The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 1

Talks given from 21/06/79 am to 30/04/80 am
English Discourse series
10 Chapters
Year published:
The original tape and book title was "The Book of the Books, Vols 1 - 6". Later reissued as twelve volumes under the present title.

The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 1

Chapter #1

Chapter title: We are what we think
21 June 1979 am in Buddha Hall

WE ARE WHAT WE THINK.
ALL THAT WE ARE ARISES WITH OUR THOUGHTS.
WITH OUR THOUGHTS WE MAKE THE WORLD.
SPEAK OR ACT WITH AN IMPURE MIND
AND TROUBLE WILL FOLLOW YOU
AS THE WHEEL FOLLOWS THE OX THAT DRAWS THE CART.

WE ARE WHAT WE THINK.
ALL THAT WE ARE ARISES WITH OUR THOUGHTS.
WITH OUR THOUGHTS WE MAKE THE WORLD.
SPEAK OR ACT WITH A PURE MIND
AND HAPPINESS WILL FOLLOW YOU
AS YOUR SHADOW, UNSHAKABLE.

"LOOK HOW HE ABUSED ME AND BEAT ME,
HOW HE THREW ME DOWN AND ROBBED ME."
LIVE WITH SUCH THOUGHTS AND YOU LIVE IN HATE.

"LOOK HOW HE ABUSED ME AND BEAT ME,
HOW HE THREW ME DOWN AND ROBBED ME."
ABANDON SUCH THOUGHTS, AND LIVE IN LOVE.

IN THIS WORLD
HATE NEVER YET DISPELLED HATE.
ONLY LOVE DISPELS HATE.
THIS IS THE LAW,
ANCIENT AND INEXHAUSTIBLE.

YOU TOO SHALL PASS AWAY.
KNOWING THIS, HOW CAN YOU QUARREL?

HOW EASILY THE WIND OVERTURNS A FRAIL TREE.
SEEK HAPPINESS IN THE SENSES,
INDULGE IN FOOD AND SLEEP,
AND YOU TOO WILL BE UPROOTED.

THE WIND CANNOT OVERTURN A MOUNTAIN.
TEMPTATION CANNOT TOUCH THE MAN
WHO IS AWAKE, STRONG AND HUMBLE,
WHO MASTERS HIMSELF AND MINDS THE LAW.

IF A MAN'S THOUGHTS ARE MUDDY,
IF HE IS RECKLESS AND FULL OF DECEIT,

HOW CAN HE WEAR THE YELLOW ROBE?

WHOEVER IS MASTER OF HIS OWN NATURE,
BRIGHT, CLEAR AND TRUE,
HE MAY INDEED WEAR THE YELLOW ROBE.

My beloved bodhisattvas.... Yes, that's how I look at you. That's how you have to start looking at yourselves. Bodhisattva means a buddha in essence, a buddha in seed, a buddha asleep, but with all the potential to be awake. In that sense everybody is a bodhisattva, but not everybody can be called a bodhisattva -- only those who have started groping for the light, who have started longing for the dawn, in whose hearts the seed is no longer a seed but has become a sprout, has started growing.

You are bodhisattvas because of your longing to be conscious, to be alert, because of your quest for the truth. The truth is not far away, but there are very few fortunate ones in the world who long for it. It is not far away but it is arduous, it is hard to achieve. It is hard to achieve, not because of its nature, but because of our investment in lies. We have invested for lives and lives in lies. Our investment is so much that the very idea of truth makes us frightened. We want to avoid it, we want to escape from the truth. Lies are beautiful escapes -- convenient, comfortable dreams. But dreams are dreams. They can enchant you for the moment, they can enslave you for the moment, but only for the moment. And each dream is followed by tremendous frustration, and each desire is followed by deep failure. But we go on rushing into new lies; if old lies are known, we immediately invent new lies. Remember that only lies

can be invented; truth cannot be invented. Truth already is! Truth has to be discovered, not invented. Lies cannot be discovered, they have to be invented.

Mind feels very good with lies because the mind becomes the inventor, the doer. And as the mind becomes the doer, ego is created. With truth, you have nothing to do...and because you have nothing to do, mind ceases, and with the mind the ego disappears, evaporates. That's the risk, the ultimate risk.

You have moved towards that risk. You have taken a few steps -- staggering, stumbling, groping, haltingly, with many doubts, but still you have taken a few steps; hence I call you bodhisattvas.

And THE DHAMMAPADA, the teaching of Gautama the Buddha, can only be taught to the bodhisattvas. It cannot be taught to the ordinary, mediocre humanity, because it cannot be understood by them.

These words of Buddha come from eternal silence. They can reach you only if you receive them in silence. These words of Buddha come from immense purity. Unless you become a vehicle, a receptacle, humble, egoless, alert, aware, you will not be able to understand them.

Intellectually you will understand them -- they are very simple words, the simplest possible. But their very simplicity is a problem, because you are not simple. To understand simplicity you need simplicity of the heart, because only the simple heart can understand the simple truth. Only the pure can understand that which has come out of purity.

I have waited long...now the time is ripe, you are ready. The seeds can be sown. These tremendously important

words can be uttered again. For twenty-five centuries, such a gathering has not existed at all. Yes, there have been a few enlightened masters with a few disciples -- half a dozen at the most -- and in small gatherings THE DHAMMAPADA has been taught. But those small gatherings cannot transform such a huge humanity. It is like throwing sugar in the ocean with spoons: it cannot make it sweet -- your sugar is simply wasted.

A great, unheard-of experiment has to be done, on such a large scale that at least the most substantial part of humanity is touched by it -- at least the soul of humanity, the center of humanity, can be awakened by it. On the periphery, the mediocre minds will go on sleeping -- let them sleep -- but at the center where intelligence exists a light can be kindled.

The time is ripe, the time has come for it. My whole work here consists in creating a buddhafield, an energy field where these eternal truths can be uttered again. It is a rare opportunity. Only once in a while, after centuries, does such an opportunity exist. Don't miss it. Be very alert, mindful. Listen to these words not only with the head but with your heart, with every fiber of your being. Let your totality be stirred by them.

And after these ten days of silence, it is exactly the right moment to bring Buddha back, to make him alive again amongst you, to let him move amongst you, to let the winds of Buddha pass through you. Yes, he can be called back again, because nobody every disappears. Buddha is no longer an embodied person; certainly he does not exist as an individual anywhere -- but his essence, his soul, is part of the cosmic soul now.

If many many people -- with deep longing, with immense longing, with prayerful hearts -- desire it, passionately desire it, then the soul that has disappeared into the cosmic soul can again become manifest in millions of ways.

No true master ever dies, he cannot die. Death does not appear for the masters, does not exist for them. Hence they are masters. They have known the eternity of life. They have seen that the body disappears but that the body is not all: the body is only the periphery, the body is only the garments. The body is the house, the abode, but the guest never disappears. The guest only moves from one abode to another. One day, ultimately, the guest starts living under the sky, with no shelter...but the guest continues. Only bodies, houses, come and go, are born and then die. But there is an inner continuum, an inner continuity -- that is eternal, timeless, deathless.

Whenever you can love a master -- a master like Jesus, Buddha, Zarathustra, Lao Tzu -- if your passion is total, immediately you are bridged.

My talking on Buddha is not just a commentary: it is creating a bridge. Buddha is one of the most important masters who has ever existed on the earth -- incomparable, unique. And if you can have a taste of his being, you will be infinitely benefited, blessed.

I am immensely glad, because after these ten days of silence I can say to you that many of you are now ready to commune with me in silence. That is the ultimate in communication. Words are inadequate; words say, but only partially. Silence communes totally.

And to use words is a dangerous game too, because the meaning will remain with me, only the word will reach

you; and you will give it your own meaning, your own color. It will not contain the same truth that it was meant to contain. It will contain something else, something far poorer. It will contain your meaning, not my meaning. You can distort language -- in fact it is almost impossible to avoid distortion -- but you cannot distort silence. Either you understand or you don't understand.

And for these ten days there were only two categories of people here: those who understood and those who did not. But there was not a single person who misunderstood. You cannot misunderstand silence -- that's the beauty of silence. The demarcation is absolute: either you understand or, simply, you don't understand -- there is nothing to misunderstand.

With words the case is just the opposite: it is very difficult to understand, it is very difficult to understand that you don't understand; these two are almost impossibilities. And the third is the only possibility: misunderstanding.

These ten days have been of strange beauty, and of a mysterious majesty too. I no longer really belong to this shore. My ship has been waiting for me for a long time -- I should have gone. It is a miracle that I am still in the body. The whole credit goes to you: to your love, to your prayers, to your longing. You would like me to linger a little while longer on this shore, hence the impossible has become possible.

These ten days, I was not feeling together with my body. I was feeling very uprooted, dislocated. It is strange to be in the body when you don't feel that you are in the body. And it is also strange to go on living in a place which no longer belongs to you -- my home is on the other shore. And the

call comes persistently. But because you need me, it is the compassion of the universe -- you can call it God's compassion -- that is allowing me to be in the body a little more.

It was strange, it was beautiful, it was mysterious, it was majestic, it was magical. And many of you have felt it. Many of you have felt it in different ways. A few have felt it as a very frightening phenomenon, as if death is knocking on the door. A few have felt it as a great confusion. A few have felt shocked, utterly shocked. But everybody has been touched in some way or other.

Only the newcomers were a little at a loss -- they could not comprehend what was going on. But I feel thankful to them too. Although they could not understand what was going on, they waited -- they were waiting for me to speak, they were waiting for me to say something, they were hoping. Many were afraid that I might not speak ever again...that was also a possibility. I was not certain myself.

Words are becoming more and more difficult for me. They are becoming more and more of an effort. I have to say something so I go on saying something to you. But I would like you to get ready as soon as possible so that we can simply sit in silence...listening to the birds and their songs...or listening just to your own heartbeat...just being here, doing nothing....

Get ready as soon as possible, because I may stop speaking any day. And let the news be spread to all the nooks and corners of the world: those who want to understand me only through the words, they should come soon, because I may stop speaking any day. Unpredictably, any day, it may happen -- it may happen even in the middle of a sentence.

Then I am not going to complete the sentence! Then it will hang forever and forever...incomplete.
But this time you have pulled me back.
These sayings of Buddha are called THE DHAMMAPADA. This name has to be understood. Dhamma means many things. It means the ultimate law, logos. By "ultimate law" is meant that which keeps the whole universe together. Invisible it is, intangible it is -- but it is certainly; otherwise the universe would fall apart. Such a vast, infinite universe, running so smoothly, so harmoniously, is enough proof that there must be an undercurrent that connects everything, that joins everything, that bridges everything -- that we are not islands, that the smallest grass leaf is joined to the greatest star. Destroy a small grass leaf and you have destroyed something of immense value to the existence itself.
In existence there is no hierarchy, there is nothing small and nothing great. The greatest star and the smallest grass leaf, both exist as equals; hence the other meaning of the word 'dhamma'. The other meaning is justice, the equality, the nonhierarchic existence. Existence is absolutely communist; it knows no classes, it is all one. Hence the other meaning of the word 'dhamma' -- justice.
And the third meaning is righteousness, virtue. Existence is very virtuous. Even if you find something which you cannot call virtue, it must be because of your misunderstanding; otherwise the existence is absolutely virtuous. Whatsoever happens here, always happens rightly. The wrong never happens. It may appear wrong to you because you have a certain idea of what right is, but when you look without any prejudice, nothing is wrong, all

is right. Birth is right, death is right. Beauty is right and ugliness is right.

But our minds are small, our comprehension is limited; we cannot see the whole, we always see only a small part. We are like a person who is hiding behind his door and looking through the keyhole into the street. He always sees things...yes, somebody is moving, a car suddenly passes by. One moment it was not there, one moment it is there, and another moment it is gone forever. That's how we are looking at existence. We say something is in the future, then it comes into the present, and then it has gone into the past.

In fact, time is a human invention. It is always now! Existence knows no past, no future -- it knows only the present.

But we are sitting behind a keyhole and looking. A person is not there, then suddenly he appears; and then as suddenly as he appears he disappears too. Now you have to create time. Before the person appeared he was in the future; he was there, but for you he was in the future. Then he appeared; now he is in the present -- he is the same! And you cannot see him anymore through your small keyhole -- he has become past. Nothing is past, nothing is future -- all is always present. But our ways of seeing are very limited. Hence we go on asking why there is misery in the world, why there is this and that...why? If we can look at the whole, all these whys disappear. And to look at the whole, you will have to come out of your room, you will have to open the door...you will have to drop this keyhole vision. This is what mind is: a keyhole, and a very small keyhole it is. Compared to the vast universe, what are our eyes, ears,

hands? What can we grasp? Nothing of much importance. And those tiny fragments of truth, we become too much attached to them.

If you see the whole, everything is as it should be -- that is the meaning of "everything is right." Wrong exists not. Only God exists; the Devil is man's creation.

The third meaning of 'dhamma' can be God -- but Buddha never uses the word 'God' because it has become wrongly associated with the idea of a person, and the law is a presence, not a person. Hence Buddha never uses the word 'God', but whenever he wants to convey something of God he uses the word 'dhamma'. His mind is that of a very profound scientist. Because of this, many have thought him to be an atheist -- he is not. He is the greatest theist the world has ever known or will ever know -- but he never talks about God. He never uses the word, that's all, but by 'dhamma' he means exactly the same. "That which is" is the meaning of the word 'God', and that's exactly the meaning of 'dhamma'. 'Dhamma' also means discipline -- different dimensions of the word. One who wants to know the truth will have to discipline himself in many ways. Don't forget the meaning of the word 'discipline' -- it simply means the capacity to learn, the availability to learn, the receptivity to learn. Hence the word 'disciple'. 'Disciple' means one who is ready to drop his old prejudices, to put his mind aside, and look into the matter without any prejudice, without any a priori conception.

And 'dhamma' also means the ultimate truth. When mind disappears, when the ego disappears, then what remains? Something certainly remains, but it cannot be called 'something' -- hence Buddha calls it 'nothing'. But let me

remind you, otherwise you will misunderstand him: whenever he uses the word 'nothing' he means no-thing. Divide the word in two; don't use it as one word -- bring a hyphen between 'no' and 'thing', then you know exactly the meaning of 'nothing'.

The ultimate law is not a thing. It is not an object that you can observe. It is your interiority, it is subjectivity.

Buddha would have agreed totally with the Danish thinker, Soren Kierkegaard. He says: Truth is subjectivity. That is the difference between fact and truth. A fact is an objective thing. Science goes on searching for more and more facts, and science will never arrive at truth -- it cannot by the very definition of the word. Truth is the interiority of the scientist, but he never looks at it. He goes on observing other things. He never becomes aware of his own being. That is the last meaning of 'dhamma': your interiority, your subjectivity, your truth.

One thing very significant -- allow it to sink deep into your heart: truth is never a theory, a hypothesis; it is always an experience. Hence my truth cannot be your truth. My truth is inescapably my truth; it will remain my truth, it cannot be yours. We cannot share it. Truth is unsharable, untransferable, incommunicable, inexpressible.

I can explain to you how I have attained it, but I cannot say what it is. The "how" is explainable, but not the "why." The discipline can be shown, but not the goal. Each one has to come to it in his own way. Each one has to come to it in his own inner being. In absolute aloneness it is revealed.

And the second word is PADA. 'Pada' also has many meanings. One, the most fundamental meaning, is path. Religion has two dimensions: the dimension of "what" and

the dimension of "how." The "what" cannot be talked about; it is impossible. But the "how" can be talked about, the "how" is sharable. That is the meaning of 'path'. I can indicate the path to you; I can show you how I have traveled, how I reached the sunlit peaks. I can tell you about the whole geography of it, the whole topography of it. I can give you a contour map, but I cannot say how it feels to be on the sunlit peak.

It is like you can ask Edmund Hillary or Tensing how they reached the highest peak of the Himalayas, Gourishankar. They can give you the whole map of how they reached. But if you ask them what they felt when they reached, they can only shrug their shoulders. That freedom that they must have known is unspeakable; the beauty, the benediction, the vast sky, the height, and the colorful clouds, and the sun and the unpolluted air, and the virgin snow on which nobody had ever traveled before...all that is impossible to convey. One has to reach those sunlit peaks to know it.

'Pada' means path, 'pada' also means step, foot, foundation. All these meanings are significant. You have to move from where you are. You have to become a great process, a growth. People have become stagnant pools; they have to become rivers, because only rivers reach the ocean. And it also means foundation, because it is the fundamental truth of life. Without dhamma, without relating in some way to the ultimate truth, your life has no foundation, no meaning, no significance, it cannot have any glory. It will be an exercise in utter futility. If you are not bridged with the total you cannot have any significance of your own. You will remain a driftwood -- at the mercy of the winds, not knowing where you are going and not knowing who you

are. The search for truth, the passionate search for truth, creates the bridge, gives you a foundation. These sutras that are compiled as THE DHAMMAPADA are to be understood not intellectually but existentially. Become like sponges: let it soak, let it sink into you. Don't be sitting there judging; otherwise you will miss the Buddha. Don't sit there constantly chattering in your mind about whether it is right or wrong -- you will miss the point. Don't be bothered whether it is right or wrong.
The first, the most primary thing, is to understand what it is -- what Buddha is saying, what Buddha is trying to say. There is no need to judge right now. The first, basic need is to understand exactly what he means. And the beauty of it is that if you understand exactly what it means, you will be convinced of its truth, you will know its truth. Truth has its own ways of convincing people; it needs no other proofs. Truth never argues: it is a song, not a syllogism.

The sutras:

WE ARE WHAT WE THINK.
ALL THAT WE ARE ARISES WITH OUR THOUGHTS.
WITH OUR THOUGHTS WE MAKE THE WORLD.

It has been said to you again and again that the Eastern mystics believe that the world is illusory. It is true: they not only believe that the world is untrue, illusory, maya -- they know that it is maya, it is an illusion, a dream. But when they use the word sansara -- the world -- they don't mean the objective world that science investigates; no, not at all. They don't mean the world of the trees and the mountains

and the rivers; no, not at all. They mean the world that you create, spin and weave inside your mind, the wheel of the mind that goes on moving and spinning. Sansara has nothing to do with the outside world.
There are three things to be remembered. One is the outside world, the objective world. Buddha will never say anything about it because that is not his concern; he is not an Albert Einstein. Then there is a second world: the world of the mind, the world that the psychoanalysts, the psychiatrists, the psychologists investigate. Buddha will have a few things to say about it, not many, just a few -- in fact, one: that it is illusory, that it has no truth, either objective or subjective, that it is in between.

The first world is the objective world, which science investigates. The second world is the world of the mind, which the psychologist investigates. And the third world is your subjectivity, your interiority, your inner self. Buddha's indication is towards the interiormost core of your being. But you are too much involved with the mind. Unless he helps you to become untrapped from the mind, you will never know the third, the real world: your inner substance. Hence he starts with the statement: WE ARE WHAT WE THINK. That's what everybody is: his mind. ALL THAT WE ARE ARISES WITH OUR THOUGHTS. Just imagine for a single moment that all thoughts have ceased...then who are you? If all thoughts cease for a single moment, then who are you? No answer will be coming. You cannot say, "I am a Catholic," "I am a Protestant," "I am a Hindu," "I am a Mohammedan" -- you cannot say that. All thoughts have ceased. So the Koran has

disappeared, the Bible, the Gita...all words have ceased! You cannot even utter your name. All language has disappeared so you cannot say to which country you belong, to which race. When thoughts cease, who are you? An utter emptiness, nothingness, no-thingness.

It is because of this that Buddha has used a strange word; nobody has ever done such a thing before, or since. The mystics have always used the word 'self' for the interiormost core of your being -- Buddha uses the word 'no-self'. And I perfectly agree with him; he is far more accurate, closer to truth. To use the word 'self' -- even if you use the word 'Self' with a capital 'S', does not make much difference. It continues to give you the sense of the ego, and with a capital 'S' it may give you an even bigger ego.

Buddha does not use the words atma, 'self', atta. He uses just the opposite word: 'no-self', anatma, anatta. He says when mind ceases, there is no self left -- you have become universal, you have overflowed the boundaries of the ego, you are a pure space, uncontaminated by anything. You are just a mirror reflecting nothing.

WE ARE WHAT WE THINK. ALL THAT WE ARE ARISES WITH OUR THOUGHTS. WITH OUR THOUGHTS WE MAKE THE WORLD.

If you really want to know who, in reality, you are, you will have to learn how to cease as a mind, how to stop thinking. That's what meditation is all about. Meditation means going out of the mind, dropping the mind and moving in the space called no-mind. And in no-mind you will know the ultimate truth, dhamma.

And moving from mind to no-mind is the step, pada. And this is the whole secret of THE DHAMMAPADA.

SPEAK OR ACT WITH AN IMPURE MIND
AND TROUBLE WILL FOLLOW YOU
AS THE WHEEL FOLLOWS THE OX THAT DRAWS THE CART.

Whenever Buddha uses the phrase 'impure mind' you can misunderstand it. By 'impure mind' he means mind, because all mind is impure. Mind as such is impure, and no-mind is pure. Purity means no-mind; impurity means mind.

SPEAK OR ACT WITH AN IMPURE MIND -- speak or act with mind -- AND TROUBLE WILL FOLLOW YOU.... Misery is a by-product, the shadow of the mind, the shadow of the illusory mind. Misery is a nightmare. You suffer only because you are asleep. And there is no way of escaping it while you are asleep. Unless you become awakened the nightmare will persist. It may change forms, it can have millions of forms, but it will persist. Misery is the shadow of the mind: mind means sleep, mind means unconsciousness, mind means unawareness. Mind means not knowing who you are and still pretending that you know. Mind means not knowing where you are going and still pretending that you know the goal, that you know what life is meant for -- not knowing anything about life and still believing that you know.

This mind will bring misery as certainly AS THE WHEEL FOLLOWS THE OX THAT DRAWS THE CART.

WE ARE WHAT WE THINK.
ALL THAT WE ARE ARISES WITH OUR THOUGHTS.
WITH OUR THOUGHTS WE MAKE THE WORLD.
SPEAK OR ACT WITH A PURE MIND
AND HAPPINESS WILL FOLLOW YOU
AS YOUR SHADOW, UNSHAKABLE.

Again, remember: when Buddha says "pure mind" he means no-mind. It is very difficult to translate a man like Buddha. It is almost an impossible job, because a man like Buddha uses language in his own way; he creates his own language. He cannot use the ordinary language with ordinary meanings, because he has something extraordinary to convey.

Ordinary words are absolutely meaningless in reference to the experience of a Buddha. But you should understand the problem. The problem is, he cannot use an absolutely new language; nobody will understand. It will look like gibberish.

That's how the word 'gibberish' came into existence. It comes from a Sufi; his name was Jabbar. He invented a new language. Nobody was able to make head or tail of it. How can you understand an absolutely new language? He looked like a madman, uttering nonsense, utter nonsense. That's how it happens! If you listen to a Chinese and you don't understand Chinese, it is utter nonsense.

Somebody was asking a man who had gone to China, "How do they find such strange names for people? -- Ching, Chung, Chang...."

The man said, "They have a way: they collect all the spoons in the house and they throw them upwards, and when those spoons fall down...ching! chung! chang! or whatsoever sound they make, that's how they name a child."

But the same is the case: if a Chinese hears English he thinks, "What nonsense!"
If that is the case with languages which millions of people use, what will be the case with a Buddha if he invents an original language? Only he will understand it and nobody else. Jabbar did that -- must have been a very courageous man. People thought that he was mad.
The English word 'gibberish' comes from Jabbar. Nobody knows what he was saying. Nobody has even tried to collect it...how to collect it? There was no alphabet. And what he was saying was making no sense at all, so we don't know what treasures we have missed.
The problem for Buddha is that either he has to use your language as you use it -- then he cannot convey his experience at all -- or he has to invent a new language nobody will understand. So all great masters have to be very much in the middle. They will use your language, but they will give your words their color, their flavor. The bottles will be yours, the wine will be theirs. And thinking that because the bottles are yours the wine is also yours, you will carry them for centuries. And there is a possibility that, thinking that it is your wine because the bottle is yours, sometimes you may drink out of it, you may become drunk.

That's why it is very difficult to translate. Buddha used a language that was understood by the people who surrounded him, but he gave twists and turns to words in such a subtle way that even people who knew the language were not alerted, were not shocked. They thought they were hearing their own language.

Buddha uses the words "pure mind" for no-mind, because if you say "no-mind," immediately it becomes impossible to understand. But if you say "pure mind," then some communication is possible. Slowly slowly, he will convince you that pure mind means no-mind. But that will take time; very slowly you have to be caught and trapped into a totally new experience. But remember always: pure mind means no-mind, impure means mind.

By putting these adjectives, impure and pure, he is compromising with you so that you don't become alerted too early and escape. You have to be allured, seduced. All great masters are seductive -- that is their art. They seduce you in such a way that slowly slowly, you are ready to drink anything, whatsoever they give. First they supply you with ordinary water, then slowly slowly, wine has to be mixed in it. Then water has to be withdrawn...and one day you are completely drunk. But it has to be a very slow process.

As you go deeper into the sutras you will understand. Impure mind means mind, pure mind means no-mind. And happiness will follow you if you have a pure mind or no mind.... HAPPINESS WILL FOLLOW YOU AS YOUR SHADOW, UNSHAKABLE.

Misery is a by-product, so is bliss. Misery is a by-product of being asleep, bliss is a by-product of being awake.

Hence you cannot seek and search for bliss directly, and those who seek and search for bliss directly are bound to fail, doomed to fail. Bliss can be attained only by those who don't seek bliss directly; on the contrary, they seek awareness. And when awareness comes, bliss comes of its own accord, just like your shadow, unshakable.

"LOOK HOW HE ABUSED ME AND BEAT ME,
HOW HE THREW ME DOWN AND ROBBED ME."
LIVE WITH SUCH THOUGHTS AND YOU LIVE IN HATE.

"LOOK HOW HE ABUSED ME AND BEAT ME,
HOW HE THREW ME DOWN AND ROBBED ME."
ABANDON SUCH THOUGHTS, AND LIVE IN LOVE.

Something of profound importance: hate exists with the past and the future -- love needs no past, no future. Love exists in the present. Hate has a reference in the past: somebody abused you yesterday and you are carrying it like a wound, a hangover. Or you are afraid that somebody is going to abuse you tomorrow -- a fear, a shadow of the fear. And you are already getting ready, you are getting prepared to encounter it.
Hate exists in the past and the future. You cannot hate in the present -- try, and you will be utterly impotent. Try it today: sit silently and hate somebody in the present, with no reference to the past or the future...you cannot do it. It cannot be done; in the very nature of things it is impossible. Hate can exist only if you remember the past: this man did something to you yesterday -- then hate is possible. Or this

man is going to do something tomorrow -- then too hate is possible. But if you don't have any reference to the past or the future -- this man has not done anything to you and he is not going to do anything to you, this man is just sitting there -- how can you hate? But you can love.

Love needs no reference -- that's the beauty of love and the freedom of love. Hate is a bondage. Hate is imprisonment -- imposed by you upon yourself. And hate creates hate, hate provokes hate. If you hate somebody you are creating hate in that person's heart for yourself. And the whole world exists in hate, in destructiveness, in violence, in jealousy, in competitiveness. People are at each other's throats either in reality, actuality, in action, or at least in their minds, in their thoughts, everybody is murdering, killing. That's why we have created a hell out of this beautiful earth -- which could have become a paradise.

Love, and the earth becomes a paradise again. And the immense beauty of love is that it has no reference. Love comes from you for no reason at all. It is your outpouring bliss, it is your sharing of your heart. It is the sharing of the song of your being. And sharing is so joyful -- hence one shares! Sharing for sharing's sake, for no other motive.

But what love you have known in the past is not the love Buddha is talking about or I am talking about. Your love is nothing but the other side of hate. Hence your love has reference: somebody has been beautiful to you yesterday, so nice he was that you feel great love for him. This is not love; this is the other side of hate -- the reference proves it. Or somebody is going to be nice to you tomorrow: the way he smiled at you, the way he talked to you, the way he

invited you to his house tomorrow -- he is going to be loving to you. And great love arises.

This is not the love buddhas talk about. This is hate disguised as love -- that's why your love can turn into hate any moment. Scratch a person just a little bit, and the love disappears and hate arises. It is not even skin-deep. Even so-called great lovers are continuously fighting, continuously at each other's throats -- nagging, destructive. And people think this is love....

You can ask Astha and Abhiyana -- they are in such a love that Astha is having a black eye almost every day. Great fight! But when great fight goes on, people think something is happening. When nothing is happening -- no fight, no quarrel -- people feel empty. "It is better to be fighting than to be empty" -- that's the idea of millions of people in the world. At least the fight keeps you engaged, at least the fight keeps you involved, and the fight makes you important. Life seems to have some meaning -- ugly meaning, but at least some meaning.

Your love is not really love: it is its very opposite. It is hate disguised as love, camouflaged as love, parading as love. True love has no reference. It thinks not of the yesterdays, it thinks not of the tomorrows. True love is a spontaneous welling up of joy in you...and the sharing of it...and the showering of it...for no other reason, for no other motive, than just the joy of sharing it.

The birds singing in the morning, this cuckoo calling from the distance...for no reason. The heart is just so full of joy that a song bursts forth. When I am talking about love I am talking about such love. Remember it. And if you can move into the dimension of this love, you will be in paradise --

immediately. And you will start creating a paradise on the earth.
Love creates love just as hate creates hate.

IN THIS WORLD
HATE NEVER YET DISPELLED HATE.
ONLY LOVE DISPELS HATE.
THIS IS THE LAW,
ANCIENT AND INEXHAUSTIBLE.

Aes dhammo sanantano -- this the law, eternal, ancient and inexhaustible.
What is the law? That hate never dispels hate -- darkness cannot dispel darkness -- that only love dispels hate. Only light can dispel darkness: love is light, the light of your being, and hate is the darkness of your being. If you are dark inside, you go on throwing hate all around you. If you are light within, luminous, then you go on radiating light around you.
A sannyasin has to be a radiant love, a radiant light.
AES DHAMMO SANANTANO.... Buddha repeats this again and again -- this is the eternal law. What is the eternal law? Only love dispels hate, only light dispels darkness. Why? -- because darkness in itself is only a negative state; it has no positive existence of its own. It does not exist really -- how can you dispel it? You cannot do anything directly to darkness. If you want to do anything to darkness you will have to do something with light. Bring light in and darkness is gone, take light out and darkness comes in. But you cannot bring darkness in or out directly -- you cannot

do anything with darkness. Remember, you cannot do anything with hate either.

And that's the difference between moral teachers and religious mystics: moral teachers go on propounding the false law. They go on propounding, "Fight with darkness -- fight with hate, fight with anger, fight with sex, fight with this, fight with that!" Their whole approach is, "Fight the negative," while the real, true master teaches you the positive law: aes dhammo sanantano -- the eternal law, "Do not fight with darkness." And hate is darkness, and sex is darkness, and jealousy is darkness, and greed is darkness and anger is darkness.

Bring the light in....

How is the light brought in? Become silent, thoughtless, conscious, alert, aware, awake -- this is how light is brought in. And the moment you are alert, aware, hate will not be found. Try to hate somebody with awareness.... These are experiments to be done, not just words to be understood -- experiments to be done. That's why I say don't try to understand only intellectually: become existential experimenters.

Try to hate somebody consciously and you will find it impossible. Either consciousness disappears, then you can hate; or if you are conscious, hate disappears. They can't exist together. There is no coexistence possible: light and darkness cannot exist together -- because darkness is nothing but the absence of light.

The true masters teach you how to attain to God; they never say renounce the world. Renunciation is negative. They don't tell you to escape from the world, they teach you to escape into God. They teach you to attain to truth, not to

fight with lies. And lies are millions. If you go on fighting it will take millions of lives, and still nothing will be attained. And truth is one; hence truth can be attained instantly, this very moment it is possible.

YOU TOO SHALL PASS AWAY.
KNOWING THIS, HOW CAN YOU QUARREL?

Life is so short, so momentary, and you are wasting it in quarreling? Use the whole energy for meditation -- it is the same energy. You can fight with it or you can become a light through it.

HOW EASILY THE WIND OVERTURNS A FRAIL TREE.
SEEK HAPPINESS IN THE SENSES,
INDULGE IN FOOD AND SLEEP,
AND YOU TOO WILL BE UPROOTED.

Buddha says: Remember, if you depend on the senses you will remain very fragile -- because senses cannot give you strength. They cannot give you strength because they cannot give you a constant foundation. They are constantly in flux; everything is changing. Where can you have a shelter? Where can you make a foundation?
One moment this woman looks beautiful and another moment another woman. If you just decide by the senses, you will be a constant turmoil -- you cannot decide because senses go on changing their opinions. One moment something seems so incredible, and another moment it is just ugly, unbearable. And we depend on these senses.

Buddha says: Don't depend on senses -- depend on awareness. Awareness is something hidden behind the senses. It is not the eye that sees. If you go to the eye specialist he will say it is the eye that sees, but that is not true. The eye is only a mechanism -- through which somebody else sees. The eye is only a window; the window cannot see. When you stand at the window, you can look outside. Somebody passing in the street may think, "The window is seeing me." The eye is only a window, an aperture. Who is behind the eye?
The ear does not hear -- who is behind the ear who hears? Who is the one who feels? Go on searching for that and you will find some foundation; otherwise, your life will be just a dry leaf in the wind.

THE WIND CANNOT OVERTURN A MOUNTAIN.
TEMPTATION CANNOT TOUCH THE MAN
WHO IS AWAKE, STRONG AND HUMBLE,
WHO MASTERS HIMSELF AND MINDS THE LAW.

Meditation will make you awake, strong and humble. Meditation will make you awake because it will give you the first experience of yourself. You are not the body, you are not the mind -- you are the pure witnessing consciousness. And when this witnessing consciousness is touched, a great awakening happens -- as if a snake was sitting coiled up and suddenly it uncoils, as if somebody was asleep and has been shaken and awakened. Suddenly a great awakening inside: for the first time you feel you are. For the first time you feel the truth of your being.

And certainly it makes you strong; you are no longer fragile, not like a frail tree that any wind can overturn. Now you become a mountain! Now you have a foundation, now you are rooted -- no wind can overturn a mountain. You become awake, you become strong, and still you become humble. This strength does not bring any ego in you. You become humble because you become aware that the same witnessing soul exists in everybody, even in animals, birds, plants, rocks.

These are only different ways of sleeping! Somebody sleeps on the right side, and somebody sleeps on the left side, and somebody sleeps on the back...these are only different ways of sleeping. A rock has its own way of sleep, a tree a different way of sleep, a bird still a different way -- but only differences in the ways and methods of sleeping; otherwise deep down at the core of every being is the same witnessing, the same God. That makes you humble. Even before a rock you know you are nobody special, because the whole existence is made of the same stuff called consciousness. And if you are awake, strong, and humble, this gives you a mastery over yourself.

IF A MAN'S THOUGHTS ARE MUDDY,
IF HE IS RECKLESS AND FULL OF DECEIT,
HOW CAN HE WEAR THE YELLOW ROBE?

Buddha chose for his sannyasins the yellow robe, just as I have chosen the orange. That is the difference between my approach and the Buddha's approach. Yellow represents death -- the yellow leaf. Yellow represents the setting sun, the evening.

Buddha emphasized death too much -- that's a way. If you emphasize death too much, it helps: people become more and more aware of life in contrast to death. And when you emphasize death again and again and again, you help people to awaken. They have to be awake because death is coming. Whenever a new sannyasin would be initiated by Buddha, he would tell him, "Go to the cemetery -- and just be there and go on watching funeral pyres, dead bodies being carried, burned...go on watching. And go on remembering this is going to happen to you too. Three months' meditation on death, then come back." That was the beginning of sannyas.

There are only two possible ways. One is, emphasize death; the other is, emphasize life. Because these are the only two things in existence -- life and death. Buddha chose death as a symbol; hence the yellow robe.

The orange represents life; it is the color of blood. It represents the morning sun, the early dawn, the eastern sky becoming red. My emphasis is on life. But the purpose is the same. I want you to be so passionately in love with life that your very passion for life makes you aware, your very intensity to live it makes you awake.

And death is in the future, and life is now, so if you think of death you will be thinking of the future. If you think of death it will be an inference: you will see somebody else dying, you will never see yourself dying. You can imagine, you can infer, you can think, but this will be a thinking. Life need not be thought, it can be lived. It can help you to be mindless more than death can. Hence my choice is far better than Buddha's choice, because life is right now; you need not go to a cemetery. All that you need is to be alert

and life is everywhere...in the flowers, in the birds, in the people around you, the children laughing...and in you!...and right now! You need not think about it, you need not infer it. You can just close your eyes and feel it -- you can feel the tickle of it, you can feel the beat of it.

But both methods can be used: death can be used for you to become a meditator, or life can be used -- my choice is life. And I emphasize and repeat that my choice is far better than Buddha's. Buddha's choice of death as a symbol helped this whole country to become dead, dull, insipid. My choice of life as the symbol can revive this country -- not only this country but the whole world -- because it is not only the Buddha who has chosen death as a symbol, Christianity has also chosen death as a symbol -- the cross. So the two greatest religions of the world, Christianity and Buddhism, are death-oriented. And because of these two religions.... And their impact has been the greatest: Christianity has transformed the whole West, and Buddhism has transformed the whole East.

Jesus and Buddha have been the two greatest teachers, but the choice of death as a symbol has been dangerous, has been a calamity. I choose life. I would like this whole earth to be full of life, more and more life, pulsating life. But what Buddha says about his yellow robe I would also say about my orange robe. He says: IF A MAN'S THOUGHTS ARE MUDDY, IF HE IS RECKLESS AND FULL OF DECEIT, HOW CAN HE WEAR THE YELLOW ROBE?

WHOEVER IS MASTER OF HIS OWN NATURE,
BRIGHT, CLEAR AND TRUE,
HE MAY INDEED WEAR THE ORANGE ROBE.

What he says about the yellow robe, I say about the orange robe: WHOEVER IS...BRIGHT, CLEAR AND TRUE, HE MAY INDEED WEAR THE ORANGE ROBE.
AES DHAMMO SANANTANO.
Enough for today.

The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 1
Chapter #2
Chapter title: An empty chair
22 June 1979 am in Buddha Hall

The first question:
Question 1
BELOVED MASTER,
AN EMPTY CHAIR
A SILENT HALL
AN INTRODUCTION TO BUDDHA --
HOW ELOQUENT!
HOW RARE!

Yes, Subhuti, that's the only way to introduce the Buddha to you. Silence is the only language he can be expressed in. Words are too profane, too inadequate, too limited. Only an empty space...utterly silent...can represent the being of a buddha.
There is a temple in Japan, absolutely empty, not even a statue of the Buddha in the temple, and it is known as a temple dedicated to Buddha. When visitors come and they

ask, "Where is the Buddha? The temple is dedicated to him..." the priest laughs and he says, "This empty space, this silence -- this is Buddha!"

Stones cannot represent him, statues cannot represent him. Buddha is not a stone, not a statue. Buddha is not a form -- Buddha is a formless fragrance. Hence, it was not just accidental that ten days' silence preceded these talks on Buddha. That silence was the only possible preface.

Subhuti, you are right: "An empty chair...." Yes, only an empty chair can represent him. This chair is empty, and this man talking to you is empty. It is an empty space pouring itself into you. There is nobody within, just a silence.

Because you cannot understand silence, it has to be translated into language. It is because of your limitation that I have to speak; otherwise there is no need. Truth cannot be said, has never been said, will never be said. All scriptures talk about truth, go on talking about it, about and about, but no scripture has yet been capable of expressing it -- neither the Vedas, nor the Bible, nor the Koran -- because it is impossible in the very nature of things to express it.

It cannot be said -- it can only be shown. It cannot be logically proved, but love can prove it. Where logic fails, love succeeds. Where language fails, silence succeeds.

I cannot prove it, but the absence of the 'I' within me can become an absolute proof for it. If you want to understand Buddha, really, you will have to come closer and closer to this silence that I am, you will have to become more and more intimate, available, vulnerable, to this nobody who is talking to you.

I am not a person. The person died long ago. It is a presence -- an absence and a presence. I am absent as a person, as an individual; I am present as a vehicle, a passage, a hollow bamboo. It can become a flute -- only the hollow bamboo can become a flute.

I have given myself to the whole. Now whatsoever the will of the whole...if he wants to speak through me, I am available; if he does not want to speak through me, I am available. His will is the only will now. I have no will of my own.

That's why many times you will find contradictions in my statements -- because I cannot change anything. God is contradictory because God is a paradox. He contains the polar opposites: he is darkness and light, summer and winter, life and death. Sometimes he speaks as life and sometimes as death, and sometimes he comes as summer and sometimes as winter...what can I do?

If I interfere, I will misrepresent. If I try to be consistent then I will be false. I can be true only if I will remain available to all the contradictions that God contains.

This chair, Subhuti, is certainly empty. And the day you are able to see this chair empty, this body empty, this being empty, you will have seen me, you will have contacted me. That is the real moment when the disciple meets the master. It is a dissolution, a disappearance...the dewdrop slipping into the ocean, or the ocean slipping into the dewdrop. It is the same! -- the master disappearing into the disciple and the disciple disappearing into the master. And then there prevails a profound silence.

It is not a dialogue! That's where Eastern religions, particularly Buddhism, have reached higher pinnacles than

Christianity, Judaism, Islam -- because Islam, Judaism, Christianity, remain clinging somehow to the idea of a dialogue. But a dialogue presupposes duality, twoness. Islam, Christianity, Judaism, are religions of prayer. Prayer presupposes that there is a God separate from you, that you can address him.

Hence Martin Buber's book became very famous -- I AND THOU. That is the essence of prayer. But 'I' and 'thou'...a duality is needed for a dialogue. And howsoever beautiful the dialogue may be, it is still a division, a split; it is not yet union. The river has not entered into the ocean. Maybe it has come very close, just on the verge, but it is holding back.

Buddhism is not the religion of prayer, it is the religion of meditation. And that's the difference between prayer and meditation: prayer is a dialogue, meditation is a silence. Prayer has to be addressed to somebody -- real, unreal, but it has to be addressed to somebody. Meditation is not an address at all; one has simply to fall into silence, one has simply to disappear into nothingness. When one is not, meditation is.

And Buddha is meditation -- that is his flavor. These ten days we remained silent, we remained in meditation. The real thing has been said. Those who have not heard the real thing, now for them I will be speaking.

The meditation that prevailed for ten days was with a difference -- and that is the difference between Buddha's and my approach -- a little difference, but of tremendous import. And that has to be understood by you, because I am not a mere commentator on Buddha. I am not only echoing him, I am not simply a mirror to reflect him; I am a

response, not a reflection. I am not a scholar, I am not going to make a scholarly analysis of his statements -- I am a poet!

I have seen the same nothingness that he has seen, and, certainly, I have seen it in my own way. Buddha has his own way, I have my own way -- of seeing, of being. Both ways reach the same peak, but the ways are different. My way has a little difference -- little, but of profound import, remember.

These ten days were not only of silent meditation -- these ten days were of music, silence, and meditation. Music is my contribution to it. Buddha would not have allowed it. On that point we would have quarreled. He would not have allowed music; he would have said that music is a disturbance. He would have insisted on pure silence, he would have said that is enough. But that is where we agree to disagree.

To me, music and meditation are two aspects of the same phenomenon. And without music, meditation lacks something; without music, meditation is a little dull, unalive. Without meditation, music is simply noise -- harmonious, but noise. Without meditation, music is an entertainment. And without music, meditation becomes more and more negative, tends to be death-oriented.

Hence my insistence that music and meditation should go together. That adds a new dimension -- to both. Both are enriched by it.

Remember three M's just as you remember three R's. The first M is mathematics; mathematics is the purest science. The second M is music; music is pure art. And the third M

is meditation; meditation is pure religion. Where all these three meet, you attain the trinity.
My approach is scientific. Even if I make illogical statements, I make them very very logically. Even if I assert paradoxes, they are asserted in a logical way. Whatsoever I am saying has a mathematics behind it, a method, a certain scientific approach. I am not an unscientific person. My science serves my religion; the science is not the end but it is a beautiful beginning.
And my approach is artistic, aesthetic. I cannot help you unless this energy field becomes musical. Music is pure art. And if it is joined with mathematics, it becomes a tremendously powerful instrument to penetrate into your interiority. Of course, it will not be complete unless meditation is the highest peak, the purest religion.
And we are trying to create the ultimate synthesis. This is my trinity: mathematics, music, meditation. This is my trimurti -- three faces of God. You can attain to God through one face, but then your experience of God will not be so rich as it will be when you attain two faces. But it will still lack something unless you attain all the three faces. When you know God as a trinity, when you have come through all the three dimensions, your experience, your nirvana, your enlightenment, will be the richest.
Buddha insists on meditation alone; that is one face of God. Mohammed insists on prayer, music, singing; hence the Koran has the quality of music in it. No other scripture has so much music in it as the Koran. The very word koran simply means "Recite! Sing!" That was the first revelation to Mohammed. Something from the beyond called forth and said, "Recite! Recite! Sing!"

Islam is another face of God. And there are religions which have approached God through the third M: mathematics. Jainism is the purest representative of the third approach. Mahavira speaks like Albert Einstein. It is not an accident that Mahavira was the first person in human history to talk about the theory of relativity. After twenty-five centuries, Albert Einstein was able to prove it scientifically, but Mahavira saw it in his vision.

If you read Mahavira, his statements are absolutely logical, mathematical. Jaina scriptures have no juice in them -- dry, arithmetical. That is another face of God. And only three kinds of religion have existed in the world: the religions of mathematics, represented by Jainism; the religions of music, represented by Islam, Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism; and the religions of meditation, represented by Buddhism, Taoism.

My effort here is to give you a total religion, which contains all the three M's in it. It is a very ambitious adventure. It has never been tried before; hence I am going to be opposed as nobody has ever been opposed before. You are moving with a dangerous person, but the journey is going to be of tremendous beauty. Dangers, hazards don't make a journey ugly; on the contrary, they make it tremendously beautiful. All the dangers that you will have to face with me are going to give you a thrill. The journey is not going to be dull, it is going to be very alive. We are going to move towards God in such a multidimensional way that each moment of the journey is going to be precious.

I started these Buddha lectures with a ten-day silence deliberately. It was a device to start with silence -- Buddha

would have been very happy. He must have shrugged his shoulders a little bit because of the music, but what can I do? It can't be helped.
My religion has to be a religion of dance, love, laughter. It has to be life-oriented, it has to be life-affirmative. It has to be a love affair with life. It is not a renunciation but a rejoicing.

The second question:
Question 2
BELOVED MASTER,
IT IS ABOUT THIS FEELING THAT IT HAS ALWAYS BEEN THERE, AND AS SOON AS I FEEL IT, IT SEEMS SO FAR AWAY -- BUT WHAT IS THIS "IT"?

Deva Prashantam, it is one of the perennial problems encountered by every seeker of truth. You cannot grasp truth -- if you try, it will be far far away. You cannot possess truth -- if you try, you will find your hands utterly empty. Truth cannot be possessed because it is not a thing. On the contrary, you have to be courageous enough to be possessed by truth -- because it is a love affair.
Allow yourself to be possessed by it and you will know what it is. But you have been doing just the contrary: you have been trying to have a grip on it. That's what mind always longs for, desires. That's what mind calls "understanding." Unless the mind is capable of catching hold of something, the mind is not satisfied.
But truth is mercurial: if you try to hold it in your hands, the firmer the grip, the more elusive it will become, and the farthest -- so far away that you will stop believing in it,

trusting in it...so far away that you will not be able to see that it exists at all.

Truth comes; it cannot be brought. Truth happens; you cannot do anything about it -- because the doer is the problem, the hindrance, the obstacle. The doer is the ego. And if you somehow manage and don't allow the doer to interfere, it comes by the back door -- as the one who experiences, as an observer, as an experiencer. It is the same ego again, in new garments.

That's why when you feel it, it is lost -- the doer has come now as a feeler. The doer has to be dissolved totally; it has not to be allowed back in some subtle way, in some secret way.

Let the truth be! Don't be in a hurry to understand it or to feel it -- just let it be there. You need not do anything about it. If you can remain in such a state of nondoing, of no-effort, of no-ego, you will understand, you will feel, you will know, you will have it. It can only be had indirectly, not directly.

Prashantam, that's where you are missing it. And that's where everybody misses it. Yes, there are moments when suddenly it is so close by...you would like to grab it. The very desire to grab comes out of greed, the very desire to grab comes out of fear. The very desire to grab is a mind desire. And as the mind enters in, truth goes out.

Can't you simply be silent, not doing anything at all -- not on the intellectual level, not on the physical level, not on the emotional level -- doing nothing at all, just being there, utterly quiet? And then you will be possessed by it. And the only way to know it is to be possessed by it.

You say, "It is about this feeling that it has always been there...."

Yes, it has always been there. It is our very being. It is the stuff we are made of. Truth is not something separate from you: you are truth. It is your very consciousness, the very ground of your being. You need not go anywhere else to seek and search, to Kashi or to Kaaba. Not even a single step is needed.

Lao Tzu says: You can find it sitting in your own house, no need to go anywhere -- because it is already there! When you go on a search, when you move into seeking, you go farther away from it. Each search takes you away from the truth that is already there.

And there are moments when you feel it, that it has always been there -- moments of joy, love, beauty. Moments when suddenly the world stops: a beautiful sunset...and you are gripped by it. Remember I am saying you are gripped by it, possessed by it, not that you possess it. How can you possess a sunset? The sunset possesses you, fills you; every nook and corner of your being is overflowing with the beauty of it.

And then one knows, deep down in the depths of one's being, it has always been there. Not even the words are needed; one simply knows without words -- one feels.

Or, when you are in love...or when you listen to beautiful poetry...or the songs of the birds...or just the wind blowing through the pine trees...or the sound of water.... Whenever you allow yourself to be possessed you will find, suddenly, out of nowhere, truth has appeared, God has appeared, dhamma has appeared. You have touched something intangible, you have seen something invisible. You have

been in contact with something eternal...aes dhammo sanantano -- the eternal law, the inexhaustible law. Whenever you are in a state of harmony, everything humming, functioning in harmony, whenever you are in accord...and these moments happen to everybody. These moments have nothing to do with churches and the temples and the mosques. In fact, it is very rare to find a person becoming enlightened in a church or in a mosque, in a temple.

Buddha became enlightened under a tree, watching the last morning star disappearing in the sky; not in a temple, not in a church -- under a tree, watching a star. Must have become possessed. And the disappearing star, slowly slowly disappearing...going, going, gone. One moment before it was there, and now it is no longer there. And in that moment, suddenly something in him, the last citadel of the ego, disappeared too. Just like the disappearing morning star, his ego disappeared too.

The sky was empty, and he was empty. And whenever two things are empty, they become one -- because two empty things cannot be demarcated. By what will you demarcate emptiness? Two nothings cannot be kept separate; two nothings become one nothing. The star disappeared there, and the sky was empty, and the ego disappeared inside and the sky was empty inside too...and suddenly the inner and the outer were gone. It was only one sky.

That moment Buddha became enlightened. That moment he came to know dhamma, the logos, the tao, God, the cosmic principle of life.

Mahavira became enlightened, not in a temple -- not even in a Jaina temple! There were Jaina temples in Mahavira's

time. Mahavira was the twenty-fourth tirthankara of the Jainas -- the twenty-fourth great master. Twenty-three masters had preceded him. There were Jaina temples, but he didn't become enlightened in a Jaina temple -- the Jainas should note the fact. He became enlightened in the forest. Just sitting there, doing nothing, and suddenly it came. It comes like a flood.

Mohammed became enlightened on a mountain. And so is the case with everybody: Lao Tzu, Zarathustra, Kabir, Nanak...not a single person has ever become enlightened in a temple, church or mosque. Why do you go there?

Go early in the morning to see the sunrise. Sit in the middle of the night watching the sky full of stars. Go, befriend trees and rocks. Go, lie down by the side of the river and listen to its sound. And you will be coming closer and closer to the real temple of God. Nature is his real temple. And there, be possessed -- don't try to possess. The effort to possess is worldly; the desire to be possessed is divine.

Prashantam, next time it happens, don't try to do anything about it. No need to understand, no need to observe, no need to examine, no need to analyze -- let it be there! Be possessed by it! Dance it! Sing it! And be totally one with it. That is the only way to know it.

You ask me, "It is about this feeling that it has always been there" -- the feeling is absolutely true -- "and as soon as I feel it, it seems so far away." Because with the feeling, the 'I' comes in -- and the 'I' is the distance between you and truth. The bigger the 'I', the bigger the distance, the smaller the 'I', the smaller the distance. No 'I', no distance.

And you ask me, "...but what is this 'it'?"

I cannot say it. It is now. Be possessed! It is here. Be possessed! It is not in my words but in the gaps. It is not in my statements but in the intervals. Read it between the lines.

But remember one thing very very significant: that you have to be possessed by it to understand it. And we are very much afraid of being possessed -- it seems as if we are losing control, it seems as if we are dissolving. "Who knows where it will land us? Who knows whether I will be able to come back from it or not?"

All these fears arise and you shrink back. And that is the moment you create the distance. The distance is your creation. Otherwise, it is always here, it is always now. Don't create the distance, don't bring fear in.

In all the languages of the world there are words for religious people like 'God-fearing' -- ugly words, absolute lies, because a religious person is not a God-fearing person at all. A religious person is a God-loving person, not a God-fearing person. But the priest depends on fear, he exploits your fear, and he creates fear in you. His whole business depends on whether you are afraid.

Drop your fears. There is no need to be afraid of God. God simply means the totality, the whole, that which is. We are part of it! How can the part be afraid of the whole? The whole cares for the part, the whole loves the part, because the whole will not be the whole without the part. It cannot be indifferent to the part.

Knowing this, one trusts. Knowing this, one allows the whole to possess. Knowing this, one drops all fears, one surrenders. And only in surrender it is, only in trust it is.

I can indicate towards it, but I cannot explain it to you. And it is already happening to you, Prashantam. You are blessed. Just stop your ways of creating distance between you and it. And that can be easily done: just take a little risk, a step into the unknown.... Fear will be there -- in spite of it, go into the unknown. Let the fear be there -- still go into the unknown. Only by going into the unknown will the fear disappear, because you will come to know there is nothing to fear.
And once you are enchanted by the unknown, then there is no end to this pilgrimage -- it is an eternal journey, never-ending, always ongoing; it is inexhaustible. aes dhammo sanantano -- it is eternal and inexhaustible....

The third question:
Question 3
BELOVED MASTER,
WHAT IS YOUR HOBBY?

Anando, I have none. I don't need any. A hobby is needed to keep you occupied. When you are tired of your ordinary occupation -- and naturally one gets tired of earning bread and butter -- when you are tired of your ordinary occupation there are only two alternatives. Either be unoccupied...which creates great fear in you, because to be unoccupied means to be with oneself, to be utterly alone with oneself. It is to face one's own abysmal depth -- it frightens, it scares. It means to face one's life and one's death, it means to face one's own interiority -- which is infinite, so vast you cannot comprehend it. And the very vastness frightens. A great trembling arises in you.

The one alternative is: meditate when you are unoccupied with your ordinary business. The other alternative is: get occupied again in some foolish activity, and call it a hobby. A few people collect postage stamps -- now, see the stupidity of it -- and they call it a hobby. And all hobbies are like that. These are ways and means to keep escaping from yourself.

I am utterly blissful with myself. To be alone, to be, without doing anything, is such a profound experience that if once you have tasted it you will drop all these stupid activities called hobbies. Hobbies are pseudo occupations. When real occupations are not there, you get into pseudo occupations. Now, see the foolishness of it. Six days of the week you are waiting for Sunday -- so that you can relax, so that you can rest, so that you can be with yourself. You are tired of the world; the world is too much with you. You are tired of people, you are tired of everything. And you are hoping Sunday will come soon, and when Sunday comes you are again occupied -- now it is your hobby. You cannot remain unoccupied; that is your problem.

And it often happens that a person is more tired after Sunday than after any other day, because of so many hobbies, and going for a picnic, and driving, and doing a thousand and one things for which you have been waiting for six days. And you were thinking you were going to rest?

You cannot rest! You don't know how to rest. You cannot relax -- you don't know how to relax. Even in the name of relaxation you will get into some work, some kind of work; even in the name of rest you will start some kind of work. Simply because you are not paid for it, does it become rest?

You will play cards or chess. You are not paid for it, that's true, but that doesn't make much difference; it is only unpaid work.
Rather than searching for hobbies, use the opportunities. Whenever you are capable of having a time empty, utterly unoccupied, with yourself, remain...remain in it, don't move out of it. Don't start collecting stamps.

Two old Jewish men were sitting on a park bench. "Well, what do you do now that you are retired?" asked one.
"I have a hobby: I raise pigeons," replied the other.
"Pigeons? Where do you keep them? You live in a condominium!"
"I keep them in a closet."
"In your closet? Don't they shit on your shoes and on your clothes?"
"No," said the man. "I keep them in a box."
"In a box? How do they breathe?"
"Breathe? They don't breathe," said the man, "they are dead."
"Dead?" exclaimed the friend, shocked. "You keep dead pigeons?"
"What the hell, it is only a hobby!"

The fourth question:
Question 4
BELOVED MASTER,
THIS MORNING WHEN YOU ADDRESSED US "MY BELOVED BODHISATTVAS," IT FELT AT THAT MOMENT AS THOUGH IT WERE ACTUALLY TRUE. BUT LATER ON, EVEN A POSSIBILITY THAT WE

ONE DAY WILL BECOME BODHISATTVAS SEEMED LIKE A DREAM....

Sheela, it is a truth -- that's why when uttered with trust, with love, it immediately strikes something deep in your heart, it rings a bell. But it is because of my trust that it rings a bell. I say again: You are bodhisattvas -- buddhas in essence, in seed, in potentiality.

When I say it, I mean it. When I say it, I say it because it is so. And in that moment you are so in tune with me that it appears absolutely true; no proof is needed, no argument is needed.

I need not argue for the truths that I utter. In fact, no truth ever needs any argument; it is simple, but it immediately rings a bell. The only thing needed is that it should come from the heart, then it reaches your heart.

I am not talking from my head. I am pouring my being into your being. It is a meeting of energies. It is a meeting of souls. Hence, when you are with me, it appears absolutely true -- you cannot doubt it, it is impossible. But when you are alone and I am not there, doubts arise. Your old mind comes back, with a vengeance, and says, "Sheela, you, and a bodhisattva? And what about your love with Veetrag? -- and you, a bodhisattva? And what about your jealousies, and what about your anger, and what about all that you are? You a bodhisattva? He must have been joking; he tricked you!" Great doubts arise because they are always there in your mind.

It is like you come with me, we go along, we walk side by side for the time being. I have a light in my hand, but because of my light, your path is also lighted. Then the

moment comes when we part -- we have to part; a crossroad has come, our paths separate. I move in one direction, you move in another. Suddenly you are in darkness and you are very much puzzled: "What happened to the light?"

That light was not yours. Of course, your path was lighted, but the light was not yours. So when you are with me, there is a light surrounding you. In that light, things are very clear. When you are not with me suddenly there is darkness, and in that darkness you will doubt everything that you had trusted, and in that darkness you will doubt even the possibility of light. You will doubt even the reality of the light that you had lived just a few moments before. Your mind will say, "You must have been dreaming. You must have been hallucinating. What light? Where is the light? If it was there, where has it gone?"

And this will happen again and again. This has a deep significance to be understood. When you are with me, here, listening to me, sitting by my side, the situation can remain the same even when you are not physically with me. You will have to go a little deeper in your love, so that even if physically you are far away, spiritually you are not. Then the trust will continue. Then doubts will not dare to come in.

Right now doubts come in because you have a certain love for me but it is not yet total. There are spaces within your being you have not allowed access to me yet. And this is not only so with Sheela, it is so with many of you. You are keeping a few corners still hidden, separate, private, of your own. You have not opened your heart totally, you are not utterly naked. And if you are hiding something, then

whatsoever you are hiding will remain a distance between me and you.
So when you are here, under my impact, when you are here physically with me, my presence can put your mind aside. But when you are not physically with me, your mind will come back -- you have not put it aside! Learn a lesson: when you go away from me, when you cannot see me, try to still be with me. Imbibe the spirit of closeness, intimacy -- then even death cannot separate us. Then there is no question of space and time. Then you are with me forever. And the trust will persist, and the trust will continue; it will become a constant factor in you. The only thing that will be constant will be your trust. Everything else will change, but not the trust.
You will have found the center of your being. And that finding is arriving home.

The last question:
Question 5
BELOVED MASTER,
THERE IS SO MUCH NONSENSE ABOUT YOUR TEACHINGS AND THE ACTIVITIES OF YOUR ASHRAM IN THE PRESS RECENTLY. IT SOMEHOW INFURIATES ME BECAUSE IT SEEMS SO FAR FROM THE ACTUAL FACTS. LETTERS IN RESPONSE TO THE CONTRARY ARE NOT BEING PUBLISHED. NOW, I KNOW THIS MUST MAKE NO DIFFERENCE WHATSOEVER TO YOU. IS THIS THEN WHAT JESUS MEANS WHEN HE SAYS TO TURN THE OTHER CHEEK?

Zareen, it is as it should be. A man like me cannot remain unopposed. A man like me is bound to divide people into two categories: those who are with me and those who are not with me.

Just the other day, an old friend wrote a letter to me suggesting.... Right now there are only two kinds of people: those who are devotees, who are utterly in love with me, and those who are enemies, full of hatred for me. He wants to create a third category of people who are neither devotees nor enemies, but impartial thinkers.

His idea looks logical, but it is not possible. It has never happened, and it is not going to happen. It cannot happen. In fact, he himself is finding it difficult to become a sannyasin. He has been an old friend and he feels it a little difficult to surrender now as a disciple. He cannot be a devotee and he cannot be an enemy either. He knows me, he loves me; he has been a friend of long standing. So it is really his problem.

He cannot surrender because of his ego that he was a friend to me, a colleague. He cannot be against me because he feels for me. Now he is in a jam, so he wants to find a way out; he wants to create a third force -- people who are neither for nor against but impartial. Those people will be impotent. And I am not interested in impartial people. I am not interested in the third force at all, for a certain reason: because they will be utterly cold. I am far more interested in people who have a very strong hatred for me -- they are at least hot, and hot people are good people. They can be transformed; they are not ice-cold.

Those who are hotly in hate with me sooner or later will have become devotees -- because you cannot live in hate

long. It hurts you. By hating me you cannot love me.
Zareen, you are right, it doesn't matter at all to me. If the whole world hates me, it doesn't matter, it makes no difference. I remain in my absolute bliss.
My bliss cannot be affected by people's hatred, opposition. But think of those people who are living in hatred -- they are torturing themselves, they are hurting themselves, they are wounding themselves. How long can they go on doing it? Sooner or later their wounds would like to heal. And sooner or later, their very heated antagonism itself will turn into a passionate love.

I am reminded, Zareen, of a beautiful story:
A Sufi mystic wrote a book on the Koran. It was opposed by all the authorities, by the official religion. They banned it, they made it a crime to read it. It was sacrilegious, they thought, dangerous, because he was interpreting the Koran in such a way as nobody had ever interpreted it. He was going against the tradition.
He called his chief disciple, gave him the book, and told him to go the chief priest and present the book to him -- and watch everything. "Whatsoever happens, you have to report it correctly. So be very alert: whatsoever happens...when you give the book as a present, how he reacts, what he does, what he says, remember accurately because you have to report the whole scene. And let me tell you," the master told him, "that this is a kind of test for you. It is not only the question of giving the book to the chief priest and coming back; the whole point is reporting everything as it happens."

The man went, very alert, very cautious. Entering into the house of the chief priest, he made himself very alert, shook his body, because everything had to be observed minutely. Then he went in.

As he presented the book to the chief priest and told the name of his master, the priest threw the book out of the house, onto the road, and said, "Why didn't you tell me before that this is from that dangerous man? I would not even have touched it. I will have to wash my hands now. It is a sin to touch his book!"

The wife of the chief priest was sitting by his side. She said, "You are being unnecessarily hard on the poor man. He has not done any harm to you. Even if you wanted to throw the book, you could have thrown it later on. And I don't see the point in throwing it because you have a big library -- thousands of books are there; this book can also be kept in the library. If you don't want to read it, there is no need to read it. But you could have done at least one thing: you could have thrown it afterwards, washed your hands, taken a bath, or whatsoever you wanted to do -- but why are you hurting this poor man?"

The man went back, told the master the whole thing as it happened, in minute detail. The master asked, "What is your reaction, then?"

The man said, "My reaction is that the wife of the chief priest is a very religious woman. I felt much respect for her. And the chief priest is simply ugly -- I wanted to cut his throat!"

The master said, "Now listen: I am more interested in the chief priest -- he can be converted because he is hot. If he can be so full of hate, he can also be so full of love, because

it is the same energy that becomes hate or love. Love standing upside-down is hate -- love doing shirshasana, a headstand, is hate. But it is very easy to put a man back on his feet. As far as the wife is concerned, she is cold, ice-cold. I have no hope for her; she cannot be converted."

I totally agree with the Sufi master. Those who are against me, Zareen, why are they against me? Their hearts are stirred. Something has started happening to them, and they don't want it to happen. It is risky. I have started influencing their lives and they don't want to go with me. Their whole investment is against it. They want to avoid me, and they see that they cannot avoid me -- they are becoming heated up. Hence the hatred; hence they are inventing all kinds of lies. But I have great hope for these people -- in fact, I love these people. Sooner or later they are going to end up with me.

The real problem is with those people who are indifferent, ice-cold, neither for nor against. I would like to divide the whole humanity into two camps: the friends and the enemies. And the more friends I have the more enemies are bound to be there. There is a certain balance in it; in life everything balances. If you have so many friends, you are bound to have so many enemies; otherwise the balance will be lost. If you have more friends, you will have more enemies; the balance has to be kept. Life continuously balances itself.

I watch the whole scene and enjoy it.

Zareen, you need not be worried about it. But I can understand your concern.

You say, "There is so much nonsense about your teachings and the activities of your ashram in the press recently...."
There will be more and more every day, because more and more people are going to come to me. Millions are on the way. And the more people become interested in me and the work that is going on here, the more and more people become involved in it, the more and more people will be against it -- a kind of balance. It is how things happen in the world; it is a natural phenomenon.
And all kinds of nonsense is bound to be told, because the people who are against have never been here. If they had been here they would have not been against, so they live on rumors. And negative things have a way of their own: they spread more easily, faster, quicker, because the whole of humanity lives in negativity.
For example, just the other day I received a letter from Canada saying that the Canadian government is becoming concerned, very much concerned, about my sannyasins and the people coming to me from Canada. And they are seriously inquiring into the whole phenomenon, because they are afraid that my commune may turn into another Jonestown. Now, I feel happy, because when governments become concerned that means something is happening. When a faraway country becomes so much concerned that they are thinking of sending a team to investigate the whole phenomenon, that mean things are on the way, that I am becoming some kind of disturbance to them. I must be popping up in their dreams.
And on what grounds are they becoming so much afraid? Because one American sannyasin committed suicide, another American sannyasin went mad. These two

instances are enough.... Now, Americans are all mad! And have you seen an American who has never pondered the possibility of committing suicide? The psychologists say that every American, at least four times in his life, thinks of committing suicide. The greatest rate of suicide is in America.

Out of one hundred thousand sannyasins, one sannyasin commits suicide -- that is enough! And that too an American sannyasin. What else were you expecting from an American sannyasin? Another American goes mad...it is absolutely normal! But the negative catches our attention immediately. How many Americans have gone sane, nobody bothers. And how many Americans have been prevented from committing suicide, nobody counts. They will never be counted.

And journalists, the press, and other media, they are also only interested in the negative things. Unless you do something wrong, you are not news. George Bernard Shaw says: If a dog bites a man, it is not news. But if a man bites a dog, it is news.

Something is newsworthy only if it is outlandish, if it is eye-catching.

You can go on doing a thousand and one things and nobody will take any note. Do only one thing wrong and the whole world suddenly becomes interested in you.

And then people are very inventive. When you tell a rumor to a person you add something to it. People are creative! And when that person shares the rumor with somebody else, do you think he will share it exactly as you told him? He will give it a new color, a little more depth, a little

larger dimension. He will make it more attractive, he will exaggerate it. And it goes on and on from mouth to mouth. Rumors have a way of spreading, and everybody contributes to them. They don't have anything that relates to the facts. But this is how it always happens. And then it continues.... I will be gone and the rumors will continue, and they will go on increasing. They become independent forces; they go on growing.

I have heard:
God has the blues. Saint Peter suggests a trip to Earth to pick up a nice Greek girl, possibly in the old swan suit. God says, "No. As long as I stuck to those Greek girls it was alright. But once I made the mistake of knocking up a Jewish girl, two thousand years ago, and I'll be damned if they aren't still talking about it!"

Rumors go on and on.... And what they are doing to me is nothing uncommon; it is expected. They have always done such things to Jesus, to Socrates, to Mansoor, to Buddha, to Kabir. If they don't do these things to me, that will be a surprise. In fact, I will not feel good if they don't do these things to me. I would like to be counted with the buddhas -- and that is the only way!

Jesus decided to return to earth. He had seen that in America there was a resurgence of Jesus freaks and born-again baptists, so he thought it was a good time to come. He brought Peter along with him.
When he came to Earth he made the announcement that he was Jesus, the Son of God. No one would believe him; they

thought he was some kind of nut. So Jesus asked Peter, "How can I get them to believe me, to convince them that I am the true savior?"
Peter said, "Remember that trick you did in Galilee, when you walked across the water? I bet that would work."
So they made a press announcement that tomorrow Jesus would walk on water. On the next day, the television and newspapers were at the lake to watch Jesus walk on water. Jesus and Peter arrived and rowed out to the middle of the lake, then Jesus climbed over the side of the boat and immediately sank. When he came back up, Peter, in shock, asked, "What happened? Why did you sink?"
"Shut up, you fool!" said Jesus. "The last time I did this I didn't have these damned holes in my feet!"

Things are more difficult than they were in the time of Jesus and Buddha! But I am enjoying, I am having a good time. Zareen, don't be worried at all. My suggestion is: you should enjoy it.
You say, "It somehow infuriates me because it seems so far from the actual facts."
Don't feel infuriated, don't feel angry -- that won't help. My people have to learn to laugh at all these stupid things that are bound to become more and more intense. As my work deepens, more and more nonsense rumors will go around -- which will have nothing to do with the facts. Or, even if they have something to do with the facts, they will distort them.
People are going to invent many kinds of stories. If you become infuriated, in a way you help them. That's what they want. That's what they want! -- that if my people

become infuriated, angry, then they can crush, destroy you. And, certainly, they can crush and they can destroy you. My people are very few, a chosen few.

Don't feel infuriated; otherwise you will be playing into their hands. When such things come to your notice, have a good laugh. Learn to laugh -- respond with laughter! Laughter has to be your protection. And your laughter will make them look stupid. When somebody says something against me, have a good laugh. Pat him on the back, hug him! Give him a good kiss!

That's what Jesus means, really: love your enemies. But I know, it is easy to love your enemies -- it is more difficult to love your neighbors. So I say, just as Jesus says, again: Love your neighbors. They are the same people! Hug your neighbors; don't just go on loving them spiritually -- express it. When somebody is saying some nonsense thing about me, express your love. Let him feel puzzled -- let him feel either he is mad or you are mad. He will never be able to figure it out, what happened -- why you hugged him. He was not saying such nice things about your master...why did you hug him? That might give him a longing to come and see the master too. When the disciple is doing such a thing it is worth taking the trouble to go and see what is happening there.

Zareen, no need to be angry.

And you say, "Letters in response to the contrary are not being published."

They will not be published, because the newspapers, the television, the radio, they are in the hands of the vested interests. They will publish everything that is against me, because some newspaper is owned by a Hindu, some

newspaper is owned by a Jaina, some newspaper is owned by a Mohammedan, some newspaper is owned by a Christian -- and all the newspapers are owned by different kinds of politicians. Your letters will not be published. These things have to be taken for granted.
You say, "Now, I know this must make no difference whatsoever to you. Is this then what Jesus means when he says to turn the other cheek?"
Yes, that's exactly what Jesus means. That's the best way to transform people, to convert people. The best possible way to convert people to your own way is to give the other cheek. Love them. Laugh at their nonsensical statements. Enjoy their rumors. Make jokes out of them, and make them puzzled.
If you can do that much, you are doing my work, Zareen. Enough for today.

The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 1

Chapter #3
Chapter title: True or false
23 June 1979 am in Buddha Hall

MISTAKING THE FALSE FOR THE TRUE
AND THE TRUE FOR THE FALSE,
YOU OVERLOOK THE HEART
AND FILL YOURSELF WITH DESIRE.

SEE THE FALSE AS FALSE,
THE TRUE AS TRUE.

LOOK INTO YOUR HEART.
FOLLOW YOUR NATURE.

AN UNREFLECTING MIND IS A POOR ROOF.
PASSION, LIKE THE RAIN, FLOODS THE HOUSE.
BUT IF THE ROOF IS STRONG, THERE IS SHELTER.

WHOEVER FOLLOWS IMPURE THOUGHTS
SUFFERS IN THIS WORLD AND THE NEXT.
IN BOTH WORLDS HE SUFFERS,
AND HOW GREATLY,
WHEN HE SEES THE WRONG HE HAS DONE.

BUT WHOEVER FOLLOWS THE LAW
IS JOYFUL HERE AND JOYFUL THERE.
IN BOTH WORLDS HE REJOICES,
AND HOW GREATLY,
WHEN HE SEES THE GOOD HE HAS DONE.

FOR GREAT IS THE HARVEST IN THIS WORLD,
AND GREATER STILL IN THE NEXT.

HOWEVER MANY HOLY WORDS YOU READ,
HOWEVER MANY YOU SPEAK,
WHAT GOOD WILL THEY DO YOU
IF YOU DO NOT ACT UPON THEM?
ARE YOU A SHEPHERD
WHO COUNTS ANOTHER MAN'S SHEEP,
NEVER SHARING THE WAY?
READ AS FEW WORDS AS YOU LIKE
AND SPEAK FEWER.

BUT ACT UPON THE LAW.

GIVE UP THE OLD WAYS --
PASSION, ENMITY, FOLLY.
KNOW THE TRUTH AND FIND PEACE.
SHARE THE WAY.

Truth is. It needs no effort on your part to invent it. Truth has to be discovered, not invented. And what is hindering us from discovering it? We have been taught many lies, mountains of lies. Those are the barriers which go on falsifying the truth, which do not allow our hearts to reflect that which is.

Truth is not a logical conclusion. Truth is existence, reality. It is already here -- it has always been here. Only truth exists. Then why cannot we find it? How do we manage not to find it? Because from the very childhood we are taught falsities, prejudices, ideologies, religions, philosophies...all lead you astray.

Truth is not an idea. You need not be a Hindu to know it, or a Mohammedan, or a Christian. If you are a Hindu you will never know it; your very being a Hindu will keep you blind. What do we mean when we say, "I am a Hindu, or a Mohammedan, or a Jew"? We mean, "I have already got ideas about truth -- ideas from the Bible or the Koran or the Gita, but I have got ideas already. I don't know the truth, but I know much about it." And that knowing much about it is the only problem that has to be solved.

Once you drop your ideas about truth you will be confronting it, within and without both. You will be facing it -- because there is nothing else!

But the parents, the society, the state, the church, the educational system, they all depend on lies. As the child is born they start trapping it into lies. And the child is helpless. He cannot escape his parents, he is utterly dependent. You can exploit his dependence...and it has been exploited down the ages.

Nobody has been exploited so much as children -- neither the proletariat nor women, nobody has been exploited so much and so deeply and so destructively as the innocent children. Because they are helpless and dependent they have to learn whatsoever you teach them. They have to imbibe all the falsehoods that you go on forcing upon them. It is a question of survival for them -- they cannot survive without you. It is a question of life and death! They have to be Hindus, they have to be Mohammedans, they have to be Jainas, they have to be Buddhists, they have to be communists. Whatsoever you are interested in putting into their minds, you go on putting it in.

Instead of making them more alert, more aware, more alive, more reflective, instead of making them more mirrorlike, pure, you make them full of ideas...layers and layers of dust. And then it becomes impossible for them to see that which is. They start seeing that which is not and they stop seeing that which is.

Hence, to be really religious means a rebirth: again becoming like a child, dropping all that the society has given to you.

Religion is a rebellion -- a rebellion against all that has been forced upon you, a rebellion against being reduced to a computer. Just look inside! Whatsoever you know, you have been told; it is not your knowing, it is not authentic.

How can it be authentic if it is not yours? You are not a witness to it, you are just a victim -- a victim of circumstances.

It is just an accident to be born in India or to be born in England. It is just an accident to be born in a Hindu family or in a Christian family. Because of these accidents your essential nature has been lost -- you have been forced to lose it. If you want to regain it you will have to be reborn. That's precisely what the meaning is when Jesus says to Nicodemus, "Unless you are born again you will not enter into the Kingdom of God." He does not mean that you actually have to die, commit suicide, and then be born again. That won't help, because again you will be born to some parents in a certain society, within a certain church, and again the same stupidity is going to be done to you. Jesus means by 'rebirth' that deliberately, consciously, now you are capable of dropping all that has been taught to you. Drop your knowledge and become innocent. And that is the only way to become innocent. Knowledge is a contamination. To be in a state of not-knowing is innocence, and to function from that state is the only way to know the truth.

Meditate over these tremendously significant sutras of Gautama the Buddha. He says:

MISTAKING THE FALSE FOR THE TRUE
AND THE TRUE FOR THE FALSE,
YOU OVERLOOK THE HEART
AND FILL YOURSELF WITH DESIRE.

Mind is nothing but desire. The heart knows no desire. You will be surprised to hear it, that all desires belong to the head. The heart lives in the present; it pulsates, beats, in the herenow. It knows nothing of the past and it knows nothing of the future. It is always now, here.

And I am not talking about a certain philosophy. I am simply stating a fact so simple you can observe it within yourself: your heart is beating now. It cannot beat in the past, it cannot beat in the future. The heart only knows the present, hence it is utterly pure. It is not polluted by the past memories, by knowledge, by experience, by all that you have been told and taught, by the scriptures, by the traditions. It knows nothing of all that nonsense! And it knows nothing of the future, of the morrow. For it, past exists no more, the future not yet. It is utterly here. It is immediate.

But the mind is just the opposite of the heart: the mind is never now, here. Either it thinks of beautiful experiences of the past or it desires the same beautiful experiences in the future. It goes on shuttling between past and future, it never stops at the present. It is utterly unaware of the present. For the mind, the present exists not. See the point: the present is the only thing that exists, but for the mind the present is the only thing that exists not. Past is nonexistential, future is nonexistential, but those are the things which are existential for the mind.

The head is the problem...and the heart is the solution. The child functions from the heart. As you start growing, you start moving from the heart to the head. When you graduate from the university you have completely forgotten about the heart. You are hung up in the head, your whole energy

has moved to the head. Now you don't know anything of reality. You are full of garbage -- scholarly garbage, academic nonsense. You may be a Ph.D., a D.Litt. You know much, knowing nothing at all! -- because real knowing happens in the heart, not in the head. And the universities exist to distract your energies from the heart to the head.

All the universities in the world up to now have been enemies of humanity. Their whole function is to serve the state and the church. They are agents of the status quo, they are agents of the vested interests. They don't serve you, they serve the powers, the masters, the oppressors, the exploiters. Whosoever happens to be in power the universities serve. They are not in the service of humanity yet.

If they were really in the service of humanity, then the university would be the place to learn rebellion. The university would create revolutionaries. The university would not create conventionalists, conformists; the university would create nonconformists, nonconventional people. It would create rebels -- adventurous, ready to risk their lives for truth. That has not happened yet.

It is a sad fact that in the name of education something ugly is continued, something very ugly. Behind a facade, something very criminal continues. And this is the crime: that they divert your energies from the heart to the head, they destroy your capacity to love and they force you to learn logic. Logic is more important than love for them, thinking is more important than sensitivity. This is just putting the bullocks behind the cart. It is totally topsy-turvy.

That's why humanity is in such a mess: the untrue seems to be true and the true seems to be untrue. They have succeeded in distorting your vision. The buddhas have been fighting against all these vested interests.

Buddha says: MISTAKING THE FALSE FOR THE TRUE AND THE TRUE FOR THE FALSE, YOU OVERLOOK THE HEART AND FILL YOURSELF WITH DESIRE.

Mind is desire, and you go on filling yourself with more and more desire, more and more ambition, more and more longing for power, prestige, wealth. And you completely forget that there is a heart beating within you which already lives in God, which is already part of the ultimate law -- aes dhammo sanantano -- which is already part of the inexhaustible, eternal law. You are joined from the heart to God. Your hearts are the roots in the soil of God.

Your hearts are still being nourished by God, by truth, but you are not there. You have vacated the place. You live in your head. Day in, day out, you live in your head; you never descend from there. Even in the night while asleep you go on rumbling in the head...dreams, and dreams upon dreams. In the day thoughts, in the night dreams. They are not different.

The dream is only a translation of thinking in the language of sleep, and vice versa: thinking is nothing but a translation of dreaming in the language of the day. You go on moving between these two: dreaming and thinking. Both are desiring. What do you think? What is there to think except desire? And what do you dream except desire?

Buddha says the false appears to be true because you have become false to your own truth, to your own heart. Come back to the heart, and then you will be able to know the

truth as the truth and the false as the false. That is enlightenment, that is coming home.

SEE THE FALSE AS FALSE.

But from where to begin? Begin from seeing the false as the false. That's why all the buddhas appear to be negative, all buddhas appear to be destructive. They negate. Jesus negates. He says again and again: It has been told to you in the past, but I say to you.... And he changes the whole standpoint.

For example, he says: It has been told to you in the past that tit for tat is the law. If somebody throws a brick at you, react by throwing a rock. But I say unto you, if somebody hits you on one cheek, give him the other cheek too. And if somebody takes away your coat, give him your shirt too. And if somebody forces you to go one mile with him, go two miles.

Mohammed is against all kinds of images of God, because his people were worshipping for centuries; they had three hundred and sixty-five gods -- one god for every day of the year. The Kaaba of Mohammed's days was one of the greatest temples on the earth -- dedicated to three hundred and sixty-five gods! Mohammed destroyed all those idols. It looks negative....

Buddha says: There is no truth in the Vedas, in the Upanishads. Beware of beautiful words, beware of philosophic speculation. Don't waste your time with hairsplitting, with logic. Be silent! Throw the Vedas out of your head, only then can you be silent. He looks negative,

he looks nihilistic, he look dangerous -- but that is the only way you can be helped.
You have to be told the false is false. You have to begin with this: neti, neti -- neither this nor that. The master has to say to you, "This is false, that is false." He has to go on pointing out to you whatsoever is false first, because when you have known all that is false, suddenly a transformation happens in your consciousness. When you have become aware of the false, you start becoming aware of the true. You cannot be taught what is truth, but you can certainly be taught what is not truth. You have been conditioned, you can be unconditioned. You have been hypnotized -- as Hindus, Mohammedans, Christians, Jainas.... The function of a master is to dehypnotize you. Once you are dehypnotized, suddenly you will be able to see the truth. The truth need not be taught.
SEE THE FALSE AS FALSE, THE TRUE AS TRUE.

LOOK INTO YOUR HEART.
FOLLOW YOUR NATURE.

One of the most significant statements ever: LOOK INTO YOUR HEART. FOLLOW YOUR NATURE. He is not saying follow scriptures. He is not saying follow me. He is not saying follow certain rules of conduct. He is not teaching you any morality. He is not trying to create a certain character around you, because all characters are beautiful prison cells. He is not giving you a certain way of life. Rather he is giving you courage, encouragement, to follow your own nature. He wants you to be brave enough to listen to your own heart and go accordingly.

"Follow your nature" means flow with yourself. You are the scripture...and hidden deep down within you is a still, small voice. If you become silent you will be guided from there.

The master has only to make you aware of your inner master. Then his function is fulfilled. Then he can leave you to yourself; he can throw you back upon yourself. A master is not to enslave the disciple; a master is to free him, to give him total freedom. And this is the only possibility of attaining total freedom: FOLLOW YOUR NATURE. By "nature" Buddha means dhamma. Just as it is the nature of water to flow downwards and it is the nature of fire to rise upwards, so there is a certain nature hidden in you. If all the conditionings that have been put around you by the society are removed, suddenly you will discover your nature. Your nature has become God. Aes dhammo sanantano -- this is the eternal, inexhaustible law: your nature is to become God.

Man is a potential god -- a bodhisattva. Man is meant to become a god. Less than that won't satisfy you, less than that is of no use. You can have all the money in the world, all the power, all the prestige possible, and still you will remain empty -- unless your divine nature flowers, opens its buds, unless you become a lotus, a one-thousand-petaled lotus, unless your divinity is revealed to you, you can never be contented.

The ordinary religious person is told to remain satisfied, contented, with whatsoever is the case. The so-called religious saints go on teaching people: Be satisfied. Satisfaction is one of their fundamental teachings. That is not the way of the true masters.

The true master creates discontent in you -- and such a discontent that nothing of this world can ever satisfy it. He creates such a longing in you, that unless you attain to the ultimate you will remain aflame, afire. He creates pain in your heart, he creates anguish...because life is slipping by every moment, and each moment gone is gone forever, and you have not attained to God yet, and one day is over.

He creates such a deep longing in you, such pain in the heart! He creates tears in your eyes, because only through such divine discontent will you move, will you take the quantum leap, the ultimate jump into the unknown. It is only through such divine discontent that you will gather together all your energies, and you will risk, and you will go on the ultimate adventure of finding who you are.

Follow your own nature. Your nature is consciousness. But you have been told by the priests: follow certain rules of conduct, the ten commandments, follow certain principles -- not your nature. Priests are very much afraid of your nature, because if you follow your nature you will get out of their grip, you will be a slave no more. You won't go to the churches and the temples and the mosques, and you won't listen to your stupid priests, politicians, the so-called leaders. I call them "so-called leaders" because what is actually happening is that blind people are leading other blind people.

You won't listen to them anymore if you listen to your own nature. If you know your own inner voice you will become free. Your inner voice has to be crushed, destroyed, utterly destroyed -- at least distorted so much that even if you hear it you can't understand it. And they have succeeded. Unless you struggle hard against them there is no possibility of

succeeding. Their exploitation is so old, their oppression is so ancient, their strategies are so cunning...and they have infinite power in their hands. And what are you against them as an individual?

But if you go in, if you listen to your heart, you will attain to such power that no power on the earth can enslave you again.

FOLLOW YOUR NATURE.... But how to follow your nature if you don't know what it is? And you are not allowed to know it! You are given precise instructions as to what to do: what to eat, when to get up in the morning, when to go to bed. You have been given precise instructions. Those instructions, if followed, make you a slave. If not followed, they make you a criminal. If followed, you become a saint -- but a slave. People will worship you, respect you, but all that respect is a mutual understanding: "If you follow our instructions, we will respect you. If you don't follow, you will be thrown into jail."

Either you are made a slave spiritually or a prisoner physically: these are the two alternatives the society gives to you. And it never lets you become aware that there is a source of infinite guidance within you, from where God speaks.

God still speaks, he has not stopped speaking. He is not partial -- it is not that he spoke to Mohammed and to Moses and he does not speak to you. He is speaking to you as much as he was speaking to Mohammed. The only difference is, Mohammed was ready to listen and you are not ready to listen. Mohammed was available and you are not available.

To become available to your inner nature is what I call meditation.

Remember these two words. 'Character' is an invention of the politicians and the priests; it is a conspiracy against you. Consciousness is your nature. Yes, a man of consciousness has a certain character, but that character follows his consciousness. It is not imposed by anybody else on him; it is his own decision. And he is not encaged in it; he is totally free to change it any moment. As circumstances change, his consciousness gives him different directions and he changes his character.

The man of character -- the so-called man of character -- is encaged. Even if circumstances change he goes on repeating the same character, although it is no longer relevant, it does not fit. The context in which it was meaningful has disappeared, but he goes on repeating the same nonsense. He is like a parrot. He is a machine: he does not respond, he only reacts.

A man of consciousness responds, and his responses are spontaneous. He is mirrorlike: he reflects whatsoever confronts him. And out of this spontaneity, out of this consciousness, a new kind of action is born. That action never creates any bondage, any karma. That action frees you. You remain a freedom if you listen to your nature.

But this simple advice seems to be very difficult for people. It should be the simplest thing in the world. Each child is born following his nature, but as you grow up, slowly you lose contact with it -- you are forced to lose contact with it. The contact can be regained, it can be rediscovered. Later on, when you become very knowledgeable, encaged in a

certain character, utterly blind to your own heart and nature, you start asking such questions.

Just the other day Prem Vijen asked:
"Beloved Master, what do you mean when you say 'Go in'?" Such a simple statement -- "Go in" -- and you ask me, "What do you mean?" Can't you understand these simple words, 'go in'? I know you understand the words, but going in has become so difficult because you have been taught only how to go out. You can only go out, you only know how to go out. Your consciousness has been turned towards others; it has forgotten the way to itself. You go on knocking on others' doors, and whenever it is said to you, "Go home," you say, "What do you mean by 'going home'?" You know only others' houses, but you don't know your own home. And you are carrying it within yourself. You have been forced to become extroverts. One has to learn again ways of inwardness.
Soren Kierkegaard has said: Religion means inwardness -- going into your own interiority. But the simple words, 'go in', have become so difficult to understand. Mind only knows how to go out; it has no reverse gear in it.
I have heard that when Ford made his first cars they had no reverse gear. It was a later addition. Without a reverse gear it was really a problem: whenever you wanted to come back you had to go miles unnecessarily, you had to go round. Even if you wanted to go a few feet back, you might have to take a journey of miles. Then Ford became aware that a reverse gear was needed.
I am teaching you here that the reverse gear is there, built in, you have just forgotten about it. You know how to go

out. Nobody asks, "What does it mean when you say 'Go out'?" But everybody wants to ask, "What do you mean when you say 'Go in'?" Simple words!

Thinking is going out: nonthinking is going in. Think, and you have started moving away from yourself. Thought is the way leading you farther away. Thought is a project. No-thought...and suddenly you are in. Without thought you cannot go out, without desire you cannot go out. You need the fuel of desire and the vehicle of thought to go out. Sitting silently, doing nothing...not even thinking, not even desiring...and where will you be?

Going in is not really going in. It is simply stopping going out...and suddenly you find yourself in.

Prem Vijen, you need not go in because if you go you will always go out. Going means going out. Stop going! Stop going anywhere! Can't you sit silently without going anywhere? Yes, physically you can sit, that is not very difficult. You can learn a yoga posture and you can make your body almost a statue, but the problem is -- what are you doing inside? Desires, thoughts, memories, imagination, all kinds of projects? -- stop them too.

How to stop them? Just become indifferent to them, unconcerned. Even if they are there, don't pay attention to them. Even if they are there, don't give them any importance. Even if they are there, let them be. You sit silently inside -- watching. Remember that word 'watching' -- witnessing, just being alert.

And as watching grows, becomes deeper, the same energy that was becoming desires and thoughts and memories and imagination -- the same energy is absorbed in the new depth. The same energy is used by this deepening

inwardness. And you will know what it means when I say "Go in."
Don't start looking in the dictionaries or in the ENCYCLOPAEDIA BRITANNICA. It is not a question of words! Words are simple to understand; when I say "Go in," that's exactly what I mean -- go in! Don't start asking about the words -- listen to the hidden message; otherwise you will miss the train. What do I mean by 'missing the train'?

Let me tell you a story:
A naive farmer's wife arrived at Paddington Station to catch a train, and having some time to spare before the train arrived, she thought she would check out her weight on a nearby weighing machine.
She got on, put in a penny and out popped a card which read, "You weigh one hundred and fifty pounds and in five minutes from now you will fart." Red with embarrassment and feeling a little outraged, she got off the scale and hurried away. Five minutes later, to her total amazement, she farted loud and long.
Very embarrassed, but intrigued, she made her way back to the machine to see what it had to say this time. In went the penny -- out came the card: "You still weigh one hundred and fifty pounds and in five minutes from now you will be raped." She jumped off the machine in disgust and walked firmly away.
A newspaper salesman, who was having a particularly slack morning, saw this country bumpkin and thought to have some fun, so before she knew what was happening, she was pulled behind the counter and raped. Emerging a

few minutes later in a terrible state, with her hat on one side, the heel of her shoe broken, and in a total state of shock, she staggered back to the machine and blindly put in a penny. Out came the card: "You still weigh one hundred and fifty pounds, and with all this farting and fucking, you've missed the train!"

If you become too much interested in words -- "What does it mean to go in? What does it mean, verbally, linguistically?" -- Vijen, you are going to miss the train. Don't waste time with words!

And it is a particularly new kind of disease that has gripped the intellectuals of the world. For at least fifty years the philosophical world has become too much interested in words, linguistic analysis. They don't ask anymore what God is. They don't ask anymore whether God exists or not. The contemporary philosophers ask, "What does it mean when you use the word 'God'?" It is not a question of whether God exists or not. It is not a question of what God is. It is not a question of how to attain God. Now the question has taken a very new turn: "What do you mean when you use the word 'God'?"

What do you mean when you use the word 'rose'? Now it is easy: you can take hold of the philosopher, force him to go to the garden, and you can show him the rose: "This is what I mean when I use the word 'rose'." But this cannot be done with the word 'God' -- and this cannot be done with the word 'meditation' and this cannot be done with the words 'going in'. These are subtle phenomena. Don't become linguistically interested. I am not here to teach you linguistic analysis.

My whole approach is existential. If you really want to know what it means to go in, go in! And the way is: watch your thoughts and don't get identified with them. Just remain a watcher, utterly indifferent, neither for nor against. Don't judge, because every judgment brings identification. Don't say, "These thoughts are wrong," and don't say, "These thoughts are good." Don't comment on the thoughts. Just let them pass as if it is just traffic passing by, and you are standing by the side of the road unconcerned, looking at the traffic.
It does not matter what is passing by -- a bus, a truck, a bicycle. If you can watch the thought process of your mind with such unconcern, with such detachment, that moment is not very far away when one day the whole traffic disappears...because the traffic can exist only if you go on giving energy to it. If you stop giving energy to it.... And that's what watching is: stopping giving energy to it, stopping energy moving into the traffic. It is your energy that makes those thoughts move. When your energy is not coming they start falling; they cannot stand on their own. And when the road of the mind is utterly empty, you are in. That's what I mean, Vijen, when I say "Go in." And that's what Buddha means when he says: FOLLOW YOUR NATURE.

AN UNREFLECTING MIND IS A POOR ROOF.
PASSION, LIKE THE RAIN, FLOODS THE HOUSE.
BUT IF THE ROOF IS STRONG, THERE IS SHELTER.

AN UNREFLECTING MIND.... Buddha does not mean by "reflection" thinking, mind you. By "reflection" he simply

means reflection, not thinking -- reflection in the sense that a mirror reflects. When you come before a mirror, the mirror is not thinking about you. The mirror simply mirrors! That mirroring is what Buddha means.

AN UNREFLECTING MIND -- a mind that has forgotten how to mirror -- IS A POOR ROOF. And we have forgotten how to mirror. We know how to think, we don't know how to reflect.

Just think of a child: a child is born, for the first time a child opens his eyes -- he will see the trees, but he will not be able to say to himself, "These are trees." He will see light, but he will not be able to say within himself, "This is electric light." He will see the redness of the rose, but he will not be able to say, "This is a roseflower and the color is red." He will see everything, but he will not say anything inside. That is mirroring: he will simply mirror. The trees will still be green, in fact far greener than they will ever be again, because the mirror is completely pure, crystalline. The mirror has no dust...thoughts gather dust.

When you go into the garden and you say, "The rose is beautiful," you may not even be seeing the rose. You may be simply repeating a cliche. Because you have heard it said that the roses are beautiful you are saying it. Seeing a beautiful sunset, you may not be seeing it, you may not be attentive, you may not be aware...but unconsciously, automatically, you simply assert, "It is a beautiful sunset." You don't mean it at all; you are simply saying it because you have been told. You are repeating somebody else's statement. If you watch deeply, you may even be able to find whose statement this is -- your mother's, your father's, your teacher's, your friend's. If you watch closely you may

be able to hear the exact voice of who had said for the first time that the sunset is beautiful...and you are simply repeating it. You have not seen this sunset. You have not seen the thisness, the present, the immediate beauty of it.
Buddha says: AN UNREFLECTING MIND IS A POOR ROOF. PASSION, LIKE THE RAIN, FLOODS THE HOUSE.
A mind that has forgotten how to mirror the truth is always a victim of desire -- a victim of the head, a victim of the future, a victim of constant longing for this and for that. And no desire can ever be fulfilled. By the time one desire is fulfilled it has created ten more desires.
And this goes on and on...and life is short, and death may knock you down any moment.
You come into the world to be fulfilled, but you go empty-handed, you go unfulfilled. Hence you will have to come again. Unless you learn the lesson you will have to be thrown back again and again into some womb, you will have to be reborn. You will be sent back to the school. Millions of times you have been sent, and if you don't pay attention, this life also you are going to miss the train.
Be aware! Start cleansing your mirror so that you can reflect.
PASSION, LIKE THE RAIN, FLOODS THE HOUSE.
BUT IF THE ROOF IS STRONG, THERE IS SHELTER.
If you know how to reflect reality there is shelter. You are secure because you are in God, because you are part of truth.

WHOEVER FOLLOWS IMPURE THOUGHTS
SUFFERS IN THIS WORLD AND THE NEXT.

IN BOTH WORLDS HE SUFFERS,
AND HOW GREATLY,
WHEN HE SEES THE WRONG HE HAS DONE.

All thoughts are impure. A thought cannot be pure. So let me remind you again: whenever Buddha says "impure thoughts" he means thoughts. He uses the adjective 'impure' to emphasize it, because if he simply says "thoughts" you may not understand rightly. So he says "impure thoughts," but he always means thoughts. All thoughts are impure, because a thought means you are thinking of the other, a desire has arisen. And whenever he says "a pure thought" he means a no-thought.
Only a no-thought is pure, because then you are utterly yourself, alone, nothing interfering.
Jean-Paul Sartre says: The other is hell. And he is right in a way, because whenever you are thinking of the other you are in hell. And all thoughts are addressed to others. When you are in a state of no-thought you are alone, and aloneness is purity. And in that aloneness happens all that is worth happening.

BUT WHOEVER FOLLOWS THE LAW
IS JOYFUL HERE AND JOYFUL THERE.
IN BOTH WORLDS HE REJOICES,
AND HOW GREATLY,
WHEN HE SEES THE GOOD HE HAS DONE.

Retrospectively, when you see that you have created a hell for yourself -- nobody else is responsible but you -- when you see this you will suffer very much, terribly. There is

not even an excuse, you cannot throw the responsibility on somebody else's shoulders: it is your responsibility. Suffering will be there and more so, more intensely so, because you will feel also, "I have been foolish. Nobody has made me suffer. It is because of my thoughts. It is because of my becoming more and more extrovert, becoming more and more interested in things of the outside, that I have suffered. I am solely responsible." This will give you great anguish -- and vice versa. If you follow the law, dhamma, tao, if you follow your innermost core, your nature, you will be joyful here and there. Buddha is not much concerned with the "there." But he says if you are joyful here you are bound to be joyful there. If this moment you are rejoicing, the next moment you will be rejoicing more, because the next moment is going to be born out of this moment.

And your bliss gathers momentum, it is accumulative. If this moment you are suffering, the next moment you will be suffering more, because you are learning the ways of suffering, you are becoming habituated to suffering. You will create more suffering the next moment because you are becoming more efficient in creating it. So whatsoever the nature of this moment is, it is going to be strengthened more, deepened, in the next.

But Buddha is not concerned with the next moment at all. He is simply stating a fact.

Don't be bothered with the next moment, or the next life, or the next world. Make this moment rejoicing, make this moment a moment of bliss, and the next will follow it, and the next life, and the next world. And everything that you are this moment is going to become deepened more and

more. And when you see that you are responsible for your bliss, your bliss will be far more. When you see that nobody has given it to you, that you have not been a beggar, that it is not a gift from somebody else -- because nobody has given it to you, nobody can take it away -- when you see this you will be far happier.

FOR GREAT IS THE HARVEST IN THIS WORLD,
AND GREATER STILL IN THE NEXT.

HOWEVER MANY HOLY WORDS YOU READ,
HOWEVER MANY YOU SPEAK,
WHAT GOOD WILL THEY DO YOU
IF YOU DO NOT ACT UPON THEM?

But the whole thing depends on action. It is not a question of just thinking beautiful thoughts. It is not just a question of beautiful desires -- of God, of paradise, of moksha. It is not a question of thinking of meditation, but acting, doing something about it. Action and only action can help. You have to become involved, you have to become committed. Many people come to me and say, "We love your discourses, but we don't want to meditate and we don't want to become sannyasins. Isn't it enough," they ask, "just to listen to your beautiful discourses?" It is utterly futile! Just to listen to my discourses is very stupid. If you are not going to act, don't waste time -- it is an exercise in futility! If you just go on listening to me and never act, my words may be soothing, my words may be consoling, my words may be convincing, you may enjoy what I am saying intellectually, you may enjoy the space that is created by

my presence, but this alone is not going to help. Action is absolutely needed.

If you are convinced of some truth, act upon it, and act immediately! -- because mind is very cunning, and the greatest cunningness of the mind is postponement. It says, "Tomorrow..." and tomorrow never comes. It says, "Yes, we are going to meditate one day. Let us first understand what meditation is." And then you can go on understanding what meditation is your whole life, and you will never act. And unless you act nothing is ever going to happen, no transformation is going to happen.

Sannyas is a commitment. It is actively showing your love towards me. It is getting involved with my destiny. It is entering into my boat. It is dangerous -- it is safer to stand on the bank and listen. Then it is a kind of entertainment -- a spiritual entertainment! -- but utterly useless, just killing time.

And that's what people go on doing in the so-called spiritual gatherings -- satsangs. They go to the Sunday sermon and they listen very attentively and very seriously, but out of the church it has no effect on their lives. In fact, even the preacher is not affected by what he is saying. It is his business to say these things, he is paid for it. He is a professional. And it is a formality for the listeners -- just to have a good reputation in the community, that they are religious, that they go to the church every Sunday. And it is a beautiful social gathering too -- meeting people, talking to people, gossiping. It gives a good opportunity -- in the name of religion. A social gathering! It is an old kind of Rotary Club, Lions Club, etcetera. It does not matter, it does not change their lives.

Once I used to live in the neighborhood of a Christian priest, a very eloquent speaker. One day he was showing his garden to me, and we started talking about this and that. And he said, "Can you help my son?"
I said, "What is the matter with your son?"
He said, "He has started taking my sermons too seriously. I have to preach and I have to talk about great things. He comes to listen and he has started to take them too seriously. Now he does not want to get married; he wants to become a holy man. Can't you help him?"
"I can -- that's my business! I can help -- I help holy people to become unholy again. You send him to me. I will pull him down."
"But listen," the priest said, "he is taking my words too seriously." Even the priest does not mean that anybody should take his words too seriously -- and nobody ever does except a few foolish people.

But when you are around a Buddha, a Jesus, a Krishna, a Mohammed, it is not a question of taking their words seriously. It is a question of seeing the authenticity of their words and then acting upon it. If it stirs your heart, if a bell starts ringing in your heart, then don't stop it. Then follow, then go deeper into it, because that is the only way to be transformed. That is the only way to know the eternal -- aes dhammo sanantano. That is the only way to know the eternal harmony of existence.
And to know the eternal harmony is to know bliss, is to know God, is to go beyond time, is to go beyond death, is to go beyond misery.

Two women are talking in a tea room at four o'clock, over large gooey ice-cream sundaes and little sugary cakes. They have not seen each other since high-school days, and one is bragging about her very advantageous marriage.
"My husband buys me whole new sets of diamonds when the ones I have get dirty," she says. "I never even bother to clean them."
"Fantastic!" says the other women.
"Yes," says the first, "we get a new car every two months. None of this hire-purchase stuff! My husband buys them outright, and we give them to the Negro gardener and houseman and like that for presents."
"Fantastic!" says the other.
"And our house," pursues the first, "well, what's the use of talking about it? It's just...."
"Fantastic!" finishes the other.
"Yes, and tell me, what are you doing nowadays?" says the first woman.
"I go to Charm School," says the other.
"Charm School? Why, how quaint! What do you learn there?"
"Well, we learn to say 'Fantastic' instead of 'Bullshit'!"

You can start calling bullshit "fantastic," but it makes no difference. You can learn religious, spiritual garbage.... There are many people here too who are very expert in so-called esoteric jargon. They always talk of so many planes, so many bodies, so many centers...and they talk so seriously that it seems they know what they are talking about. Avoid esoteric garbage! Avoid esoteric knowledge!

It is not knowledge, it is just to befool people. If you are interested in such things you should read the great literature that has been created by theosophists.
Anything goes, you just have to talk in such a way that it seems otherworldly. It can neither be proved nor disproved. Now how can you prove how many planes there are? Seven or thirteen?

One man came to me. His religious sect believes in fourteen planes, and he had a chart, he had brought the chart. Mahavira has attained only to the fifth plane, Buddha to the sixth, Kabir, Nanak, to the ninth -- because he was a Punjabi he had been a little generous with Nanak and Kabir. But his own Radhaswami guru, he has attained to the fourteenth! Even Buddha is just hanging around the sixth! And Mohammed, do you know where Mohammed is? -- just the third! A Hindu and a Punjabi, how can you allow Mohammed to go beyond the third? He keeps him third-rate. Jesus he is a little more generous with -- on the fourth; he places Jesus on the fourth. But his own guru -- nobody knows about his guru -- he has reached the fourteenth! The fourteenth is called satch-khand -- the plane of truth.
So I asked him, "What about the other thirteen?"
He said, "They are just coming closer and closer to truth, only approximately true."
Now, can there be an approximate truth? Either something is true or something is not true. Either I am here in the chair or I am not in the chair -- I cannot be approximately in the chair. So "approximate truth" is a beautiful name for a lie.

He had come to ask me what my opinion is about the fourteen planes. I said, "I have reached the fifteenth. And just as you are asking about the planes, your Radhaswami guru asks me again and again how to enter into the fifteenth."
He was very angry. He said, "Never heard about the fifteenth plane!"
I said, "How can you hear? Your guru has only reached the fourteenth, so you have heard about fourteen. But I have reached the fifteenth!"
Just nonsense! But it can be presented in such a way that it looks very spiritual. Avoid!

Buddha says: HOWEVER MANY HOLY WORDS YOU READ, HOWEVER MANY YOU SPEAK, WHAT GOOD WILL THEY DO YOU IF YOU DO NOT ACT UPON THEM?
Belief remains in the world of words. It is trust, it is deep trust, that takes you into action. Action is risky. To talk about the other shore is simple, but to swim to the other shore is dangerous, because no map exists. In fact nobody can be certain about the other shore, whether it exists or not.
Just ordinary belief won't do. Unless you have a tremendous trust in life, unless you have a tremendous trust in your own inner voice, you can't go on the journey of the uncharted sea.
But only action will prove that you trust, and only action can transform you.

ARE YOU A SHEPHERD

WHO COUNTS ANOTHER MAN'S SHEEP, NEVER SHARING THE WAY?

Buddha used to say it again and again: that there are foolish people who go on counting other people's cows -- that this man has fifteen cows, this man has thirteen cows -- and they themselves don't have a single one! What is the point of counting other people's cows or sheep? It is not going to feed you, it is not going to nourish you. It is a sheer wastage of time!

But this is what happens in the name of religion. What the Vedas say...people waste their whole lives in trying to decipher the meaning of the Vedas. There are people who have wasted their whole lives in finding out the true meaning of the Bible. This is counting other people's sheep!

You can go in and you can hear the Bible arising there -- as Jesus heard it. Jesus has no privilege over you. Nobody is privileged! Before the eternal law, before dhamma, everybody is equal. In this world everybody is unequal and can never be equal. In this world communism is impossible.

But in the inner world everybody is equal -- only communism is possible. Communism is an inner phenomenon. The efforts that are being made to make the outer world a communist world are futile; it cannot happen in the very nature of things.

In Soviet Russia now the old classes are not there, but new classes have come up. Old classes are replaced by new classes. First there were the proletariat and the bourgeoisie; now there are the people who rule, the rulers, the

Communist Party members, and the people who are ruled. It is the same game played in different names.
In the outer world communism is impossible. Inequality is the law; everybody is unequal in the outer world. Somebody is stronger than you, somebody is more intelligent, somebody is more beautiful, somebody is talented, somebody is a genius.... People are different, and they cannot be forced to be equal; that will be destroying humanity. They will remain unequal.
But in the inner, as you move inwards, inequality starts disappearing. At the innermost core there is absolute equality. Communism is an inner phenomenon.
That's why I am going to call my new ashram a commune. Communism comes from the word 'commune'. It is going to be an inner equality. People will remain different, as much as possible; in fact, as far as the outside world is concerned, everybody should have his unique individuality, his own flavor, his own signature. On the outside everybody should be allowed absolute freedom to be himself. In the inner, the ego disappears, the personality disappears, there is only pure consciousness. And two consciousnesses are not higher or lower. There is no hierarchy.
Don't go on counting other people's sheep. Go in! Don't go on reading scriptures. Go in! Don't go on listening to others' words. Share the way! If you come across a buddha you are fortunate. If you fall in love with a buddha you are blessed. Don't just go on listening to his words. Follow the way, share the way! Look where he is pointing, don't start worshipping his finger. Look at the moon!

READ AS FEW WORDS AS YOU LIKE
AND SPEAK FEWER.
BUT ACT UPON THE LAW.

Let me remind you again, because the word 'law' in English has wrong associations. It is a translation for dhamma: the eternal law, the cosmic law, logos. ACT UPON THE LAW does not mean act according to the Indian Penal Code. Act according to the law means act according to your inner nature.

GIVE UP THE OLD WAYS --
PASSION, ENMITY, FOLLY.
KNOW THE TRUTH AND FIND PEACE.
SHARE THE WAY.

GIVE UP THE OLD WAYS.... You have to become discontinuous from the past. You have to exist in a new way. You have to simply cut yourself from your past with a single stroke. And that's what sannyas is all about: cutting yourself from your past with a single stroke of the sword. What are the old ways? -- the way of desire, the way of hate, and the way of stupidity. Don't function out of hatred and don't desire things, possessions. And don't be superstitious, foolish. If you can do this much, if you can take this leap into the unknown...because the past is known and you are accustomed to doing things in a certain way. When you drop the past you will be at a loss for a few days, disoriented, not knowing what to do, how to do it. You will be in a vacuum. That vacuum has to be passed through. It is painful -- that is the price we have to pay for truth.

Once you have passed that vacuum: KNOW THE TRUTH AND FIND PEACE. Then truth is known and truth follows peace like a shadow.
SHARE THE WAY, Buddha insists again. But this can't happen just by listening, just by reading the works of the masters.
SHARE THE WAY.
AES DHAMMO SANANTANO.
Enough for today.

The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 1

Chapter #4
Chapter title: Just lucky, I guess!
24 June 1979 am in Buddha Hall

The first question:
Question 1
BELOVED MASTER,
UPON RETURNING TO HOLLAND LAST YEAR I STARTED COMMUNICATING ABOUT YOU WITH AN OVERWHELMING SENSE OF URGENCY. I FELT YOU IMPARTED THIS URGENCY TO ME, BUT IT SEEMED ALSO TO BE A PART OF MY NATURE. THIS FEELING OF NOT HAVING A SECOND TO LOSE, THE WISH TO GET MORE DUTCH PEOPLE TO BECOME SANNYASINS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, MADE ME FAR FROM PLAYFUL. THE SERIOUSNESS LED TO MUCH ANGUISH BECAUSE I WAS CONFRONTED WITH INDIFFERENCE, RIDICULE AND CONTEMPT, ESPECIALLY FROM

THE JOURNALISTS. OBJECTIVELY I DID NOT FAIL -- FAR FROM IT -- BUT IN TERMS OF BEING, MY TRIP WAS NOT EXACTLY wu-wei. I SIMPLY COULD NOT COMBINE THIS URGENCY WITH JOY AND RELAXATION.
WILL YOU SAY A FEW WORDS ON THIS URGENCY, EVEN THOUGH YOU HAVE GIVEN ME SO MUCH ALREADY?

Deva Amrito, the playfulness that I talk about comes very slowly. You cannot just jump out of your seriousness which you have accumulated for lives. Now it has a force of its own.
It is not a simple matter to relax; it is one of the most complex phenomena possible, because all that we are taught is tension, anxiety, anguish. Seriousness is the very core the society is built around. Playfulness is for small children, not for grown-up people. And I am teaching you to be children again, to be playful again. It is a quantum leap, a jump...but it takes time to understand.
And as far as I am concerned, you have been immensely successful: objectively, certainly, but subjectively too. Unexpectedly you have been successful. Anybody else in your place would have been in a madhouse.
You were excited, and it is natural to be excited. When somebody understands me, feels me, he immediately starts feeling an urgency -- not a single moment to lose. And the word has to be spread. A kind of tremendous immediacy overwhelms. It is natural! It is true that there is not a single moment to lose. And if you love me, you would like all

those people to come to me, because they may not get the opportunity again -- for centuries, for lives together!

When you love, and you have found a treasure, you would like to share it. And if the treasure is such that it can disappear any moment, how can you avoid the feeling of immense urgency? You will have to shout from the tops of the houses.

And the response that you will get is absolutely certain and fixed. The more you would like people to come to me, the more they will escape -- from you, from the very idea of coming to me. And the only way to escape is to ridicule you, to laugh at you, to call you mad. That is their way of defending themselves. If they listen to you understandingly, if they allow you to overwhelm their being, to overflow into their being, to flood their being, then they will also find themselves in the same grip. And it will be very difficult for them to avoid.

Hence, from the very beginning they will ridicule you, criticize you, oppose you, laugh at you. They will do everything possible to create the feeling in you that you are wrong. But they failed. They could not create that feeling in you. The more they ridiculed you, the more they laughed, the more they criticized, the more you tried to convince them.

And you have been objectively successful -- you have convinced thousands of people. Since your going to Holland, many many Dutch people have arrived, and more are arriving, and more will go on arriving. You have created a great stir. You have touched many people's hearts. And it has been a great experience for your inner growth too.

The impact that you created has not got into your head yet; it has not made you more of an egoist. In fact, it has made you more humble. It may not have been exactly wu-wei, but it was very close. And I was not expecting it to be absolutely wu-wei, but it has been more than I was expecting.

I was a little bit afraid, Amrito, that you might go mad. The urgency was such, your ecstasy was such, you were so passionately in love with me, that I was afraid deep down. I was sending you with all kinds of apprehensions. But you survived the test. You have come back. The turmoil that was created around you because of your talking about me -- in the newspapers, on the radio, the TV -- the way you talked, it gave the sense of your immense love, it gave the sense that you have found the home.

Many have been convinced. And many who have not been convinced have also started thinking about it. And even those who have ridiculed you and have opposed you are impressed; otherwise who cares? Why should you oppose somebody if you are not impressed? Why should you ridicule and laugh if you are simply alert that he is mad? Nobody laughs at a madman, nobody ridicules a madman. It is enough to know that he is mad and everything is finished!

You have created a chain which will go on. And I would like many of my sannyasins to be so excited, to feel the urgency, to go to their countries and spread the word. And you will have to shout from the tops of the houses.

And whenever you are in love you look mad -- you are mad. Love is madness...but far higher than the so-called,

mediocre, mundane sanity. And love is blindness, but a blindness that is capable of seeing the invisible.
Love is not part of the ordinary world that we have created. We have expelled love from it. So whenever you are in love -- and to be in love with a master, to be in love with a buddha, is the ultimate love -- it drives you crazy. It makes you part of the beyond. Nobody can believe it.
How can your friends, Amrito, believe it, that it has happened to you and it has not happened to them? It is so much against their egos that you have found and they have not found yet, and still they are struggling. No, the easier way for them is to deny, to say that you have not found, that you are in an illusion, that you have been hypnotized, that you are hallucinating, that you have been drugged. That gives them a consolation, that gives them a kind of at-easeness. If you have really found, then they will feel very very uneasy -- then their lives are failures.
It has been a beautiful experience. I know you could not be very playful. It was difficult. Next time when I send you, you will be more playful. Now don't get afraid! I know that you don't want to go back again. Enough is enough...but one more time. Next time the whole project is to be playful. Then people will laugh more and they will think that you have gone even more mad. But laugh...dance, sing. This time you were arguing. Next time no arguing -- singing, dancing, hugging people.
But I am absolutely happy. Whatsoever has happened has been good objectively, has been good for others, has been good for you. It is a device: to send you for a particular purpose is a device for your inner growth. And you have been successful.

There was every possibility of being a failure.

I am reminded:
Once George Gurdjieff asked P.D. Ouspensky, his chief disciple of those days, to come from London to a faraway place somewhere in the Caucasus. It was very difficult. Financially Ouspensky was bankrupt. He had no money, no house to live in, nobody to support him. And such a long journey! And the times were very dangerous. In those parts of the world it was dangerous to move, because the Russian revolution was happening. People were being massacred, killed, murdered. There was no peace. Even Gurdjieff had to leave Russia, and he was hiding in the mountains of the Caucasus.
It was not a right time to go there; it was very dangerous. The journey was not easy: all the trains were unsettled, roads were cut, bridges were broken. It was chaos! But when the master calls, the disciple has to follow. Whatever belongings he had, he sold. He borrowed money from people, and traveled thousands of miles. It took him almost thirty days to reach Gurdjieff. Tired, tattered, thinking many times, "What am I doing? People are escaping from Russia, and I am going there!" And he was on the blacklist of the communists, because he was a well-known figure -- chief disciple of George Gurdjieff, a well-known, world-famous mathematician, a great author, one of the greatest the world has ever known. His books were translated into almost all the languages of the world. Going back to Russia was dangerous. He could be caught, imprisoned, killed. He was anticommunist! -- no sensible person can be a communist, because the whole idea is nonsense. But he

traveled...and when he reached Gurdjieff, Gurdjieff looked at him and the first thing that he said was, "Go back to London and start work again."
Now that was too much. Ouspensky failed. He could not trust this man. Now what kind of a joke is this? Playing with somebody's life in such a way...and immediately he said, "Go back right now! I have nothing else to say." Ouspensky went back -- turned against Gurdjieff, became an enemy. That was a great device of a great master. If he had trusted, he would have become enlightened. He missed the opportunity. He died an unenlightened person.

When things are going smooth and easy, trust is easy -- but it is worthless. When things become difficult, arduous, impossible, and you can still trust, when it becomes absolutely illogical to trust and you can still trust, only such a trust becomes a transforming force.
Amrito, I am going to send you one more time. And remember, I am not a very consistent man: it may be twice, thrice...it depends. But for the moment, one time I am going to send you -- that much is certain.
And this time the project is being playful.

The second question:
Question 2
BELOVED MASTER,
WHY ARE THERE SO MANY RELIGIONS IN THE WORLD, AND WHY DO THESE RELIGIONS CONTINUOUSLY QUARREL WITH EACH OTHER?

Geetam, it is natural that there should be so many religions. In fact, more are needed. As I see it, each individual should have his own religion; there should be as many religions as there are people. The number is not so much: there are only three hundred religions -- and how many people on the earth?

Each individual should have his own religion, because each individual is so unique, so different from anybody else. How can two persons have one religion? It is impossible. But we have been asking the impossible. Each individual has to reach God in his own way, and that way is never going to be traveled by anybody else again.

Hence, buddhas can only indicate, can only give you hints. They cannot provide you with certain, absolutely certain maps -- just hints, a few hints. And those hints have not to be taken very seriously -- very playfully. You are not to become a fanatic. If you become a fanatic you are no longer religious.

A religious person is humble, available to all kinds of hints; he is a seeker, a searcher, an explorer, and he will learn from every possible source. He will learn from the Bible, and he will learn from the Vedas, and he will learn from THE DHAMMAPADA. He will listen to Buddha, to Jesus, to Zarathustra. He will learn from all possible sources, but still he will remain himself. He will not become an imitation, he will not become a carbon copy. He will retain his authenticity. He will be humble, sincere, authentic; he will not become pseudo. He will not be a follower, he will be a lover.

He will love the buddha, but he will not follow him; he will not follow him in the details. How can you follow a buddha

in the details? He is a totally different kind of person. You have never been before, nobody like you has ever been before, and nobody who is exactly like you will ever be there again. Hence your religion has to be your religion, your truth has to be your truth.

And that is the beauty of truth, that it always comes in such a unique form that you can say, "This is a special gift from God to me." Hence there are so many religions. And it is beautiful! -- there should be many more. Many people have been trying to make one religion; that is utter stupidity. You cannot create one religion. You can enforce one religion on people, but that will destroy their spirit, their freedom; that will cripple their being and paralyze their growth.

Just as there are so many languages, there are so many religions. The variety is beautiful, the variety makes it possible for you to choose according to your type. Religion is not and cannot be decided by birth, and those who decide their religion by their birth are utter fools. You cannot be born a Hindu and you cannot be born a Christian; birth has nothing to do with your religion. Religion is an inquiry. You may be born to Hindu parents -- that is one thing -- but if your parents really love you they will not convert you into a Hindu. Of course they will tell you all they have known and experienced, but they will leave you free. And they will tell you, "Become more alert, watchful, mature, and when you are mature enough and you want to decide, choose your own religion."

Go to the mosque, go to the church, go to the temple, go to the gurudwara. Listen to all kinds of things, see all kinds of flowers: the garden of God is so full of variety, is so rich

because of variety. There are roses and lotuses and a thousand and one other flowers. Go and choose your own perfume, your own fragrance, because unless you yourself choose you will not be dedicated to it, you will not be surrendered to it.

The world is not religious because religion is imposed upon us. The parents are in a hurry to impose; the church, the state, the country -- everybody is in a hurry to impose a certain religion on the child. How foolish! How stupid! Religion needs maturity, great understanding, before one can choose.

Nobody is born a Hindu or a Mohammedan or a Parsi. Everybody is born clean, innocent, a TABULA RASA, and then everyone has to seek and search. This is the beauty of life because life is an inquiry. And don't be settled too early; there is no need. It is possible that no existing religion may satisfy you. But that is good; that means a new religion is born in you. The world becomes richer: one more religion, one more flower, one more tree -- a new phenomenon.

Buddha brings a new religion into the world; the world was poorer before Buddha because it was missing Buddhism. Buddha could have followed the religion of his parents; then the world would have been still poor. The world would have missed something immensely valuable, a new door to God. Buddha opened a new door, a new vision, a new insight. He was not convinced by his parents' religion; otherwise, he would have remained a Hindu. He rebelled. All religious people are rebellious people.

He went on an individual search -- all religious people are explorers, all religious people are adventurers. It would

have been easy and convenient and comfortable to believe in the religion that had been believed in by the parents and the parents' parents, and for centuries. It would have been more convenient because you need not inquire, you need not go through the whole effort of finding the truth. It has been found by some seer in the past -- you can simply borrow it. But a borrowed truth is not a truth at all. A borrowed truth is a lie.

Buddha went on a search; arduous was the inquiry. He risked all -- his kingdom, his life. But when you risk so much, life showers new treasures on you. A new religion, a new insight, a new vision, was born into the world. Mohammed could have followed his parents' religion. Jesus could have followed Judaism. Become a Jesus, become a Buddha, become a Mohammed! Don't be a Mohammedan and don't be a Buddhist and don't be a Christian -- explore! Don't waste life in imitating, because then you will remain pseudo. And a pseudo person cannot be religious. Great authenticity, sincerity is needed.

So, Geetam, it is good that there are three hundred religions -- there should be more! I am always for variety. I want the world richer in every possible way. Would you like the whole world to have only one kind of flower -- just roses, or just lotuses? Will it not be an impoverished world, very poor? Would you like the world to have only one language? Then the different nuances of the different languages will disappear.

There are things which can be said only in Arabic and cannot be said in any other language; and there are things which can be said only in Hebrew and cannot be said in any other language. There are things which can be said only in

Chinese and cannot be said in any other language. If the world has only one language, many many beautiful things will remain unsaid.

Lao Tzu can speak only Chinese. You may not have pondered over the problem: just think of Lao Tzu writing his TAO TEH CHING in English...and the book will be totally different. It will miss something of immense value; it will have something different, a totally different color to it, but it will miss the flavor that it has in Chinese.

Now, Chinese has no alphabet; it is written in symbols. Because there is no alphabet, symbols can be interpreted in a thousand and one ways; symbols are more fluid, less fixed, more poetic, less prosaic. One symbol can mean many things. It is not scientific; it is very difficult to write scientific treatises in Chinese. For that, English is a far more adequate language.

But what Lao Tzu has given to the world would not have been possible without Chinese. Each symbol has many meanings, a multiplicity of meanings. You can choose your meaning according to your state of mind. Each symbol has many layers of meaning. As you grow in your understanding, the meaning of the symbols changes.

Hence, in the East a totally different kind of reading has existed which is nonexistent in the West. You would not like to read the same Bernard Shaw book again and again and again, or would you? Unless you are insane you would not like to read it again and again and again. What is the point? Once you have read it, it is finished! That's why the paperback has come into existence: read it and throw it. But in the East a different kind of reading exists: the same book is read again and again the whole life long.

The TAO TEH CHING is not a book which can be published in paperback -- they are doing that now. It should not be published in paperback -- it cannot be, because it is a totally different kind of book. It has layers and layers of meaning. When for the first time you read it, it is one book because you know only one meaning, the superficial. After meditating for a few months you read it again; another meaning reveals itself; after meditating a few months more you read it again...a third meaning. It has to go on, it has to become a life's study.

And you will go on finding the meanings -- they are inexhaustible. Aes dhammo sanantano: the ultimate is eternal and inexhaustible. It is not a fiction; you cannot just read it and be finished with it. One reading is not going to help you at all; it simply introduces you, it does not give you the core of it. It takes a whole life to come to the core of it.

Now we need all kinds of languages. English is needed for its definiteness, for its certainty. Each word has a definition. Science cannot develop without such a language.

Science could not be born in India because of the language; Sanskrit is a poetic language. You can sing it -- it has that quality -- you can chant it, but you cannot make much of a syllogism out of it. Many songs, certainly, but it is not argumentative; expressive but nonargumentative.

Arabic has a very haunting quality. If you chant it, it will become a haunting in your heart. Stop chanting it and the chanting continues in the heart. Arabic has that quality in it because it is a desert language; desert languages have a haunting quality. When you are calling somebody in a

desert, far away, you have to call in a certain way -- and in a desert you can call people who are very far away; if you call them in a rhythmic way your sound will reach them. Hence the beauty of the Koran. It is not a book to be read -- those who read the Koran will miss its meaning -- it is a book to be sung. It is not a book to be studied: it is a book to be danced, only then will you reach its inner spirit.

It is beautiful that there are many languages because there are many things to be said, expressed, communicated. And as the world grows, many more languages are needed, because as the world grows, many more things people are feeling, people are going through, people are reaching. Religion is nothing but a language for expressing the ultimate. Geetam, there is nothing wrong in there being many religions. Of course, there is certainly something wrong in their constant quarreling with each other. That shows that the so-called religions have lost their religious quality, they have become political; that these so-called religions no longer have alive masters in them but only dead, dull, mediocre priests. They go on quarreling, they go on trying to convert, because numbers create power. If there are more Christians then Christianity has more power and the pope in the Vatican becomes more powerful. If Hindus are more in number, of course they are more in power.

Numbers give power. So Christianity wants everybody to be a Christian, and Mohammedans would like everybody to be a Mohammedan, Their ways and means may differ, but the effort and the desire is the same, a very deep political desire -- it is power politics. Then naturally quarreling will

arise. Politics is quarreling; it has nothing to do with religion.

Religions should be as many as possible. And there is no question of any conflict: it is a question of like and dislike. If I like roses, you don't try to come and convince me that I should like marigolds -- you simply accept my liking. And if you like marigolds, it's perfectly okay; there is no question of arguing, quarreling. We need not fight with each other -- actually or intellectually. I can leave you to your choice, and I don't feel offended because you like marigolds and I don't like them.

Likes and dislikes are individual affairs. One may like the Bhagavadgita, another may like the Koran, somebody else may like THE DHAMMAPADA -- it's perfectly okay, absolutely okay. We should share our likings with each other, but we should not try to convert the other, to force the other into our fold. Yes, share by all means, because sharing shows your love. If you have found a source, share! But the sharing should be out of love, not for power politics. It is not to convince the other and to drag him into your fold. Religions have been doing such ugly things. People have been converted at the point of the bayonet; people are being converted by money, by bribing them...by any means, right or wrong. Become a Christian! Become a Mohammedan! Become a Hindu! Grab more and more people so you become more powerful, and don't allow anybody else to leave your fold.

Mulla Nasruddin's son was asking him, "Papa, when a Christian becomes a Mohammedan, what do you call him?"

Nasruddin smiled and said, "He has come to his senses, he is a man of understanding, wisdom. He has understood what is false as false and what is truth as truth."
The boy asks again, "And Papa, if a Mohammedan becomes a Christian what do you call him?"
Nasruddin was very angry and said, "He is a traitor! He has betrayed. He is stupid!"

Now, if a Christian becomes a Mohammedan, he is a man of intelligence, a wise man; and if a Mohammedan becomes a Christian he is a traitor, stupid. And the same is the situation if you ask the Christian.
A Hindu became a Christian. All the Hindus were against him, naturally -- he had betrayed them! But Christians made him a saint. Sadhu Sunder Singh was his name. They almost worshipped him as if he was an incarnation of Jesus, because he proved the truth of Christianity. And Hindus? -- they were so angry with the man that they wanted to kill him. And there is every possibility that they did kill him, because one day he suddenly disappeared and his body has not been found since then. It is still a mystery what happened to Sadhu Sunder Singh.
I know a man who was a Hindu and became a Jaina. Hindus were very much against him, naturally, obviously. They tried in every way to destroy the man, but he became the most famous Jaina saint. Ganesh Varni was his name. He defeated all other Jaina saints; he reached the highest pinnacle. What was his real quality? Why did he reach the highest pinnacle? Because basically he was a Hindu and became a Jaina. "He proved that Jainism is far higher than

Hinduism; otherwise, why has this man, such a wise man, come to our fold?"
Geetam, these religions quarrel because they are not religious; they have become more and more political. And when you quarrel, then everything is right -- in love and war everything is right.

A Catholic is trying to convert a Jew and tells him that if he becomes a Catholic his prayers will certainly be answered -- because the priest will give them to the bishop, who will give them to the cardinal, who will give them to the pope, who will shove them up into heaven through a hole at the top of the Vatican, which just matches a hole in the floor of heaven, where Saint Peter will take them to the Virgin Mary, who will intercede on their behalf with Jesus, who will say a good word for them to God.
The Jew repeats this whole itinerary with an astonished air, ending, "You know it must be true, because I have always wondered what they do with all the shit in heaven. They must throw it down that little hole in the Vatican, where the pope gives it to the cardinal, who gives it to the bishop, who gives it to the priest, who gives it to you -- and you are trying to hand it to me?"

Religions are good -- many more are needed -- but quarreling religions are not religions. The very quarreling attitude makes them political. And the priest and the politician have been in a very subtle conspiracy down the ages -- because the politician can dominate the people through the priest very easily. The priest possesses the souls of the people and the politician possesses the bodies

of the people. Both are oppressors, exploiters. Both are in the same business, both are partners. Both can help each other. The politician can help the priest because he has temporal power, and the priest can help the politician because people listen to him, worship him, take his word as divine.

Do you know, Buddhism did not become a great religion because of Buddha; it became a great religion because of the emperor Ashoka. It was not because of Buddha that millions of people became Buddhists, no. While Buddha was alive, only a few, a few chosen people were courageous enough to walk with him in his light, to commune with him. And they were courageous -- because they had to suffer, they had to suffer much ridicule, opposition, because the established Hindu church was against this man Buddha.

Buddhism became a world religion not because of Buddha but because of the emperor Ashoka. When the Buddhist priests joined hands with the emperor Ashoka, then the religion became a world religion. The whole of Asia was converted. Now the priests would help Ashoka to retain his power, and Ashoka would help the priests become more and more powerful.

Christianity became a world religion not because of Jesus. Jesus was very alone -- only a few disciples, twelve disciples, and a few hundred sympathizers, that's all. And even those disciples disappeared when Jesus was being crucified, and the sympathizers simply forgot about him; they stopped talking about the man because it was dangerous even to show sympathy.

It is said that the people who had sympathized with Jesus came to spit on his face while he was dying to show the people, "We are against, we are not for him." To prove to the people...because this man is dying -- now they will be in trouble. They have to live, they still have to live. They have to give some proof that they are against this man. They denied Jesus while he was dying. They threw mud, stones, they spat on his face, just to show the crowds, "See, isn't this enough proof that the rumors that you have heard that we are sympathizers are absolutely wrong, unfounded? We are against him as much as you are -- in fact, we are more against him than you are."

The enemies were not spitting on him but the friends. Jesus became a world force not because of himself but only when the Roman emperors and Christian priests joined hands. Now, this is an irony. Jesus was crucified by a Roman emperor -- see how history moves! Pontius Pilate was just a representative of the Roman power, of the Roman emperor; he simply followed the orders from Rome. Who would ever have thought that Rome would become the central place of Christianity? Who would ever have thought while Jesus was being crucified that Rome would be the residence of the pope? But that's how it happened. When priests joined hands with Emperor Constantine and other Roman emperors, Christianity became a world force.

Christianity, Buddhism, Hinduism, Jainism -- they have all depended on politics. They are not true religions anymore but political games being played in the name of religion.

I would like the world to have many more religions, so many that each individual has his own religion -- then no priest will be needed. That is the only way to drop the

priests. If you have your own religion, no priest is needed -- you are the priest and you are the follower and you are everything.
You have to listen to your inner voice. Buddha says: Follow your own nature; there is no need for anybody to intercede on your behalf.
But I am not in favor of creating one religion; enough of that nonsense! In the past we have been trying to do that: make one religion so that quarreling can stop. But it is not possible. Even if you can enforce one religion, if the whole world becomes Christian, then again there will be Protestants and Catholics and a thousand and one sects. And the same game will start again: people will start quarreling -- because their needs are different, their understandings are different.

I have heard:
A beautiful young woman came home from London. She belonged to a small village, was from a Catholic family. After three or four years of living in London she had become very rich; she came back to see her parents. The mother could not believe her eyes. She asked, "How did you manage? You have become so rich -- such beautiful clothes, a diamond ring, a beautiful car!"
And the girl said, "Mother, I have become a prostitute."
Just hearing this the mother fainted, became unconscious. When she came back she asked again, "What did you say?"
The girl said, "Mother, I said I have become a prostitute."
And the mother started laughing and she said, "I misunderstood you -- I thought you said you had become a Protestant."

To be a prostitute is okay, but to become a Protestant...? The same quarreling will start. Even small religions -- for example, Jainism, one of the smallest religions in the world -- have so many sects, sects within sects. In fact, we have not yet become aware of the great necessity that each individual needs his own version of God, and each individual has his own way of approaching God.

A man picked up by a prostitute in a bar is amazed by the college pennants and diplomas ornamenting the walls of her room.
"Are these your diplomas?" he asks.
"Sure," she says airily. "I have my Master of Arts from Columbia, and took my Ph.D. in Shakespeare at Oxford."
The man is incredulous. "But how did a girl like you get into a profession like this?"
"I don't know," she says. "Just lucky, I guess."

People have different understandings, different ways of looking at things, different interpretations. And they have to be allowed this freedom.

The third question:
Question 3
BELOVED MASTER,
MY PARENTS WERE CHRISTIAN MISSIONARIES IN INDIA FOR TWENTY-FIVE YEARS. MY BROTHER WAS A JUNKIE, MY SISTER A COMPULSIVE LIAR. AS FOR ME, I AM SO SERIOUS THAT IF I SMILE MY MOUTH HURTS. HOW DID I END UP HERE?

Prem Parijat, just lucky, I guess! You will live in ecstasy and you will die in ecstasy.
Did you hear about the man eighty-seven years of age who married a nineteen-year-old girl?
He died of a new disease called ecstasy. It took them three days to wipe the smile off his face.
Now, this is going to happen to you too: living your life will be a laughter; dying, it will be difficult for the people to wipe off your smile.
It may be just because your parents are Christian missionaries that you have landed here, because to be born to any kind of missionaries -- Christian, Hindu or Mohammedan -- is to be fed up with all that nonsense. To be born to a priest is to know one thing for certain: that priests don't believe in God. It is their business; they pretend.
It is a rare opportunity to be born in the house of a priest, because children are very perceptive and they can see through and through that all that nonsense that their father in preaching is just preaching -- he does not mean it because he never practices it. The children of the priests are bound to become aware of the hypocrisy of the so-called religious people.
It may be just because of it, because it is almost impossible to be in the house of a priest and not to know that he is the most irreligious person possible in the world.
Priests are exploiting religion. They are exploiting people's trust. They are the greatest cheaters in the world, because to exploit people's trust is the greatest crime. You are

destroying their trust. But they live on that kind of cheating; that is their whole trade secret.

The bishop was very proud of an elegant mansion he had constructed as his official residence. One day, a friend and the bishop were engaged in conversation and the bishop was pursuing a seemingly atheistic train of thought....

That kind of thinking is becoming very prevalent in Christian circles: religionless religion, Godless Christianity -- these are being talked about, discussed. After Friedrich Nietzsche, who declared that God is dead, Christianity has been in a turmoil -- what to do now? They have been trying every possible way to create a Christianity which does not need God anymore, so that the profession can expand again.
Now God has become a barrier; the moment you assert the word 'God', you put people off. So Christian theologians are discussing, thinking, meditating, how to create a Christianity that does not need God at all. And it is possible! -- because Buddhism is there without any God, and Jainism is there without any God, so why can't there be a Christianity without God?

...This bishop was pursuing a seemingly atheistic train of thought. The friend asked him, "Bishop, do you believe in God or not? Say it exactly, say it in short. Don't go round and round. Say simply yes or no -- do you believe in God?" After a long hesitation, the bishop replied, "Of course I do! Who do you think paid for this house?"

Now, the house that he has made, a beautiful mansion, is possible only because people still believe in God; and because they believe in God, they believe in the bishop. He cannot publicly declare there is no God. If you drop God, then Jesus is no longer the Son of God, then the pope is no longer the representative of Jesus, and so on and so forth. And they all go down the drain. It needs a hierarchy: God at the top and the priest at the bottom, the whole ladder. And the priest certainly knows that there is no God. If he was aware that there is a God, he would not have been a priest in the first place -- he would be a Jesus, he would be a Buddha, but not a priest. He would be a prophet but not a priest. He would bring something of the unknown into people's lives, but he would not be part of a status quo, he would not be part of the established church. No man of understanding, no man who has some religious consciousness and experiences, can be part of any established church. It has never happened. Buddha has to leave his fold, Jesus has to leave his fold, Mohammed has to leave his fold -- this has always been so. Whenever a religious man is born, he has to leave his fold, because the fold is already in the hands of the politicians and the priests, whose whole interest is in exploiting people.

Anand Moksha has written to me:
During the time of the major earthquakes in Guatemala in 1976, the Catholic bishop at Lake Atitlan befriended me and allowed me to stay in his garden for a while.
A few months passed and after-shock tremors were still common. At that time I discovered that a beautiful house on a hillside was for rent for very little money. The reason

was that a large boulder ominously overhung the house and people were afraid. I felt the vibes and it seemed okay to me -- so I rented the place.
When I told the bishop, he reacted with nervous dismay and swung his arms about, saying, "Aren't you worried about that rock tumbling down on the house?"
I replied, "If the Lord wants to take me, he will."
The bishop shrugged his shoulders and said, "You don't believe that, do you?"

It may be simply, Parijat, that just because you were born of Christian missionaries it became possible for you to be here. Christian missionaries, and twenty-five years in India! -- that is too much. In the first place, Christian missionaries and in the second place, twenty-five years in India...that is enough, more than enough, to convince the children that their parents are pseudo, that they are talking business, that they don't believe.
It is not a question of belief at all.

I have heard a small story:
In a school, a Christian missionary school, the teacher asked the children, "Who is the greatest man in history?"
An American boy says, "Abraham Lincoln."
A Mohammedan boy says, "Hazrat Mohammed."
A Hindu girl says, "Lord Krishna."
And so on and so forth...and finally, the little Jewish boy stands up and says, "Jesus Christ."
The teacher could not believe her ears -- the Jew and saying Jesus Christ? She asked, "Do you really mean that?"

He said, "That is not the question. In my heart of hearts I know it is Moses -- but business is business."

To be with Christian missionaries for twenty-five years, and in India, and seeing what they are doing, is enough to disillusion you. The whole credit goes to your parents and their twenty-five years in India. They have brought you here -- be thankful to them.

The fourth question:
Question 4
BELOVED MASTER,
I FEEL THAT I AM A VERY SPECIAL PERSON. I AM SO SPECIAL THAT I WANT JUST TO BE ORDINARY. PLEASE CAN YOU SAY SOMETHING ABOUT THIS?

Anand Sangito, everybody here thinks exactly the same. And not only here, but everywhere else. Everyone deep in their heart knows that he is special. This is a joke God plays on people. When he makes a new man and pushes him down towards the earth, he whispers in his ear, "You are special. You are incomparable, you are just unique!" But this he goes on doing to everybody and everybody goes on carrying it deep in the heart, although people don't say it as loudly as you are doing, because they are afraid others may feel offended. And nobody is going to be convinced, so what is the point of saying it? If you tell somebody, "I am special," you cannot convince him because he himself knows that he is special. How can you convince anybody? Yes, maybe sometimes somebody may be convinced, at least pretend to be convinced. If he has some work with

you, as a bribe he may say, "Yes, you are special, you are great." But deep down he knows business is business.

A braggart is telling his friend about his three cars, etcetera, etcetera. When he also mentions that he has two kept mistresses in New York, but that he has made his ravishingly beautiful and terribly passionate private secretary pregnant, and must therefore take his gorgeous blond stenographer with him on his business trip to Rio de Janeiro to see the carnival, the listener suddenly begins to pant, grabs at his own necktie, and has a heart attack.
The braggart interrupts his tale, gets water, pats the victim on the back, etcetera, etcetera, and he asks solicitously what the matter is. "Can I help it?" the man gasps. "I am allergic to bullshit."

It is better to keep such bullshit hidden deep down inside yourself, because people are allergic. But in a way it is good that you exposed your mind.
If you think you are special then you are bound to create misery for yourself. If you think that you are higher than others, wiser than others, then you will attain to a very strong ego. And the ego is poison, pure poison. And the more egoistic you become, the more it hurts, because it is a wound. The more egoistic you become, the more you become unbridged from life. You fall separate from life; you are no longer in the flow of existence, you have become a rock in the river. You have become ice-cold, you have lost all warmth, all love. A special person cannot love, because where are you going to find another special person?

I have heard about a man who remained unmarried his whole life, and when he was dying, ninety years old, somebody asked him, "You have remained unmarried your whole life, but you have never said what the reason was. Now you are dying, at least quench our curiosity. If there is any secret, now you can tell it, because you are dying; you will be gone. Even if the secret is known, it can't harm you."
The man said, "Yes, there is a secret. It is not that I am against marriage, but I was searching for a perfect woman. I searched and searched, and my whole life slipped by."
The inquirer asked, "But upon this big earth, so many millions of people, half of them women, couldn't you find one perfect woman?"
A tear rolled down from the eye of the dying man. He said, "Yes, I did find one."
The inquirer was absolutely shocked. He said, "Then what happened? Why didn't you get married?"
And the old man said, "But the woman was searching for a perfect husband."

Your life will become very difficult if you live with such ideas. And yes, the ego is so tricky, so cunning, it can give you, Sangito, this new project: "You are so special, become just ordinary." But in your ordinariness you will know you are the most extraordinarily ordinary man. Nobody is more ordinary than you! It will be the same game, camouflaged. That's what so-called humble people go on doing. They say, "I am the most humble man. I am just the dust on your feet." But they don't mean it! Don't say, "Yes, I know you

are," otherwise they will never be able to forgive you. They are waiting for you to say, "You are the most humble man I have ever seen, you are the most pious man I have ever seen." Then they will be satisfied, contented. It is ego hiding behind humbleness. You cannot drop the ego in this way.

You ask, "I feel that I am a very very special person. I am so special that I want just to be ordinary. Please can you say something about this?"

No one is special, or, everyone is special. No one is ordinary, or everyone is ordinary. Whatsoever you think about yourself, please think the same about everyone else, and the problem will be solved. You can choose. If you want the word 'special', you can think you are special -- but then everybody is special. Not only people, but trees, birds, animals, rocks -- the whole existence is special, because you come out of this existence and you will dissolve into this existence. But if you love the word 'ordinary' -- which is a beautiful word, more relaxed -- then know that everybody is ordinary. Then the whole existence is ordinary.

One thing to be remembered: whatsoever you think about yourself, think the same for everybody else and the ego will disappear. The ego is the illusion that is created by thinking about yourself in one way and thinking about others in another. It is double thinking. If you drop the double thinking, ego dies of its own accord.

The last question:

Question 5

BELOVED MASTER,

WHEN I CAME HERE I FELT GOD TO BE VERY NEAR -- ANY MOMENT AND I WOULD BE WITH HIM -- BUT AS TIME PASSES IT SEEMS IMPOSSIBLE. HE IS NOT AROUND; IT IS DIFFICULT TO SEE HIM.
WHY IS IT SO? PLEASE SAY SOMETHING ABOUT THIS.

Vedant Bharti, you must be carrying a certain image of God in your mind; hence you are missing. And unless you drop that image you are going to miss. God has no obligation to fulfill your idea of him. You must be carrying a certain idea that "God looks like this, behaves like this...." That's why it is becoming impossible: you are making it impossible.
God can be known only by those who are capable of dropping all ideas about God. Any idea that you have accumulated in yourself in your ignorance is a hindrance. Drop all ideas about God and you will be surprised, you will be shocked, you will not be able to believe your eyes...because only God is! Then you will never ask, "Where is God?" You will ask, "Is there any place where God is not?"
Then in the very ordinariness of things you will see something tremendously extraordinary. Then ordinary pebbles are transformed into diamonds. Then ordinary humanity is no longer ordinary -- then something luminous is in everybody's heart. Then man comes closer to the divine, and the divine comes closer to man; the human and the divine disappear into each other, the world and God disappear into each other. Then you are not searching for a

God who is separate and high and far away, living in the seventh heaven; then he lives in your neighborhood as your neighbor. Then he is human, he is animal, he is vegetable, he is mineral...he is all.

And when you can see that he surrounds you, not as a person but as a presence, then only does your inquiry come to a fulfillment. God is not hiding from you but you are keeping your eyes closed because of so many prejudices. Somebody has a Hindu idea of God, and somebody has a Christian idea of God, and somebody else a Mohammedan idea of God. Now, God is neither Mohammedan, nor Christian, nor Hindu, so all these people who are carrying these ideas are bound to go on stumbling in darkness and more darkness. From darkness to darkness will be their journey, from death to death they will move. They will never know the light.

A Hindu cannot know God, a Mohammedan cannot know God. First you will have to cleanse your mind completely of all Hinduism, all Mohammedanism, all Buddhism. When you are utterly thoughtless, just alert, aware, watchful, then God explodes. And he explodes all over the place.

Vedant Bharti, you say, "When I came here I felt God to be very near." That was your imagination.

"...Any moment and I would be with him." That was your wish.

"...But as time passes it seems impossible" -- because no imagination can ever become real. No dream of yours can ever be fulfilled. Reality has to be discovered, not imagined.

Now you say, "He is not around; it is difficult to see him."

Only he is around. It is difficult to see him because your eyes are too burdened with your own prejudices, concepts, systems of thought. Be a little more childlike, be a little more innocent. God comes only when the heart is innocent. God comes only when you are utterly empty of all ideas. He is always ready to come, he is standing at the door, but you cannot hear because your mind is so full of turmoil, full of thoughts, millions of thoughts clamoring around. Your mind is so noisy you cannot hear the silent knock on the door.
Be silent, be innocent.
God is. Only God is.
Enough for today.

The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 1

Chapter #5
Chapter title: Wakefulness is life
25 June 1979 am in Buddha Hall

WAKEFULNESS IS THE WAY TO LIFE.
THE FOOL SLEEPS
AS IF HE WERE ALREADY DEAD,
BUT THE MASTER IS AWAKE
AND HE LIVES FOREVER.

HE WATCHES.
HE IS CLEAR.

HOW HAPPY HE IS!
FOR HE SEES THAT WAKEFULNESS IS LIFE.

HOW HAPPY HE IS,
FOLLOWING THE PATH OF THE AWAKENED.

WITH GREAT PERSEVERANCE
HE MEDITATES, SEEKING
FREEDOM AND HAPPINESS.

SO AWAKE, REFLECT, WATCH.
WORK WITH CARE AND ATTENTION.
LIVE IN THE WAY
AND THE LIGHT WILL GROW IN YOU.

BY WATCHING AND WORKING
THE MASTER MAKES FOR HIMSELF AN ISLAND
WHICH THE FLOOD CANNOT OVERWHELM.

One of the most important things to be understood about man is that man is asleep. Even while he thinks he is awake, he is not. His wakefulness is very fragile; his wakefulness is so tiny it doesn't matter at all. His wakefulness is only a beautiful name, but utterly empty. You sleep in the night, you sleep in the day; from birth to death you go on changing your patterns of sleep, but you never really awake. Just by opening the eyes don't befool yourself that you are awake. Unless the inner eyes open, unless your inside becomes full of light, unless you can see yourself, who you are, don't think that you are awake. That is the greatest illusion man lives in. And once you accept that you are already awake, then there is no question of making any effort to be awake.

The first thing to sink deep in your heart is that you are asleep, utterly asleep. You are dreaming, day in, day out. You are dreaming sometimes with open eyes and sometimes with closed eyes, but you are dreaming, you are a dream. You are not yet a reality.

And, of course, in a dream whatsoever you do is meaningless, whatsoever you think is pointless, whatsoever you project remains part of your dreams and never allows you to see that which is. Hence Buddha's insistence...and not only Gautama the Buddha but all the buddhas have insisted on only one thing: Awake! Continuously, for centuries, their whole teaching can be contained in a single word: Be awake!

And they have been devising methods, strategies, they have been creating contexts and spaces, and energy fields in which you can be shocked into awareness. Yes, unless you are shocked, shaken to your very foundations, you will not awaken. The sleep has been so long, it has reached to the very core of your being; you are soaked in it. Each cell of your body and each fiber of your mind has become full of sleep. It is not a small phenomenon. Hence great effort is needed to be alert, to be attentive, to be watchful, to become a witness.

If on any one single theme all the buddhas of the world agree, this is the theme: that man as he is is asleep, and man as he should be should be awake. Wakefulness is the goal, and wakefulness is the taste of all their teachings.

Zarathustra, Lao Tzu, Jesus, Buddha, Bahauddin, Kabir, Nanak -- all the awakened ones have been teaching one single theme, in different languages, in different metaphors, but their song is the same. Just as the sea tastes of salt --

whether the sea is tasted from the north or from the east or from the west, the sea always tastes of salt -- the taste of buddhahood is wakefulness.
But you will not make any effort if you go on believing that you are already awake; then there is no question of making any effort. Why bother? And you have created religions, gods, prayers, rituals, out of your dreams -- your gods are as much part of your dreams as anything else. Your politics is part of your dreams, your religions are part of your dreams, your poetry, your painting, your art -- whatsoever you do, because you are asleep, you make it according to your own state of mind.
The Bible says God created man in his own image -- the truth seems to be just the opposite: man has created God in his own image. Your gods are false because you are false. Your religion is pseudo because you are pseudo. Your scriptures cannot have any significance because you don't have any significance.

Two priest are playing golf. The younger one misses an easy putt and says, "Shit!" The older one berates him for this, saying that if he continues to use profanity like that God will certainly blast him with a thunderbolt. They keep playing and the younger priest misses another putt, and again says, "Shit!"
The skies suddenly open: a thunderbolt flashes out, and strikes the older priest dead. There is a pause, and the heavenly voice is heard saying in accents of thunder, "Shit!"

Your gods cannot be different from you. Who will create them? Who will give them shape and color and form? You create them, you sculpt them; they have eyes like you, noses like you -- and minds like you! The Old Testament God says, "I am a very jealous God!" Now who has created this God who is jealous? God cannot be jealous. And if God is jealous, then what is wrong in being jealous? If even God is jealous, why should you be thought to be doing something wrong when you are jealous? Then jealousy is divine.

The Old Testament God says, "I am a very angry God! If you don't follow my commandments, I will destroy you. You will be thrown into hellfire for eternity. And because I am very jealous," the God says, "don't worship anybody else. I cannot tolerate it."
Who created such a God? It must be out of our own jealousy, out of our own anger, that we have created this image.

A Jew who has a long run of bad luck goes out into the woods and lifts his voice in prayer and recrimination. "Oh, God," he asks heaven tearfully, "haven't I always been a good Jew? Haven't I always given charity, even to those damn goyim? Didn't I bring up my family decent? Never drink, swear, gamble; no bad women, nothing! Why do you do this to me God? Why? Why?"
A dark cloud suddenly appears overhead, and a tremendous voice replies, "You piss me off!"

The God certainly cannot be different from you. It is your projection, it is your shadow. It echoes you and nobody else. That's why there are so many gods in the world. The Hindus have a certain idea about God -- the Hindu idea -- it reflects the Hindu mind.

If you go back into Hindu scriptures you will be surprised. You will not be able to believe what kind of gods Hindus have created -- very sexual. Adultery is very common amongst Hindu gods, and not only do they play their games of adultery in the Hindu paradise, they can't even leave the earth alone; they come to the earth too, to rape women, to seduce simple women. They don't even leave the wives of the great seers alone. And because they have infinite power they can even appear as the husbands, they can look like the husbands. And the women have no idea who is hiding behind the facade.

Who has created these gods? -- it must have been deep down a very sexual mind.

And the same is the case with all other gods of all other religions. It is because of this that Buddha never talked about God. He said: What is the point of talking about God to people who are asleep? They will listen in their sleep. They will dream about whatsoever is said to them, and they will create their own gods -- which will be utterly false, utterly impotent, utterly meaningless. It is better not to have such gods.

That's why Buddha is not interested in talking about gods. His whole interest is in waking you up.

It is said about a Buddhist enlightened master who was sitting by the side of the river one evening, enjoying the

sound of the water, the sound of the wind passing through the trees.... A man came and asked him, "Can you tell me in a single word the essence of your religion?"
The master remained silent, utterly silent, as if he had not heard the question. The questioner said, "Are you deaf or something?"
The master said, "I have heard your question, and I have answered it too! Silence is the answer. I remained silent -- that pause, that interval, was my answer."
The man said, "I cannot understand such a mysterious answer. Can't you be a little more clear?"
So the master wrote on the sand "meditation," in small letters with his finger. The man said, "I can read now. It is a little better than at first. At least I have got a word to ponder over. But can't you make it a little more clear?"
The master wrote again "MEDITATION." Of course this time he wrote in bigger letters. The man was feeling a little embarrassed, puzzled, offended, angry. He said, "Again you write meditation? Can't you be a little clear for me?"
And the master wrote in very big letters, capital letters, "M E D I T A T I O N."
The man said, "You seem to be mad."
The master said, "I have already come down very much. The first answer was the right answer, the second was not so right, the third even more wrong, the fourth has gone very wrong" -- because when you write "MEDITATION" with capital letters you have made a god out of it.
That's why the word 'God' is written with capital 'G'. Whenever you want to make something supreme, ultimate, you write it with a capital letter.

The master said, "I have already committed a sin." He erased all those words he had written, and he said, "Please listen to my first answer -- only then I am true."

Silence is the space in which one awakens, and the noisy mind is the space in which one remains asleep. If your mind continues chattering, you are asleep. Sitting silently, if the mind disappears and you can hear the chattering birds and no mind inside, a silence...this whistle of the bird, the chirping, and no mind functioning in your head, utter silence...then awareness wells up in you. It does not come from the outside, it arises in you, it grows in you. Otherwise remember: you are asleep.

A husband and wife were asleep. About 3 AM the wife dreamt of secretly meeting another man. Then she dreamt she saw her husband coming.
In her sleep she shrieked, "Heavens, my husband!"
Her husband, waking suddenly, leapt out of the window.

And remember, it is not a laughing matter; it is the reality, it is how you are living. It is how man exists in his ordinary state.

A wife tries to win back her husband's love, on the advice of a woman friend, by bringing him his slippers and pipe when he comes home late one night, giving him a tall drink, cuddling up in his lap dressed only in a silk dressing gown, and ending with the murmured offer, "Let's go upstairs, darling!"

"I might as well," says her bemused husband, "I'll get hell when I get home anyway!"

We go on living absolutely inattentive to what is happening around us. Yes, we have become very efficient in doing things. What we are doing, we have become so efficient in doing that we don't need any awareness to do it. It has become mechanical, automatic. We function like robots. We are not men yet; we are machines.

That's what George Gurdjieff used to say again and again, that man as he exists is a machine. He offended many people, because nobody likes to be called a machine. Machines like to be called gods; then they feel very happy, puffed up. Gurdjieff used to call people machines, and he was right. If you watch yourself you will know how mechanically you behave.

The Russian psychologist Pavlov, and the American psychologist Skinner, are ninety-nine point nine percent right about man: they believe that man is a beautiful machine, that's all. There is no soul in him. I say ninety-nine point nine percent they are right; they only miss by a very small margin. In that small margin are the buddhas, the awakened ones. But they can be forgiven, because Pavlov never came across a buddha -- he came across millions of people like you.

Skinner has been studying men and rats and finds no difference. Rats are simple beings, that's all; man is a little more complicated. Man is a highly sophisticated machine, rats are simple machines. It is easier to study rats; that's why psychologists go on studying rats. They study rats and they conclude about man -- and their conclusions are

almost right. I say "almost," mind you, because that point one percent is the most important phenomenon that has happened: a Buddha, a Jesus, a Mohammed. These few awakened people are the real men, but where can B.F. Skinner find a buddha? Certainly not in America.

I have heard:
A man asked a rabbi, "Why didn't Jesus choose to be born in twentieth-century America?"
The rabbi shrugged his shoulders and said, "In America? It would have been impossible. Where can you find a virgin, firstly? And secondly, where will you find three wise men?"

And without a virgin mother and three wise men, how can Jesus be born?

I have heard:
In a church, the priest asked the audience, "Please stand up, all the women who are virgins!"
Just one woman with a small baby girl stood up. Certainly she was a mother, and the priest said, "Do you think yourself to be a virgin? You are a mother!"
She said, "Yes, I am -- but this girl is a virgin, and she cannot stand on her own."

Where is B.F. Skinner going to find a buddha? And even if he can find a buddha, his preconceived prejudices, ideas, will not allow him to see. He will go on seeing his rats. He cannot understand anything that rats cannot do. Now, rats don't meditate, rats don't become enlightened. And his

conception of man is only a magnified form of a rat. And still I say that he is right about the greater majority of people; his conclusions are not wrong. And buddhas will agree with him about the so-called normal humanity: the normal humanity is utterly asleep. Even animals are not so asleep.

Have you seen a deer in the jungle -- how alert he looks, how watchfully he walks? Have you seen a bird sitting on the tree -- how intelligently he goes on watching what is happening all around? You move towards the bird -- there is a certain space he allows; beyond that, one step more, and he flies away. He has a certain alertness about his territory. If somebody enters into that territory then it is dangerous.

If you look around you will be surprised: man seems to be the most asleep animal on the earth.

A woman buys a parrot at an auction of the furnishings of a fancy whorehouse, and keeps the parrot's cage covered for two weeks to make it forget its profane vocabulary. When the cage is finally uncovered, the parrot looks around and remarks, "Awrrk! New house. New madam." When the woman's daughters come in, he adds, "Awrrk! New girls." When her husband comes home that night, the parrot says, "Awrrk! Awrrk! Same old customers. Hello, Joe!"

Man is in a very fallen state. In fact, that is the meaning of the Christian parable of the fall of Adam, his expulsion. But why were Adam and Eve expelled from paradise? They were expelled because they had eaten the fruit of knowledge. They were expelled because they had become

minds, and they had lost their consciousness. If you become a mind you lose consciousness -- mind means sleep, mind means noise, mind means mechanicalness. If you become a mind you lose consciousness. Hence, the whole work that has to be done is: how to become consciousness again and lose the mind. You have to throw out of your system all that you have gathered as knowledge. It is knowledge that keeps you asleep; hence, the more knowledgeable a person is, the more asleep. That has been my own observation too. Innocent villagers are far more alert and awake than the professors in the universities and the pundits in the temples. The pundits are nothing but parrots; the academicians in the universities are full of nothing but holy cow dung, full of absolutely meaningless noise -- just minds and no consciousness. People who work with nature -- farmers, gardeners, woodcutters, carpenters, painters -- they are far more alert than the people that function in the universities as deans and vice-chancellors and chancellors. Because when you work with nature, nature is alert, trees are alert; their form of alertness is certainly different, but they are very alert. Now there are scientific proofs of their alertness. If the woodcutter comes with an axe in his hand and with the deliberate desire to cut the tree, all the trees that see him coming tremble. Now there are scientific proofs about it; I am not talking poetry, I am talking science when I say this. Now there are instruments to measure whether the tree is happy or unhappy, afraid or unafraid, sad or ecstatic. When the woodcutter comes, all the trees that see him start trembling. They become aware that death is close by. And the woodcutter has not cut any tree yet -- just his coming....

And one thing more, far more strange: if the woodcutter is simply passing by there with no deliberate idea to cut a tree, then no tree becomes afraid. It is the same woodcutter, with the same axe. It seems that his intention to cut a tree affects the trees. It means that his intention is being understood; it means the very vibe is being decoded by the trees.
And one more significant fact has been observed scientifically: that if you go into the forest and kill an animal, it is not only the animal kingdom around that becomes shaken, but trees also. If you kill a deer, all the deer that are around feel the vibe of murder, become sad; a great trembling arises in them. Suddenly they are afraid for no particular reason at all. They may not have seen the deer being killed, but somehow, in a subtle way, they are affected -- instinctively, intuitively. But it is not only the deer which are affected -- the trees are affected, the parrots are affected, the tigers are affected, the eagles are affected, the grass leaves are affected. Murder has happened, destruction has happened, death has happened -- everything that is around is affected.
Man seems to be the most asleep....

These sutras of Buddha have to be meditated on deeply, imbibed, followed.

WAKEFULNESS IS THE WAY TO LIFE.

You are alive only in the proportion that you are aware. Awareness is the difference between death and life. You are not alive just because you are breathing, you are not

alive just because your heart is beating. Physiologically you can be kept alive in a hospital, without any consciousness. Your heart will go on beating and you will be able to breathe. You can be kept in such a mechanical arrangement that you will remain alive for years -- in the sense of breathing and the heart beating and the blood circulating. There are now many people around the world in advanced countries who are just vegetating in the hospitals, because advanced technology has made it possible for your death to be postponed indefinitely -- for years, for centuries, you can be kept alive. If this is life, then you can be kept alive. But this is not life at all. Just to vegetate is not life. Buddhas have a different definition. Their definition consists of awareness. They don't say you are alive because you can breathe, they don't say you are alive because your blood circulates; they say you are alive if you are awake. So except for the awakened ones nobody is really alive. You are corpses -- walking, talking, doing things -- you are robots.

WAKEFULNESS IS THE WAY TO LIFE, says Buddha. Become more wakeful and you will become more alive. And life is God -- there is no other God. Hence Buddha talks about life and awareness. Life is the goal and awareness is the methodology, the technique to attain it.

THE FOOL SLEEPS....

And all are asleep, so all are foolish. Don't feel offended. The facts have to be stated as they are. You function in sleep; that's why you go on stumbling, you go on doing things you don't want to do. You go on doing things you

have decided not to do. You go on doing things you know are not right to do, and you don't do things which you know are right.
How is this possible? Why can't you walk straight? Why do you go on getting trapped into bypaths? Why do you go on going astray?

A young man with a fine voice is asked to take part in a pageant play, though he tries to beg off, saying he always gets embarrassed under such circumstances. He is assured it will be very simple, and he will have only one line to say: "I come to snatch a kiss, and dart into the fray. Hark! I hear a pistol shot..." and then stride offstage.
At the performance he comes onstage, very embarrassed already by the tight-fitting colonial knee-breeches he has been made to put on at the last moment, and becomes completely unstrung at the sight of the beautiful heroine lying back on a garden seat, awaiting him, in a white gown. He clears his throat and announces: "I come to kiss your snatch -- no! -- snatch a kiss, and fart into the dray -- I mean, dart into the fray! Hark! -- I hear a shistol pot -- no! -- a shostil pit, a pistil shit. Oh, bat shit, rat shit, shit on you all! I never wanted to be in this damned play anyhow!"

This is what is happening. Watch your life: everything that you go on doing is so confused and so confusing. You don't have any clarity, you don't have any perceptiveness. You are not alert. You can't see! You can't hear! Certainly, you have ears so you can hear, but there is nobody inside to understand it. Certainly you have eyes so you can see, but

there is nobody present inside. So your eyes go on seeing and your ears go on listening, but nothing is understood.
If you really had eyes you would see God everywhere. And if you could hear you would hear the celestial music, you would hear the harmony of existence.
And on each step you stumble, on each step you commit something wrong. And still you go on believing that you are aware. Drop that idea completely. Dropping it is a great leap, a great step, because once you drop the idea that "I am aware" you will start seeking and searching for ways and means to be aware. So the first thing to sink into you is that you are asleep, utterly asleep.
Modern psychology has discovered a few things which are significant; although they have been discovered only intellectually, still it is a good beginning. If intellectually they have been discovered, then sooner or later existentially also they will be experienced.
Freud is a great pioneer; of course, not a buddha, but still a man of great significance, because he was the first to make the idea accepted by the larger part of humanity that man has a great unconscious hidden in him. The conscious mind is only one tenth, and the unconscious mind is nine times bigger than the conscious.
Then his disciple, Jung, went a little further, a little deeper, and discovered the collective unconscious. Behind the individual unconscious there is a collective unconscious.
Now somebody is needed to discover one thing more which is there, and I hope.... Sooner or later the psychological investigations that are going on, on both sides of the Iron Curtain, are bound to discover it -- the cosmic unconscious. Buddhas have talked about it.

So we can say: the conscious mind, a very fragile thing, a very small part of your being. Behind the conscious is the subconscious mind -- vague. You can hear its whispering but you cannot figure it out. It is always there, behind the conscious, pulling its strings.

Third: the unconscious mind which you come across only in dreams or when you take drugs. Then, the collective unconscious mind. You come across it only when you go into a very deep inquiry into your unconscious mind; then you come across the collective unconscious. And if you go still further, deeper, you will come to the cosmic unconscious.

The cosmic unconscious is nature. The collective unconscious is the whole of humanity that has lived up to now, it is part of you. The unconscious is your individual unconscious that the society has repressed in you, that has not been allowed expression. Hence it comes by the back door in the night, in your dreams. And the conscious mind...I will call it the so-called conscious mind because it is only so-called. It is so tiny, just a flicker, but even if it is just a flicker it is important because it has the seed; the seeds are always small. It has great potential.

Now a totally new dimension is opening up. Just as Freud opened the dimension below the conscious, Sri Aurobindo opened the dimension above the conscious. Freud and Sri Aurobindo are the two most important people of this age. Both are intellectuals, neither of them is an awakened person, but both have done a great service to humanity. Intellectually they have made us aware that we are not so small as we appear from the surface, that the surface is hiding great depths and heights.

Freud went into the depths, Sri Aurobindo tried to penetrate into the heights. Above our so-called conscious mind is the real conscious mind; that is attained only through meditation. When your ordinary conscious mind is added to meditation, when the ordinary conscious mind is plus meditation, it becomes the real conscious mind. Beyond the real conscious mind is the superconscious mind.

When you are meditating you have only glimpses. Meditation is a groping in the dark. Yes, a few windows open up, but you fall back again and again. Superconscious mind means samadhi -- you have attained a crystal-clear perceptiveness, you have attained an integrated awareness. Now you cannot fall below it; it is yours. Even in sleep it will remain with you.

Beyond the superconscious is the collective superconscious; the collective superconscious is what is known as "gods" in religions. And beyond the collective superconscious is the cosmic superconscious which even goes beyond gods. Buddha calls it nirvana, Mahavira calls it kaivalya, Hindu mystics have called it moksha; you can call it the truth.

These are the nine states of your being, and you are just living in a small corner of your being -- the tiny conscious mind; as if somebody has a palace and has completely forgotten about the palace and has started living on the porch -- and thinks this is all.

Freud and Sri Aurobindo are both great intellectual giants, pioneers, philosophers, but both are doing great guesswork. Instead of teaching students the philosophy of Bertrand Russell, Alfred North Whitehead, Martin Heidegger, Jean-Paul Sartre, it would be far better if people were taught

more about Sri Aurobindo, because he is the greatest philosopher of this age. But he is completely neglected, ignored by the academic world -- for a certain reason.
The reason is, even to read Sri Aurobindo will make you feel that you are unaware; and he himself is not a buddha yet, but still he will create a very embarrassing situation for you. If he is right, then what are you doing? Then why are you not exploring the heights of your being?
Freud was accepted with great resistance, but finally he was accepted. Sri Aurobindo is not even accepted yet. In fact there is not even any opposition to him; he is simply ignored. And the reason is clear. Freud talks about something below you -- that is not so embarrassing; you can feel good knowing that you are conscious, and below your consciousness there is subconsciousness and unconsciousness and collective unconsciousness. But those states are all below you; you are at the top, you can feel very good. But if you study Sri Aurobindo, you will feel embarrassed, offended, because there are higher states than you -- and man's ego never wants to accept that there is anything higher than him. Man wants to believe that he is the highest pinnacle, the climax, the Gourishankar, the Everest -- that there is nothing higher than him....
That's why the modern man wants to deny God, because to accept God means you have to accept something higher than you. And the modern ego is so puffed up that the modern mind says there is no God and there is no beyond and there is no afterlife. And it feels very good -- denying your own kingdom, denying your own heights, you feel very good. Look at the foolishness of it.
Buddha is right. He says:

THE FOOL SLEEPS
AS IF HE WERE ALREADY DEAD,
BUT THE MASTER IS AWAKE
AND HE LIVES FOREVER.

Awareness is eternal, it knows no death. Only unawareness dies. So if you remain unconscious, asleep, you will have to die again. If you want to get rid of this whole misery of being born and dying again and again, if you want to get rid of the wheel of birth and death, you will have to become absolutely alert. You will have to reach higher and higher into consciousness.

And these things are not to be accepted on intellectual grounds; these things have to become experiential, these things have to become existential. I am not telling you to be convinced philosophically, because philosophical conviction brings nothing, no harvest. The real harvest comes only when you make great effort to wake yourself up.

But these intellectual maps can create a desire, a longing in you; can make you aware of the potential, of the possible; can make you aware that you are not what you appear to be -- you are far more.

THE FOOL SLEEPS AS IF HE WERE ALREADY DEAD, BUT THE MASTER IS AWAKE AND HE LIVES FOREVER.

HE WATCHES.
HE IS CLEAR.

Simple and beautiful statements. Truth is always simple and always beautiful. Just to see the simplicity of these two statements...but how much they contain -- worlds within worlds, infinite worlds. HE WATCHES. HE IS CLEAR. The only thing that has to be learned is watchfulness. Watch! Watch every act that you do. Watch every thought that passes in your mind. Watch every desire that takes possession of you. Watch even small gestures -- walking, talking, eating, taking a bath. Go on watching everything. Let everything become an opportunity to watch.

Don't eat mechanically, don't just go on stuffing yourself -- be very watchful. Chew well and watchfully...and you will be surprised how much you have been missing up to now, because each bite will give you tremendous satisfaction; if you eat watchfully, it will become more tasteful. Even ordinary food tastes if you are watchful; and if you are not watchful, you can eat the most tasteful food but there will be no taste in it, because there is nobody to watch. You simply go on stuffing yourself.

Eat slowly, watchfully; each bite has to be chewed, tasted. Smell, touch, feel the breeze and the sunrays. Look at the moon and become just a silent pool of watchfulness, and the moon will be reflected in you with tremendous beauty. Move in life remaining continuously watchful.

Again and again you will forget. Don't become miserable because of that; it is natural. For millions of lives you have never tried watchfulness, so it is simple, natural, that you go on forgetting again and again. But the moment you remember, again watch.

Remember one thing: when you remember that you have forgotten watching, don't become repentful, don't repent; otherwise, again you are wasting time. Don't feel miserable: "I missed again." Don't start feeling, "I am a sinner." Don't start condemning yourself, because this is a sheer waste of time. Never repent for the past! Live in the moment. If you had forgotten, so what? It was natural -- it has become a habit, and habits die hard. And these are not habits imbibed in one life; these are habits imbibed in millions of lives. So if you can remain watchful even for a few moments, feel thankful to God -- feel thankful. Even those few moments are more than expected.

HE WATCHES. HE IS CLEAR.

And when you watch, a clarity arises. Why does clarity arise out of watchfulness? Because the more watchful you become, the more all your hastiness slows down. You become more graceful. As you watch, your chattering mind chatters less, because the energy that was becoming chattering is turning and becoming watchfulness -- it is the same energy! Now more and more energy will be transformed into watchfulness and the mind will not get its nourishment. Thoughts will start becoming thinner, they will start losing weight. Slowly slowly, they will start dying. And as thoughts start dying, clarity arises. Now your mind becomes a mirror.

HOW HAPPY HE IS! And when one is clear, one is blissful. It is confusion that is the root cause of misery; it is clarity that is the foundation of blissfulness.

HOW HAPPY HE IS!

FOR HE SEES THAT WAKEFULNESS IS LIFE.

And now he knows there is no death, because wakefulness can never be destroyed. When death comes, you will watch it too. You will die watching; watching will not die. Your body will disappear, dust unto dust, but your watchfulness will remain; it will become part of the cosmic whole. It will become cosmic consciousness.

In these moments the seers of the Upanishads declare, "Aham brahmasmi! -- I am the cosmic consciousness!" It is in such spaces that al-Hillaj Mansoor announced, "Ana'l haq! -- I am the truth!"

These are the heights which are your birthright. If you are not getting them, only you are responsible and nobody else.

HOW HAPPY HE IS! FOR HE SEES THAT
WAKEFULNESS IS LIFE.

HOW HAPPY HE IS,
FOLLOWING THE PATH OF THE AWAKENED.

WITH GREAT PERSEVERANCE
HE MEDITATES, SEEKING
FREEDOM AND HAPPINESS.

Listen to these words very attentively: WITH GREAT PERSEVERANCE.... Unless you bring total effort to waking yourself up it is not going to happen. Partial efforts are futile. You cannot be just so-so, you cannot be just lukewarm. It is not going to help. Lukewarm water cannot evaporate, and lukewarm efforts to be alert are bound to fail. Transformation happens only when you put your total energy into it. When you are boiling at a hundred degrees

heat, then you evaporate, then the alchemical change happens. Then you start rising up.

Have you not watched? -- water flows downwards, but vapor rises upwards. Exactly the same happens: unconsciousness goes downwards, consciousness goes upwards. And one thing more: upwards is synonymous with inwards, and downwards is synonymous with outwards. Consciousness goes inwards, unconsciousness goes outwards. Unconsciousness makes you interested in others -- things, people, but it is always the others. Unconsciousness keeps you completely in darkness; your eyes go on being focused on others. It creates a kind of exteriority, it makes you extroverts. Consciousness creates interiority, it makes you introverts; it takes you inward, deeper and deeper.

And deeper and deeper also means higher and higher; they grow simultaneously, just as a tree grows. You only see it going upwards, you don't see the roots going downwards. But first the roots have to go downwards, only then can the tree go upwards. If a tree wants to reach the sky, then it will have to send roots to the very bottom, to the lowest depths possible. The tree grows simultaneously in both directions. In exactly the same way consciousness grows upwards...downwards, it sends its roots into your being.

I talked about nine states of consciousness. Your branches of consciousness will go upwards, from conscious -- so-called conscious -- to real conscious, from real conscious to superconscious, from superconscious to collective conscious, from collective conscious to cosmic conscious. And your roots will be growing from so-called conscious to subconscious, from subconscious to unconscious, from

unconscious to collective unconscious, from collective unconscious to cosmic unconscious. The moment your roots reach nature, your flowers start blooming in God. Hence nature and God are not divided -- in the awakened one they are bridged.

The really awakened one is not against nature, cannot be; he is all for nature. In fact, he helps you to go both ways -- on one side into nature, on the other side into God. That's my effort here. I would like you to be natural, so natural that your roots go to the deepest core of your being -- because that is the only way to help you grow upwards. Roots have to be strongly in the soil, so strong that they can support a high-rising cedar of Lebanon. If it has to go hundreds of feet upwards, it will need great roots. Because of this I am being misunderstood all over this country particularly, and all over the world in general.

Roots have to reach to the sex energy, because that is the lowest, the bottom in you; only then can your flowers bloom in superconsciousness, in samadhi. The lotus can bloom only if it is rooted in the mud deep down in the lake. This is possible only with great perseverance. Man as he is is very lazy; because he is asleep he is lazy.

This story is of a husband and wife who agree that whoever speaks first will have to close the street door which has accidentally been left open. Robbers find the open door, enter, and seeing the silent couple making no move, eat the food on the table, take all the valuables, and finally rape the wife, and propose to shave off the husband's beard.

"Alright," the husband cries at that point, "I'll close the goddamn door!"

People are really lazy, utterly lazy. Laziness is part of sleep. Hence, perseverance, effort, continuous effort, constant effort, will be needed. You will fall back again and again. You are in the state of a drunkard; hence falling backward is forgivable. But the moment you recognize, whenever a ray of light happens and you remember, put your total energy into it again. Don't remain a fool, don't remain asleep, don't remain a drunkard.

There were these three drunkards walking down the street. One was carrying a loaf of bread, the other a jug of wine and the third a car door. As they were walking along, a policeman stopped them and asked, "Where are you going?"
"On a picnic," replied the man with the bread.
"On a picnic?" said the cop. "The bread I can understand -- you can eat it when you get hungry; the wine you can drink when you get thirsty. But why the car door? -- that I can't understand."
"Well," said the man with the door, "if it gets too cold I can roll up the window."

You will have to come out of many layers of drunkenness. Greed is a state of drunkenness, and everybody is greedy -- greedy for more. Mind continuously asks for more and more, and the demand is never-ending. If you are after money, more money. If you are after political power, more power. If you are after prestige, more prestige. If you are interested in becoming humble, then more humbleness, because you have to be the most humble man in the world.

If you are after renunciation, then more and more renunciation. There is never any end to this constant demand of the mind -- more....

Greed is a drunkenness, it is a sleep. So is anger. Have you not observed that in anger you can do things which you cannot do ordinarily? You say things for which you repent later on. And you cannot believe later on that you uttered such nonsense, that you are capable of uttering such nonsense. What happens when you are angry? You are in a state of drunkenness.

Become more watchful and anger will be less and greed will be less and jealousy will be less.

I don't say to you: Don't be angry, because that's what has been said to you down the ages. Your so-called saints have been telling you, "Don't be angry!" so you have learned ways of repressing anger. But the more you repress anger, the bigger the unconscious you are creating in yourself. You are throwing things into the basement, and then you will be afraid to enter into the basement, because all these things -- anger and greed and sex -- are there. You know! You have been throwing them there. All kinds of rubbish are there, and dangerous, poisonous. You will not be ready to go in.

That's why people don't want to go in, because going in means encountering all these things. And nobody wants to encounter these things; one wants to avoid them. For thousands of years you have been told to repress, and because of repression you have become more and more unconscious. I cannot say to you repress. I would like to say to you just the opposite: don't repress -- watch, be alert.

When anger arises, sit down in your room, close your doors and watch it.

You know only two ways: either to be angry, be violent, destructive, or to repress it. You don't know the third way, and the third way is the way of the buddhas: neither indulge nor repress -- watch. Indulgence creates habit. If you become angry today and again tomorrow, and the day after tomorrow again, you are creating a habit; you are conditioning yourself to be more and more angry.

So indulgence cannot take you out of it. That's where the modern growth movement is stuck. Encounter groups, primal therapy, gestalt, bioenergetics...and so many beautiful things are happening in the world, but they are stuck at a certain point. Their problem is: they teach expression -- and it is good, it is far better than repression. If there is only this choice, repress or express, then I would suggest express. But this is not the real choice; there is a third alternative far more important than both these. If you express, you become habitual; you learn by doing it again and again -- you can't get out of it.

In this commune there are at least fifty therapy groups running, for a certain reason. It is just to balance the thousands of years of repression; it is just to balance. It is just to bring to light all that you have repressed as Christians, Hindus, Mohammedans, Jainas, Buddhists. It is just to undo the centuries' old harm that has been done to you.

But remember, these groups are not the end; they only prepare you for meditation. They are not the goal; they are just simple means to undo the wrong of the past. Once you have thrown out of your system all that you have been

repressing all along, I have to lead you into watchfulness. Now it will be easier to watch.

But you are not to become a group-addicted person, you are not to become a groupie. There are people now in the world who are group-addicted; they go from one group to another. One encounter finishes -- then another marathon, then gestalt, then this and that.... After just a few days the itch arises -- because where to express? In the normal society they cannot express, they have to repress.

So the group becomes just an outlet. The normal society forces you to repress, the group helps you to express but you are not really growing. Again you will be back in the normal society, again repressing. And if you express in the normal society, you will be getting into far more dangerous situations. You may murder somebody -- you have so much anger. You will be in jail, imprisoned forever. Or if you go on fighting with everybody -- if you slap the boss in the office, if you beat your wife, your children, your husband -- then your whole life will become a chaos, it will be impossible to live it. So after a few days of accumulation you need another encounter. A few days of encountering and you feel unburdened; back in society you will be burdened again.

This is not going to help. This is a temporary relief. You can scream to your heart's desire in a primal therapy group, but if you start screaming on the road, then you will be taken to the police station. You can scream in a group context -- it is allowed, helped, provoked; you are persuaded to scream, because since your childhood you have been repressing it. It has become a wound; it needs to be opened. If the pus oozes out and the wound is left open

to the winds and to the sun and to the rain, it will heal itself, because you have a healing energy; it is inbuilt. But back in the society again...how long can you remain in a primal therapy group? Back in the same old society again, you will have to repress; you cannot go on screaming there.

Then the scream gathers, then the steam gathers. Then one day you have to go into the group again. This is a temporary relief; good as far as it goes, but it cannot make you a buddha. That's where this commune is different from institutes like Esalen. They end with groups -- we begin with groups. Where they end, that's exactly the point from where we begin.

And it is not a coincidence that thousands of therapists have become interested in my work. They have come here.... Among my sannyasins, the greatest group from any profession is that of psychotherapists. A great need is felt now all over the world that encounter, primal therapy, gestalt, can help a little bit to unburden people, but they cannot help to make them buddhas -- they cannot help them to become awakened.

Indulgence creates habit, repression gathers the poison within. In indulgence you throw the poison on others, but they are not going to remain silent -- they will throw it back. It becomes a match: you throw your anger on others, they throw their anger on you -- but nobody is helped, everybody is harmed and hurt.

And if you repress.... Because of this futility of indulgence, priests invented repression. It keeps you out of danger. Repression keeps you a good citizen, a gentleman. It keeps you out of the dangers of getting caught by the law, getting caught into enmity; it keeps you smooth. Repression helps

you to become a better social person, that's true. But it makes you a wound inside, just a wound, and the pus goes on gathering inside. Outside it functions as a lubricating agent, but inside you become more and more mad.

If this society and this century are the maddest in the whole history, the credit goes to the past. Five thousand years of saintly advice to people -- the credit goes to those saints. If people are becoming mad, if people are becoming insane, if people are committing suicide, if people are becoming murderous, the credit certainly goes to all your so-called saints, priests, preachers, leaders. They are responsible for it.

Just the other day I was telling you the Canadian government wants to investigate, make a deep investigation of this commune because one American citizen who was a sannyasin has committed suicide, and another American who was a sannyasin has gone mad too. Now, I wonder: the person who has committed suicide was sixty years old. He has been a Christian for sixty years, but Christianity is not investigated. And he has been a sannyasin for not even sixty days! The credit goes to Christianity, not to me.

The man who went mad was a Protestant. Now, I am condemned because he was a sannyasin, but the Protestant church is not condemned. And he was brought up as a Protestant, he lived as a Protestant for thirty-five years, and for just a few days he was a sannyasin. Now, American society is not condemned.

This is strange logic...and I am trying to help people. When he had come here, he was already mad. He has come here after six years of psychoanalysis; because psychoanalysis could not help him he had come here and became a

sannyasin. Because the Protestant church and the priests could not help him, he had come here and become a sannyasin. But they had done such a good job that it was difficult to bring him back down to earth.

And he did not remain here for long; he was here for only three weeks. Now, the credit cannot go to me. If he becomes mad, I cannot be held responsible. But this strange logic is there.

Here, also, the same logic continues. If a sannyasin misbehaves, I am condemned. But so many Hindus are put in jail every day -- Hinduism is not condemned. So many Mohammedans misbehave, but Mohammedanism is not condemned. If a Sikh murders somebody, Sikhism is not condemned. This is a very stupid and absurd world.

People come to me for help. Many are helped. Ninety-nine percent of people are helped. But the one percent has been damaged so much that it is almost impossible to help them. They can also be helped, but I am not allowed to help them.

For example, an exhibitionist comes here who once in a while exposes himself naked. Now, he can be helped, easily helped -- if he is allowed to move naked. He is not dangerous; he is not doing any harm to anybody. He simply has this eccentric idea...he enjoys it to shock you. This is the way of shocking you, this is the way of gaining attention: he exposes himself naked. If he is simply allowed to move naked and nobody pays any attention to him, he will be cured.

The cure is simple, very simple! Don't be shocked, and don't pay attention. It is to shock you and to get your attention that he is an exhibitionist. If nobody pays any attention, if he comes naked to you and you talk to him as if

he is not naked, he will be puzzled. He will not be able to believe what is happening. He will go and look in the mirror to see whether he is naked or not! And what is the point? If nobody pays any attention and nobody is shocked, he may try wearing clothes -- maybe these are strange people and they can be shocked by wearing clothes! People can be helped, but the society does not allow me to help them. Even that one percent can be cured, because nobody is really incurable. But time will be needed, perseverance will be needed.
Buddha says: WITH GREAT PERSEVERANCE HE MEDITATES, SEEKING FREEDOM AND HAPPINESS. Meditate -- meditation means watchfulness -- and you will attain to freedom and bliss.

SO AWAKE, REFLECT, WATCH.
WORK WITH CARE AND ATTENTION.
LIVE IN THE WAY
AND THE LIGHT WILL GROW IN YOU.

The light grows of its own accord. You simply become more silent, more watchful, more meditative, and the light descends in you -- of its own accord. You need not go anywhere.

BY WATCHING AND WORKING
THE MASTER MAKES FOR HIMSELF AN ISLAND
WHICH THE FLOOD CANNOT OVERWHELM.

Your watchfulness becomes an island, a citadel, which no passion, no lust, no greed, no anger, can possess. With that

island, for the first time you become an integrated individual. For the first time you become a human being. This human being is absolutely needed today, this new human being -- homo novus.
Enough for today.

The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 1

Chapter #6
Chapter title: Through a glass darkly
26 June 1979 am in Buddha Hall

The first question:
Question 1
BELOVED MASTER,
I FEEL LIKE I KNOW THE ANSWERS. WHY DO I STILL ALLOW THE QUESTIONS TO BECOME PROBLEMS?

Savita, there are not answers, there is only the answer. And that answer is not of the mind, that answer cannot be of the mind. Mind is a multiplicity. Mind has answers and answers, but not the answer.
That answer is a state of no-mind. It is not verbal. You can know it but you cannot reduce it to knowledge. You can know it, but you cannot say it. It is known in the innermost recesses of your being. It is light that simply illuminates your interiority.
It is not an answer to any particular question. It is the end of all questioning, it refers to no question at all. It simply dissolves all the questions and a state is left without any

question...that's the answer. Unless that is known, nothing is known.

Hence, you may feel that you know the answers, but still questions will go on popping up, still questions will go on torturing you. Still questions are bound to arise because the root is not cut yet. New leaves will be sprouting, new branches will be arising.

The root is cut only when you disconnect yourself from the mind, when you become so aware, so watchful that you can see the mind as separate from you. When all identity with the mind is dropped, when you are a watcher on the hills and the mind is left deep down in the darkness of the valleys, when you are on the sunlit peaks, just a pure witness, seeing, watching, but not getting identified with anything -- good or bad, sinner or saint, this or that -- in that witnessing all questions dissolve. The mind melts, evaporates. You are left as a pure being, just a pure existence -- a breathing, a beating of the heart, utterly in the moment, no past, no future, hence no present either.

Unless that state arrives you will feel many times that you know the answers, but each answer will only create new questions. Each answer will trigger new chains of questions in you. You can read, you can study, you can think, but you will get more and more in the mire of the mind, more entangled, more entrapped. Slip out of the mind!

Hence, I am not giving you answers, I am trying to point out the answer. You cannot use the plural for it because it is one. It is a state of utter silence, peace, no-thought. Buddha calls it right mindfulness -- sammasati. And he says that those who are rightly mindful, alert, aware, the truth comes to them of its own accord. You need not go anywhere, it

comes. You need not even seek and search, because how can you seek and search? Out of your ignorance, whatsoever you do will bring more ignorance. Out of your ignorance, wherever you go you will go astray. Out of your confusion, how can you find clarity? Out of your confusion you will become more and more confused -- in search of clarity.

Hence Buddha says: The master watches, the master is clear. Aes dhammo sanantano -- this is the law, the ultimate, eternal, inexhaustible law.

To be silent is to have the answer. To be silent is to be without questions...and the root is cut, then no leaves arrive anymore.

Savita, you say, "I feel like I know the answers."

That is only an illusion. And the mind is very clever in creating new illusions. The mind is very deceptive: it can deceive you in knowledge too. It can deceive you in everything! It can even make you believe that you are enlightened, that you are a buddha already. Beware! The only enemy is the mind; there is no other enemy.

The old scriptures talk about the mind. They have a special name for it -- they call it the Devil. The Devil is not somebody outside you; it is your own mind that goes on tempting you, that goes on cheating you, deceiving you, that goes on creating new illusions in you. Beware, watch the mind! And in watching, questions disappear -- not that they are answered, let me repeat it again.

The buddha knows no answers -- not that he has come to the conclusion of all questions, no, not at all. On the contrary, he has no questions anymore. Because he has no

questions anymore, his whole being has become the answer.
Savita, that moment is possible.
That's my whole work here. I am not here to give you more information; that you can get anywhere. Thousands of universities exist, thousands of libraries exist. Information you can get anywhere, you can become knowledgeable anywhere. My effort is to make you unlearn whatsoever you have learned up to now, to make you innocent so that you can start functioning from a state of not-knowing. So that you don't have any answers, so that you act spontaneously, not out of the past and out of the conclusions already arrived at. So that you don't have any ready-made formula for anything...so that you are like a small child mirroring reality.
And when you are silent, no knowledge clamoring inside you, your perception is clear -- no dust on the mirror...you reflect that which is. And out of that reflection whatever action arises is virtue.

The second question:
Question 2
BELOVED MASTER,
YOU WANT US TO BE INDIVIDUALS, BUT DURING WORK IN THE ASHRAM WE HAVE TO BE VERY DISCIPLINED. DISCIPLINE AND INDIVIDUALISM -- ARE THEY NOT DIAMETRICALLY OPPOSITE?

Sudarshan, I would like you to be individuals, but not individualists. And there is a great difference. The individualist is not an individual yet. The individualist who

believes in individualism is only an egoist. And to be an egoist is not to be an individual. Just the contrary: the individual has no ego, and the ego has no individuality. The ego is such an ordinary phenomenon -- everybody has it! There is nothing special about it, there is nothing unique about it. Everybody has the ego. It is so common! The uncommon thing is egolessness.

Only an egoless consciousness attains to individuality. And by individuality I simply mean the literal meaning of the word: individual means indivisible, individual means integrated; individual means one who is not many, who is not a crowd, who is not multipsychic; one who has attained to unity, one who has become a crystallized being. Gurdjieff uses the word 'crystallization' for individuality. But the basic requirement for crystallization is to drop the ego, because ego is a false entity. It won't allow you to be real, it won't allow you to be authentically real. It won't allow you to grow. It is false, it is a deception, it is an illusion. You are not separate from existence, but the ego goes on pretending separation.

And the other word that you have used in the question also has to be understood: discipline. Discipline does not mean anything imposed upon you. Nothing is imposed in this commune. If you enter this commune it is at your own choice. The doors are open -- you can leave any moment. In fact, entry is difficult and we make every possible effort to help you to leave. Nobody is hindered from leaving, although every possible effort is made to hinder you from entering. Entry is very difficult.

If you choose to become part of this commune it is your decision -- your readiness to commit yourself, to be involved.

Out of this decision a discipline arises. You can choose to get out of the commune, but once you are in the commune it means that you have taken a responsibility. And it is only through responsibility that one grows. By fulfilling one's responsibility totally, growth becomes possible.

There are a few people here, only a few, who go on trying to deceive the commune. They are simply befooling themselves; nobody is befooled! They don't want to work, they try to avoid it in every possible way. They find excuses, they even fall ill just to avoid work. But this is so stupid! You have entered the commune to work upon yourself. You have entered the commune to make a concentrated effort to become an integrated individual. You have entered the commune for your spiritual growth, for enlightenment. And if you avoid...and that seems to be the real question behind the apparent question.

You say, Sudarshan, "Individualism and discipline -- are they not diametrically opposite?"

They are not! An individual is always a disciplined phenomenon. One who is not disciplined is not an individual; he is just a chaos, he is many fragments. All those fragments are functioning separately, even in opposition to each other. That's how people are ordinarily: one part of the mind going to the south, another part going to the north; one part saying one thing, another part opposing it. You know it! I am simply stating a fact -- you can observe it. One part says "Do this." Another part

immediately says "No!" Something says "Yes," and something immediately destroys it by saying "No."
This is your situation! You are an individual in such a situation, when you cannot even say a total yes or a total no? Your no is always halfhearted and your yes too -- and you think you are an individual?
An individual means one who can function as a totality, as an organic unity. How are you going to become an organic unity? It can only be through conscious discipline.
That's what Buddha is saying again and again: perseverance, effort, a conscious, deliberate effort to grow -- and total effort, not lukewarm. You have to boil at a hundred degrees. Yes, sometimes it is painful, but it all depends on you, on how you interpret it. If you really want to grow it is not painful -- it is tremendously pleasant. Each step deeper into discipline brings more and more joy, because it gives you more and more soul, being.
Discipline means readiness to learn; hence the word 'disciple', they come from the same root. Who is a disciple? -- one who bows down, surrenders, and is ready to learn. And what is discipline? -- the readiness, the openness, the vulnerability, to learn.
Entering into this commune you are entering into a buddhafield. It is a surrender, it is a trust! I am here to make you individuals, but you will have to pass through many many devices. Many fires you will have to pass through, many tests. Only then, slowly slowly, will you be welded into one unity. And you have remained a multiplicity for so long, for so many lives, that unless concentrated effort is made, unless you are attacked from every nook and corner, unless your sleep is broken in every

possible way, you are shaken and shocked, the individual is not going to be born.

The work that is happening in the commune is not really what it appears from the surface. It is something else -- it is a device! We have to use devices.

Somebody comes to me and wants to become part of the commune, and I say to him, "Go to Deeksha." Deeksha is my device! I have given her total power -- and I have given her total power because she is so loving, so soft, so caring. She wounds people, but she heals also. By one hand she hammers, by the other she consoles. She is a device.

And when I say to you, "Go and work with Deeksha," and she shouts at you and in every possible way she provokes you, it is discipline to watch -- not to act in your old ways, as you have always acted. And she is so motherly that it is very simple to react to her as you have been reacting to your own parents. It is very simple that she will create a reaction in you that your mother creates in you. Mothers are intolerable creatures -- and Deeksha is a perfect mother! I know, Sudarshan, it is difficult -- but growth is difficult.

Many more devices are going to be created. You will be sent to many dimensions. No corner of your being has to be left undeveloped, otherwise you will become lopsided.

And the first principle of discipline is surrender.

Apparently it looks contradictory, because that's what you have been told: that if you surrender, then you are no longer an individual. And I say to you, if you cannot surrender you are not an individual. Only an individual can surrender.

Surrender is such a great phenomenon, only a man of great will can surrender. It is the ultimate in will. To drop your will is bound to be the ultimate in will. To put yourself

aside, absolutely aside, and to say to something such a total yes -- which your mind resists, your old habits resist.... And sometimes you are right -- and that's where the whole beauty lies. You are right, and still you have to surrender to something which does not appear at all right logically. Deeksha is crazy! You may be far more intellectual, far more rational -- but you have to surrender to Deeksha. Her craziness is her quality -- that's why I have chosen her. I have got many more rational people: I could have chosen a Ph.D. who would have convinced you that he is right. But when you are convinced and you follow, it is not surrender. When you are not convinced at all, you see the apparent stupidity of a certain thing, and still you surrender, that is a great step, a great step of getting out of your past.

This commune is a lab, this commune is an alchemical process. You come here as a crowd and I have to weld you into unity. Much hammering is going to happen, and you will come out of this whole process as pure individuals. Discipline is the way to create individuality. But remember: to be an individual is not to be an individualist. Individualism is an ego trip. And the people who believe in individualism are not individuals, remember -- remember well. Deep down they know they are not individuals, hence they create a facade of philosophy, of logic, of argument, because deep down they don't feel they are individuals. They pretend on the outside that they are individuals -- they believe in individualism. Believing in individualism is not becoming an individual. Belief is always false.

When you are an individual you need not believe in individualism. When it is a truth of your being, belief is not needed. Belief is needed only to cover things: you don't

know about God and you believe in God. The believer is an atheist. He may be a Christian, a Hindu, a Mohammedan, a Buddhist, it doesn't matter: a believer is an atheist. He does not know about God, and still he believes. That means he is even trying to deceive God! He is a hypocrite, he is a parrot. Parrotlike he goes on repeating what the scriptures say, what others say. And parrots can repeat beautifully, without understanding a thing, without knowing a thing, mechanically.

A Negro walked into a pet store in Harlem, wanting to buy a good talking parrot. The proprietor told him that they had a wide selection of parrots, so what sort did he want?
The Negro asked to see a fifty-dollar parrot. "Polly wanna cracker? Polly wanna cracker?" he called as soon as the parrot appeared. The parrot said nothing.
"I wanna parrot that talks good," he said. "Show me a good one."
So the proprietor brought out a two-hundred-dollar parrot: "Polly wanna cracker? Polly wanna cracker?" No answer.
"You gotta better parrot than this?" asked the Negro.
The proprietor said yes, and led the Negro behind the counter, to where the thousand-dollar parrot, beautifully plumaged with sparkling beady eyes, clearly a very special parrot, sat proudly in a luxurious cage.
"Polly wanna cracker? Polly wanna cracker?" came from the Negro, but the parrot didn't even look up.
"Man, this your best parrot?" asked the Negro, "because I wanna a good talker and this one looks dumb."
The proprietor took him to the back of the shop where in a special polished brass cage the size of a small room sat the

pride of the proprietor's collection -- a five-thousand-dollar parrot. The parrot, dressed in a silk smoking jacket and sitting on a quilted perch, was smoking a pipe and reading the FINANCIAL TIMES.
"Polly wanna a cracker? Polly wanna cracker?" the Negro yelled.
The parrot sniffed and looked at him over his gold-rimmed spectacles with aristocratic disdain.
"Polly wanna cracker? Polly wanna cracker?" the Negro yelled again.
"Polly wanna cracker?" said the parrot in an impeccable Oxford accent. "Nigger wanna watermelon?"

The believer is a parrot. The believer knows nothing. The believer is an atheist in disguise. He is trying to befool himself, the world and even God.
The man who believes in individualism is not an individual. The man who is really an individual need not believe -- he knows it, so what is the point of believing? Belief is always needed in ignorance, and individualism is a belief. To be an individual is an experience! Individualism is very cheap, but to be an individual needs arduous discipline. It needs great perseverance, work, watchfulness. It comes only out of years of effort in awareness, in meditation.
And whatsoever is happening here in this commune, Sudarshan, is nothing but different ways to introduce you to meditation. In the kitchen, in the carpentry shop, in the soap workshop, in the boutique -- whatsoever is happening, apparently it looks as if it is the same ordinary thing as happens everywhere else. It is not. If you go and see the carpenters working, of course they go on working like any

other carpenters anywhere else -- but with a different quality. That quality cannot be seen. You will have to become a participant, only then will you slowly feel it. That quality is of trust, love.
My sannyasins are here because they love me, for no other reason. They are simply here with me to be here with me. For the sake of being here with me they are ready to do anything. But whatsoever they are doing is only the outer part. You will see the body of the work but you will not be able to see the spirit of the work. For that you will have to become a participant.
And, Sudarshan, it seems that you are still a spectator. Maybe you are working in the commune, but still you have not become a participant -- otherwise such a question would have been impossible.

The third question:
Question 3
BELOVED MASTER,
WHY AM I FEELING I AM MISSING SOMETHING? THAT I SHOULD BE SOMETHING ELSE? PLEASE HELP ME LET GO OF THIS GARBAGE.

Dhyana Yogi, if it is garbage, if you really understand that it is garbage, then there is no question of helping you drop it. Knowing it as garbage is dropping it!
But is seems that you have heard me say that it is garbage. It has become a belief in you; it is not your own knowing, it is not your own experience. You are still clinging to it. Deep down you still think it is precious, it is not garbage. Deep down you still think these are diamonds not pebbles.

Deep down somewhere you still believe it is a treasure to be protected and guarded.

Don't start believing me, because that will make no difference. You were believing in Mohammed, or you were believing in Christ, or in Buddha, and then you come and you start believing in me. That is not a revolution, that is not conversion. You simply change the object of your belief, but the belief remains -- the same believing mind. You believe in Jesus, but Jesus speaks the language which is now two thousand years old. You cannot make much sense out of it; the context is lost in which it was relevant. I speak the language of the twentieth century. You can make sense out of it, so you withdraw your belief from Jesus and you start believing in me. This is very simple and cheap.

I am not saying believe in me. I am saying drop all believing and start seeing, because belief will remain a blindness -- start seeing! Is it really garbage that you are carrying? Is it your understanding that it is garbage? Then you will not ask how to drop it. Nobody asks how to drop garbage. The problem arises only because deep down you know yourself that it is gold. And somebody says that it is garbage and says it very convincingly, and you cannot argue, and he silences you. And the man has such authenticity, such integrity, that in his presence you simply become overflooded with his being. You simply start saying, "Yes, it is garbage." But deep down you still know it is not garbage, it is gold! Hence the problem arises: how to drop it?

If you understand on your own that it is garbage, you will never ask how to drop it. Seeing it as garbage is dropping it, knowing it as garbage is dropping it! The garbage is not

clinging to you -- you are clinging to it. The garbage cares nothing about you, the garbage is not interested in you. If you drop it, it is not going to make much fuss about it -- "Why are you dropping me?" It will not say a single word, it will not create any problem for you. It will not go to the court. You need not have a divorce! If you drop it, the garbage will be really more happy than it is now. It will be finished with you, it will be free from you. It must be getting tired of you. It is you who are clinging to it. Why are you clinging to it? Why does one cling to something? -- because deep down one goes on believing it is precious. Dhyana Yogi, you say, "Why am I feeling I am missing something?"

Because from your very childhood you have been told that in yourself, intrinsically, you are worthless. As you are you have no value. The value has to be attained, the worth has to be proved. From your very childhood you have been taught this millions of times. The parents, the teachers, the priests, the politicians, they are all in a secret conspiracy to destroy the child. And the best way to destroy a child is to destroy his trust in himself.

To destroy the trust in the child you have to prove to the child that worth is not a given phenomenon, that it has to be achieved in life and you can miss it. Unless you work, unless you are very ambitious, unless you struggle with others.... It is a tooth and nail fight and you have to cut each other's throats to achieve it. You are being conditioned to be violent, ambitious, full of desires: to have more money, to have more power, to have more prestige. Because you have been told that intrinsically you don't have any worth, this problem has arisen.

And I say that you are intrinsically worthy, that you are born as buddhas. Unaware you are, utterly oblivious of the reality of your own being, but you are hidden gods. What I am saying is so totally different from what has been told to you, that a problem has arisen. I say you are buddhas -- right now you are buddhas! -- but the whole training and teaching, conditioning is: How can you be a buddha right now? Tomorrow maybe, one day certainly, in some future life it is going to happen...but right now? It seems impossible.

You have believed too much in your parents, in your teachers, in your politicians, in your priests, and whatsoever they have told you, you have collected it. It is garbage, but you have carried the garbage for so long that suddenly to drop it seems impossible -- so long you have remained attached to it, so long you have thought it beautiful, precious, nourishing. Now I say: It is all nonsense! Drop it, and just be a buddha from this very moment! It is not a question of attaining, it is only a question of becoming aware. It is only a question of becoming conscious, alert, awake, not a question of achievement.

So you listen to me: one part of your mind says, "Yes, the Master must be right!" One part of you simply nods yes, because what is being said is a simple truth of life. But all your training is against it. When you are close to me you start feeling it is true. When you go away from me the mind jumps back upon you -- with vengeance. And of course it is very powerful. The mind is so powerful, that's why it destroys your intelligence.

Intelligence has nothing to do with the mind; intelligence has something to do with the heart. It is the quality of the heart. Intellectuality is the quality of the head. The intellectual is not necessarily an intelligent person and the intelligent person is not necessarily an intellectual.
Your intellect is full of garbage -- and I am trying to wake up your intelligence. And the whole society has tried to make you unaware of your intelligence. The society is against your intelligence. It wants you to be mediocre, because only mediocre people can be good slaves. It wants you to be unintelligent and stupid, because only stupid people can be dominated.
And stupid people are obedient, stupid people are never rebellious, and stupid people simply vegetate. They don't make any effort to live their lives at the optimum. They don't try to burn their torch of life from both ends simultaneously. They don't have intensity. Stupidity is obedient, and obedience creates stupidity.

A rather simple dude rode into town in the middle of the day stark naked. The sheriff called him over and said, "Jake, what are you doing riding into town with no clothes on?"
"Well, sheriff," said Jake, "it is a long story. I was riding into town to get some provisions for my pa, when I came across this lady on the side of the road who asked me for some help. Now my daddy always told me to help gentle lady folk, so I got off my horse and helped her carry her picnic basket down to the river. Then I helped her lay out her blanket, and helped her with everything she asked me to do. Then she said, 'How about taking your boots off,

cowboy?' So I did, sheriff, and then she said, 'How about taking your clothes off, cowboy?' And I said, 'Sure thing, Ma'am.' And she was there on that rug, naked as the day she was born. Then she lay back and said, 'Go to town cowboy!'...and so here I am, sheriff."

Obedience is a form of stupidity -- and the society wants you to be stupid. Stupid people are good people. They remain always with the status quo, they never go against it. Even if they see the rottenness of things, they simply close their eyes, or they are always ready to accept any stupid explanation.

For example, this country has been poor for centuries, starving, suffering. But because people are religious, obedient, stupid, they have been given any kind of explanation and they have accepted it. Some believe that God has made them poor because poverty is something very pious. They worship poverty; in India poverty is worshipped. If you renounce your riches and you become a naked fakir, millions of people will think you are a great sage. You may be simply stupid, but just because you have renounced riches you are a great sage. I have seen many stupid sages.

Now it is a contradiction in terms -- how can a stupid person be a sage? A sage has to be wise! But it is very difficult in this world to be wise and be worshipped. Wise people are to be murdered, crucified, poisoned. Stupid people are worshipped. Stupid people simply follow whatever the society says. Whatsoever the society wants them to do, they simply do it. So a few people have been worshipping poverty.

Gandhi used to call poor people daridra narayana -- "the poor are divine." Poverty is divine! The poor people are gods! If this is true then who would not like to be poor? If poor people are gods, who would not like to be a god?
And then there are other explanations: that you are poor because in your past lives you have committed sins. Those explanations have been invented for those people who don't believe in God. The Jainas, the Buddhists, they don't believe in God so you cannot give the first explanation to them. They need another explanation: the theory of karma. But the purpose is the same! If you have committed sins in your past life, then it is better to be finished with the karma. Go through poverty, and go through poverty without any resistance. If you create any resistance, you will again be creating bad karma and you will suffer in your future life. Enough, after all, is enough! Now be finished with the whole thing -- suffer at this moment contentedly. So people have become cows and buffaloes; they are suffering contentedly, no resistance, no rebellion.
The society wants you to be stupid, not intelligent. Intelligence is dangerous. Intelligence means you will start thinking on your own, you will start looking around on your own. You will not believe in the scriptures; you will believe only in your own experience.
Dhyana Yogi, please don't believe in what I say. Experiment, meditate, experience -- unless it becomes your own understanding, nothing is going to help.
You ask me, "Why am I feeling that I am missing something?"
...Because you have been told always that you have to find something. Now you are not finding it, so the feeling arises

that you are missing. And I am telling you, you have never lost it in the first place! Please stop trying to find it, stop seeking and searching. You have it already! Whatsoever is needed, you have it already. Just look within and you will find infinite treasures, inexhaustible treasures of joy, love, ecstasy.

Nothing is being missed if you look in, but if you go on searching outside you will feel more and more frustrated. And as you grow older, of course, you will feel that your life is slipping out of your hands and you have not found it yet. And the whole irony is that you have not lost it in the first place. It has always been within you...it is this moment within you.

But don't believe me. I am not here to create believers, I am here to help you experience. The moment it becomes your experience, it liberates. Truth liberates, says Jesus -- not belief but truth.

But my truth cannot be your truth; my truth will be your belief. Only your truth can be true to you. Truth certainly liberates, but let me add that the truth has to be your truth. Nobody else's truth can liberate you. Somebody else's truth will become only an imprisonment.

Dhyana Yogi, you are not missing anything. Nobody is missing. In the nature of things we cannot miss it. We are part of God and God is part of us. There is no way, no possible way to miss it. How can you escape from yourself? Where? Wherever you go you will remain yourself. Even in hell you will remain yourself, because you cannot escape from yourself, you cannot escape from God.

It is there waiting, patiently waiting for you to look in.

You say, "...that I should be something else?"
That has been told to you again and again: "Be somebody! Look at Gautam Buddha, at Krishna, at Christ. Be a Buddha, be a Krishna, be a Christ!" Then certainly you will die in misery, in anguish, frustrated -- utterly frustrated, crying and weeping -- because you cannot be a Buddha. You are not meant to be a Buddha! You cannot be a Christ, you cannot be a Krishna. You can only be yourself.

A great Hassid master, Zusiya, was dying. People had gathered -- disciples, sympathizers. Somebody asked, an old man, "Zusiya, when you are facing God -- and soon you will be facing God because you are dying -- will you be able to say to him that you followed Moses absolutely, truthfully?"
Zusiya opened his eyes, and these were his last words. He said, "Stop talking nonsense! God is not going to ask me, 'Zusiya, why were you not a Moses?' He will ask me, 'Zusiya, why were you not a Zusiya?'"

You have to be just yourself and nobody else. And in fact that's what buddhahood means: to be yourself. That is what christ-consciousness means: just to be yourself. Buddha was not an imitation of somebody else. Don't you think there were many many great men who had preceded him? He must have been told, "Be a Krishna! Be a Parshvanath! Be an Adinatha!" He must have heard beautiful stories, mythologies. He must have read the PURANAS, ancient stories about the great men, Rama, Krishna, Parasuram. He must have heard all that, he must have received the heritage. But he never tried to be somebody. He wanted to

be himself, he wanted to know who he is. He never became an imitator; that's why one day he became awakened.
Jesus never tried to be Abraham, Moses, Ezekiel. Jesus simply tried to be himself. That was his crime, that's why he was crucified. The same people who crucified Jesus would have worshipped him if he had simply been an imitator, a carbon copy of Moses. If he had been just a gramophone record repeating the Ten Commandments, the Jews would have worshipped him. But they had to crucify the man -- he was just himself.
The rotten society, the crowd, the mob mind, cannot tolerate individuals. It is impossible for them to tolerate a Socrates. Do you know what the charge was against Socrates? Exactly the same thing is said about me! This was the crime of Socrates, that he used to corrupt the minds of the youth. That's exactly what my enemies say: that I am corrupting people's minds, particularly the minds of the youth.
Socrates was corrupting the minds of the youth? He was trying to awaken their intelligence, but the society became afraid. If so many people become so authentic, true, then the vested interests are in danger. Then you cannot drive people like cattle. And that's what priests enjoy, and the politicians too.
There is a conspiracy between the priest and the politician to exploit people, to dominate people, to oppress people. And the fundamental is: never allow them to become intelligent. Give them substitutes. What is the substitute for intelligence? -- intellectuality. Give them education; send them to the school, to the college, to the university, so they become intellectuals.

Have you ever heard of universities creating intelligence? They create intellectuals, they create scholars, they create people who know the scriptures -- to the very word they can repeat the scriptures -- but they don't create intelligent people. They serve society; the educational system is invented by this rotten society to serve its own purposes. It is not there to help you, it is there to keep you in bondage.
Dhyana Yogi, I cannot help you let go of this garbage, I can only help you to be more conscious. And if you are conscious the garbage will be dropped of its own accord. One day suddenly you will find it disappearing...suddenly disappearing. As consciousness deepens, all garbage disappears -- just as you bring light in and darkness disperses.
Buddha says: Become more aware and the light will start pouring in...aes dhammo sanantano.

The fourth question:
Question 4
BELOVED MASTER,
I OFTEN READ THE 'HYMN TO LOVE' IN THE NEW TESTAMENT. IT SEEMS TO ME THAT THIS IS EXACTLY YOUR MESSAGE. ALSO, IT IS SIGNIFICANT THAT IT NEVER ACTUALLY USES THE WORD 'GOD'. I CAN FIND NOTHING TO CONTRADICT YOUR BASIC MESSAGE IN THIS LOVELY POEM. ON THE OTHER HAND, IT SEEMS TO BE EXACTLY WHAT YOU ARE SAYING IN YOUR DISCOURSES. AM I RIGHT?
YOU HAVE SUCH A BEAUTIFUL VOICE THAT IT WOULD BE REALLY NICE TO HEAR YOU SAY

SOME OR ALL OF IT, ESPECIALLY AS I FEEL YOU WILL SOON STOP TALKING PUBLICLY ALTOGETHER. HERE IS A COPY OF THE HYMN.

Premartha, the message of all the buddhas is always the same because the truth is one. Expressions may differ, different languages may be used, but that which is indicated towards is the same.
Millions of fingers can point to the same moon. Fingers are bound to be different -- my finger is different from the finger of Jesus or Buddha or Moses or Abraham -- but the moon is the same. And this hymn is a beautiful finger pointing to the moon. It is the very essence of all the teachings of all the buddhas of all the ages -- past, present, and future too.

THOUGH I SPEAK WITH THE TONGUES OF MEN AND ANGELS, AND HAVE NOT LOVE, I AM BECOME AS SOUNDING BRASS OR A TINKLING CYMBAL. AND THOUGH I HAVE THE GIFT OF PROPHECY, AND UNDERSTAND ALL MYSTERIES, AND ALL KNOWLEDGE; AND THOUGH I HAVE ALL FAITH, SO THAT I COULD REMOVE MOUNTAINS, AND HAVE NOT LOVE, I AM NOTHING. AND THOUGH I BESTOW ALL MY GOODS TO FEED THE POOR, AND THOUGH I GIVE MY BODY TO BE BURNED, AND HAVE NOT LOVE, IT PROFITETH ME NOTHING.

LOVE SUFFERETH LONG, AND IS KIND; LOVE ENVIETH NOT; LOVE VAUNTETH NOT ITSELF, IS

NOT PUFFED UP, DOTH NOT BEHAVE ITSELF UNSEEMLY, SEEKETH NOT HER OWN, IS NOT EASILY PROVOKED, THINKETH NO EVIL; REJOICETH NOT IN INIQUITY, BUT REJOICETH IN THE TRUTH; BEARETH ALL THINGS, BELIEVETH ALL THINGS, HOPETH ALL THINGS, ENDURETH ALL THINGS.

LOVE NEVER FAILETH: BUT WHETHER THERE BE PROPHECIES, THEY SHALL FAIL; WHETHER THERE BE TONGUES, THEY SHALL CEASE; WHETHER THERE BE KNOWLEDGE, IT SHALL VANISH AWAY. FOR WE KNOW IN PART, AND WE PROPHESY IN PART. BUT WHEN THAT WHICH IS PERFECT IS COME THEN THAT WHICH IS PART SHALL BE DONE AWAY. WHEN I WAS A CHILD, I SPAKE AS A CHILD, I UNDERSTOOD AS A CHILD, I THOUGHT AS A CHILD; BUT WHEN I BECAME A MAN, I PUT AWAY CHILDISH THINGS. FOR NOW WE SEE THROUGH A GLASS, DARKLY; BUT THEN FACE-TO-FACE. NOW I KNOW IN PART, BUT THEN SHALL I KNOW EVEN AS ALSO I AM KNOWN. AND NOW ABIDETH FAITH, HOPE, LOVE, THESE THREE; BUT THE GREATEST OF ALL THESE IS LOVE.

These are the essential qualities of a religious person. This is my message -- this is the message!
The language is old, and because it is old it has a beauty of its own, because the older the language is, the more poetry it has. As we have become more and more scientific our language has also become more and more scientific.

As the hymn is two thousand years old, it has something of primitive innocence in it, the childlike quality of wonder, of being surprised at the mysterious. But, Premartha, you are perfectly right: there is nothing in it which contradicts me, and there is nothing in it which I would like to contradict either. Whosoever said it must have been an awakened one. But don't go on simply repeating it. It is beautiful to repeat, it is beautiful to sing it, but not enough. Practice it, let it become the very flavor of your life. Let it be dissolved into your blood, into your bones, into your marrow. Let it surround you like an invisible aura. Don't go on simply repeating it. It is beautiful -- and that is the danger. You can become so charmed, so hypnotized by its beauty, that you may go on repeating it your whole life. And the more you repeat, the more beautiful it will look...because these ancient messages have tremendous power and many layers of meaning.

But don't go into the linguistic or philosophical analysis of it. It is a prayer! -- and a prayer is not something to be said but something to be felt. A prayer is not something to be read but something to be lived. Live it!

It is true: AND NOW ABIDETH FAITH, HOPE, LOVE, THESE THREE; BUT THE GREATEST OF ALL THESE IS LOVE.

You can think about love, you can have beautiful flights of imagination about love, you can have beautiful dreams about love, but that is not going to help. What is going to help is, you have to become love. Love has to become your essential core. Everything else has to be sacrificed to love, everything else has to become part of your loving life.

Then only will this prayer be true for you. And then it will not be Christian, then it will not belong to the New Testament. It will be something that is part of your heart; you will breathe it. And whosoever will come close to you will have a little glimpse of it. A little light will be shed on everybody's path...if you live it.
Scriptures can be understood only if first they are practiced. People do just the opposite: they read the scripture and they try to understand it. Intellectually it is not difficult to understand those scriptures, they are simple. People become very proficient, very efficient, in repeating the scriptures -- and they end with that. They remain parrots. And what can you understand about it? Intellectually whatsoever you understand will not be right, because it will reflect your state of mind, not the state of the mind who uttered these words.

A retired cattle rancher, aged sixty-five, who had sold his ranch and come to New York to see the sights, checked into a midtown hotel.
Once upstairs, he made himself comfortable and relaxed on the bed. While he was resting, he saw the door slowly open, and there standing before him was a curvaceous blonde attired only in a sheer negligee.
"Oh," she apologized when she saw the old fellow, "I must be in the wrong room."
"No," he corrected, "you are in the right room, but you are about forty years too late!"

The interpretation is always going to be yours. You can read Jesus, you can read Buddha, but who is going to

interpret it? You will interpret it. And what is your understanding? What light have you got? Those beautiful sayings will remain just beautiful sayings, beautiful nothings. Yes, good poetry, but poetry cannot liberate you unless it becomes your own experience, unless you can become a witness to the scriptures.

"Your continual unfaithfulness proves you are an absolute rotter," stormed the outraged wife who had just caught her husband for the seventh time in a sportive romp with another woman.
"Quite the contrary!" came the cool reply. "It merely proves that I am too good to be true."

Your interpretations will always reflect you. When you look in the mirror you will be looking at your face, you will be looking at yourself. You can't see the mirror, you can only see your face reflected in it. You will be able to see the mirror only when you have lost your face, when you have lost your head, when you are not. When you have become a nothing, a nobody, then stand before a mirror and you will see the mirror and its mirroring and you will not be mirrored in it, you will not be reflected in it. You will not be present there. Before you become an absence, going before the mirror is of no use.
And that's what people go on doing: reading the Bible, the Koran, THE DHAMMAPADA, they read themselves.

The worried mother was lecturing her teenage daughter on the subject of sex morality. "Of course I realize you may be tempted while you are out on a date. If you are, dear, please

ask yourself this all-important question: is an hour of pleasure worth an entire life of humiliation?"
"Gosh, mother," asked the daughter, "how do you make it last an hour?"

Remember always, you cannot understand Jesus, Moses, Zarathustra. Your face will come in it too much.

A newly wed patient was complaining to his doctor about his marital relations. It seems the first time he makes love to his spouse it is just wonderful, but the second time, he is perspired and sweaty.
The medicine man decided to consult the wife. "Isn't it odd," the medico asks the missus when she arrives, "that it is just wonderful the first time and the second time he is all perspired and sweaty?"
"Why should it be odd?" she smirks. "The first time it is in January and the second time it is July!"

You cannot go directly into the sayings of the buddhas. First you will have to go inside yourself. The basic encounter has to be with your own originality, and then all the buddhas will become clear to you. And then one thing more starts happening: then Jesus and Buddha and Moses and Mohammed are not saying different things -- they are saying the same things.
Unless a person becomes a witness to the ultimate truth himself, he will go on thinking that Buddha is saying one thing and Jesus is saying something contrary; that Buddhism is against Hinduism, that Hinduism is against Jainism, that Jainism is against Mohammedanism. Unless

you witness the truth you will go on believing these three hundred religions, and you will be part of the quarrel, the conflict, the antagonism that goes on between these religions continuously. The day you see the truth of your own being, all these three hundred religions simply disappear, evaporate.

Once -- just like Premartha -- a Christian missionary went to see a Zen master. He wanted to convert the Zen master, so he had brought the Sermon on the Mount with him. He started reading the Sermon on the Mount: he had read only the first two or three sentences, and the Zen master said, "Stop! Whosoever said it was a buddha!"
The missionary was surprised. He said, "But these are the words of Jesus!"
The master said, "It doesn't matter what the name of the buddha is, but whosoever said this was a buddha. He had arrived."

And I say this to you because I know too. Once you have tasted, you will know. In whatsoever form the truth comes you will immediately recognize it. But first become a witness.

The last question:
Question 5
BELOVED MASTER,
ONLY ONE STEP?

Digambara, yes, in fact, not even one...because we are not to go anywhere. We are already in God! I say "only one

step" just to console you, because without any steps you will be too puzzled. I reduce it to the minimum, only one step, so that something remains for you to do, because you understand only the language of doing. You are a doer! If I say, "Nothing has to be done, not even a single step has to be taken," you will be at a loss how to make any head or tail of it.

The truth is, not even a single step is needed. Sitting silently doing nothing, the spring comes and the grass grows by itself. But that may be too much. Your doer mind may simply ignore it or may think it is all nonsense. How can you achieve God without doing anything? Yes, a shortcut the mind can understand; that's why I say, "a single step." That is the shortest -- it cannot be reduced to less than that.

A single step! That is just to make you understand that doing is nonessential. To attain to being, doing is absolutely nonessential. When you are agreed and convinced that only one step is needed, then I will whisper in your ear, "Not even one -- you are already there!"

Rabiya, a great Sufi mystic, was passing.... It was the street she used to pass every day on her way to the marketplace, because in the marketplace she would go every day and shout the truth that she had attained. And for many days she had been watching a mystic, a well-known mystic, Hassan, sitting before the door of the mosque and praying to God, "God, open the door! Please open the door! Let me in!" Rabiya could not tolerate it that day. Hassan was crying, tears were rolling down, and he was shouting again and

again, "Open the door! Let me in! Why don't you listen? Why don't you hear my prayers?"
Every day she had laughed, whenever she had heard Hassan she had laughed, but it was too much today. Tears...and Hassan was really crying, weeping, crying his heart out. She went, she shook Hassan, and said, "Stop all this nonsense! The door is open -- in fact you are already in!"
Hassan looked at Rabiya, and that moment became a moment of revelation. Looking into the eyes of Rabiya, he bowed down, touched her feet, and said, "You came in time; otherwise I would have called my whole life! For years I have been doing this -- where have you been before? And I know you pass this street every day. You must have seen me crying, praying."
Rabiya said, "Yes, but truth can only be said at a certain moment, in a certain space, in a certain context. I was waiting for the right, ripe moment. Today it has arrived; hence I came close to you. Yesterday if I had told you, you would have felt irritated; you may have even become angry. You may have reacted antagonistically; you may have told me, 'You have disturbed my prayer!' -- and it is not right to disturb anybody's prayer."
Even the king is not allowed to disturb the prayer of a beggar. Even if a criminal, a murderer, is praying in Mohammedan countries, the police have to wait till he finishes his prayer, only then can he be caught. Prayer should not be disturbed.
Rabiya said, "I had wanted to tell you this, that 'Hassan, don't be a fool, the door is open -- in fact, you are already in!' But I had to wait for the right moment."

Digambara, I say "only one step" -- and even that seems to be unbelievable to you, hence the question.
You ask me, "Beloved Master, only one step?"
Not even one, Digambara. But the right moment has not come yet, at least for you. When it comes I will whisper in your ear, "You are already in. Not even a single step is needed" -- because we are not going outside. Steps are needed to go outside, steps are not needed to go in.
It is like a man dreaming, and in his dreams he has gone far far away. Will he need a long journey to come back home? He is already home, he is sleeping in his home...but he may be in Timbuktu in his dream. All that is needed is that he has to be shaken up.
As Rabiya shook Hassan, Digambara, one day I will shake you up! You just need cold water to be poured on you -- really cold water, ice-cold, so in shock you open your eyes. Do you think you will ask me, "How to go back home -- because I am in Timbuktu?" No, you will not ask, if you see that you are already in your home, had fallen asleep and dreamt about Timbuktu. You had never gone there.
You have not gone out of God! You cannot, it is impossible, because only God exists. Where can we go, where can we go? There is no place where God is not. We are always in him and he is always in us. But that needs an awakening.
Not even one step -- that is just to bring you closer to truth. Slowly slowly, you have to be persuaded. One thousand steps are reduced to one step, and then I will take that step away from you too. But that needs a right moment.
Ultimate truths can be said only in a right, ripe situation.

That moment will also come.
Just be ready to receive it, welcome it....
Enough for today.

The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 1

Chapter #7
Chapter title: By watching....
27 June 1979 am in Buddha Hall

THE FOOL IS CARELESS.
BUT THE MASTER GUARDS HIS WATCHING.
IT IS HIS MOST PRECIOUS TREASURE.

HE NEVER GIVES IN TO DESIRE.
HE MEDITATES.
AND IN THE STRENGTH OF HIS RESOLVE
HE DISCOVERS TRUE HAPPINESS.

HE OVERCOMES DESIRE --
AND FROM THE TOWER OF WISDOM
HE LOOKS DOWN WITH DISPASSION
UPON THE SORROWING CROWD.
FROM THE MOUNTAINTOP
HE LOOKS DOWN ON THOSE
WHO LIVE CLOSE TO THE GROUND.

MINDFUL AMONG THE MINDLESS,
AWAKE WHILE OTHERS DREAM,
SWIFT AS THE RACE HORSE
HE OUTSTRIPS THE FIELD.

BY WATCHING
INDRA BECAME KING OF THE GODS.
HOW WONDERFUL IT IS TO WATCH,
HOW FOOLISH TO SLEEP.

THE BHIKKHU WHO GUARDS HIS MIND
AND FEARS THE WAYWARDNESS OF HIS THOUGHTS
BURNS THROUGH EVERY BOND
WITH THE FIRE OF HIS VIGILANCE.

THE BHIKKHU WHO GUARDS HIS MIND
AND FEARS HIS OWN CONFUSION
CANNOT FALL.
HE HAS FOUND THE WAY TO PEACE.

Life is three-dimensional, and man is free to choose. The freedom that man has is both a curse and a blessing. He can choose to rise, he can choose to fall. He can choose the way of darkness or he can choose the way of light.

No other being has the freedom to choose. Their lives are predetermined. Because they are predetermined they cannot go astray -- that's the beauty of it. But because it is predetermined they are mechanical -- that's what is ugly about it.

Man is not yet a being in the true sense. He is only a becoming, he is on the way. He is searching, seeking, groping; he is not yet crystallized. That's why he does not know who he is -- because he is not yet; how can he know who he is? Before knowing, being has to happen. And the

being is possible only if you choose rightly, consciously, with full awareness.

Jean-Paul Sartre is right when he says that man is a project, that man creates himself by his own effort, that man is born only as an opportunity, as a possibility, not as an actuality. He has to become actual -- and there is every possibility that he may miss the target. Millions of people miss the target; it is very rarely that a person has found his being. When a person finds his being, he is a buddha.

But the basic requirement is: choose your life with awareness. You have to choose anyway -- whether you choose with awareness or not makes no difference, choice has to be made. You are not free in the sense that if you don't want to choose you will be allowed not to. You are not free not to choose -- even not choosing will be a choosing.

The millions who miss, they miss because they don't choose. They simply wait; they go on hoping that something is going to happen. Nothing ever happens that way. You have to create the context, the space, for something valuable to happen to you, for something essential to happen to you.

There are two schools of philosophers in the world. One believes that man is born as an essence: the essentialist school. It says that man is already born ready-made. This is the idea of all the fatalists. The other school is that of those who call themselves existentialists. They believe that man is born not as an essence but only as an existence.

And what is the difference? The essence is predetermined; you bring it with your life, you bring it as a blueprint. You have only to unfold it; you are already made. There is no

choice for you to make yourself, to create yourself. That is a very uncreative standpoint; that reduces man to a machine.

The other school believes that man is born only as an existence. The essence has to be created; it is not already there. You have to create yourself, you have to find ways and means to become, to be. You have to become a womb to your own being, you have to give birth to yourself. The physical birth is not the true birth; you will have to be born again.

Jesus says to Nicodemus, "Unless you are born again, you will not enter into the kingdom of my God." What does he mean? Is Nicodemus to die first physically? No. Jesus means something totally different: he has to die as an ego, he has to die as a personality. He has to die as a past. He has to die as mind. Only when you die as mind are you born as a being.

In the East we have called the buddhas the twice-born -- dwij. Other people are only once-born; a buddha is twice-born. The first gift of life is through the parents; the second gift you have to give to yourself.

You can choose between these three dimensions. If you choose one dimension you will attain a certain integrity, but because it is one-dimensional it will not be total and it will not be whole. The first dimension is the dimension of science, of the objective world, of objects, things, the other. The second dimension is of aesthetics: the world of music, poetry, painting, sculpture, the world of imagination. And the third dimension is that of religion -- subjective, inner. Science and religion are polar opposites: science is extrovert, religion is introvert. And between the two is the

world of aesthetics. It is the bridge; it is both and neither. The world of aesthetics, the world of the artist, is in a way objective -- only in a way. He paints, and then a painting is born as an object. It is also subjective, because before he can paint he has to create the painting in his inwardness, in his subjectivity. Before a poet can sing his song, he sings it in his innermost recesses of being. It is sung there first, only then does it move into the outer world.

It is scientific in the sense that art creates objects, and it is religious in the sense that whatsoever art creates is first envisioned in one's own inner being. It is the bridge between science and religion. Religion is absolute inwardness. It is moving into your innermost core, it is subjectivity.

These are the three dimensions.

If you become a scientist and lose contact with aesthetics and religion, you will be a one-dimensional man. You will be only one third; you will not be whole. You may attain to a certain integrity that you will see in a man like Albert Einstein -- a certain individuality, a beauty, a truth, but only partial.

You can choose to be an artist: you can be a Picasso, a Van Gogh, a Beethoven, a Rabindranath, but then too...you will be a little better because aesthetics is the world of in-between, the world of twilight. You will have something of religion in you. Each poet has something of religion in him -- he may be aware of it, he may not be aware of it, but no poet can be without some flavor of religion. It is impossible. Even the most atheistic artist is bound to have some kind of religiousness. Without it he will not be a

genius. Without it he will remain only a technician, a craftsman, but not an artist.

Even a man like Jean-Paul Sartre -- who is determinedly an atheist, who will never concede that he is religious -- even he is in some way religious. He has created great novels, and those novels and the characters of those novels have great interiority. That interiority has been lived by this man, otherwise he could not write about it. That interiority is experienced.

And the man that moves into aesthetics is bound to have some scientific qualities around him too. He will be more logical than the religious person, more object-oriented than the religious person -- less object-oriented than the scientist of course, less logical than the scientist, but more logical than the religious person. He will be in a more balanced state.

It is better to move in the world of art because somehow it has something of all the three dimensions -- but only something, still it is not total.

The religious man is again one-dimensional, just as the scientist is. Albert Einstein is one-dimensional, so is Gautama the Buddha. And because the East has become one-dimensionally religious it has suffered much. And now the West is suffering much, and the cause is one-dimensionality. The West is bankrupt as far as the inner world is concerned and the East is bankrupt as far as the outer world is concerned.

The East is not accidentally poor and starving. It has chosen to be that way. It has denied science; it has even denied the world of objective reality. It says the world is illusory. If the world is illusory, how can you create a

science? The very first requirement is missing. You cannot create a science out of maya, illusion. How can you create a science out of something which is not, which does not even exist? If you deny the world, you have denied the dimension of science altogether.

That is the reason why the East is poor and starving. And unless the Eastern genius understands this, we can go on importing science from the West but it will not get roots into our beings. If our approach remains the same as it has been for five thousand years, science will only be something foreign. That's how it is.

In India you can find a scientist, world famous in his field of work, and still living a very unscientific life. He may be consulting the palmist and the astrologer. He may be going to take a bath in the Ganges, so his sins of many many lives are washed away. He may still be believing in a thousand and one things which are simply superstitious -- and still he is a scientist! Science remains something peripheral; his soul still remains rooted in the ancient past of the East, which is unscientific.

The East has suffered much because of one-dimensionality. And now the West is suffering again for the same reason: one-dimensionality. The West has chosen to be scientific at the cost of being religious. Now God is denied, the soul is denied. Man is reduced first to an animal and now to a machine. Man loses all glory, all grandeur. Man loses all hope, all future. The moment man loses his interiority he loses depth, he becomes superficial. The Western man is rich as far as things are concerned, but is very poor as far as soul is concerned -- inwardly poor, outwardly rich.

This is the state of affairs right now.

And between these two a few artists exist who have something of both the dimensions. But even the artist is not satisfied, because he is something of both but he is neither a scientist nor a religious person -- just having a few glimpses of both the worlds. He remains in a kind of limbo; he never settles, he remains a vagabond. He moves like a shuttle between these two worlds. He does not contribute much: because he is not a scientist he cannot contribute scientifically and he is not religious so he cannot contribute religiously. At the most his art remains decorative; at the most it can make life a little more beautiful, a little more comfortable, convenient. But that is not much.

I propose the fourth way. The true man will be all three simultaneously: he will be a scientist, an artist, and religious. And I call the fourth man the spiritual man.

That's where I differ from Albert Einstein and Gautam Buddha and Picasso -- from them all. You must remember my differences.

Buddha is one-dimensional -- tremendously beautiful! As far as his own inner world is concerned he is the greatest master, the master of the inner, unsurpassable, but he remains one-dimensional. He attains to immense peace, silence, bliss, but does not contribute to the world in any objective way.

Albert Einstein contributes to the world in a very objective way, but cannot contribute anything of the inner -- hence his contribution becomes a curse. He suffered his whole life because he was the man who proposed that atom bombs should be made. He had written a letter to the American president: "Now it is time -- unless atom bombs are made the war can go on for years and years and will be very

destructive. Just making the atom bombs, the very threat of it, will stop the war."

But once the power -- any kind of power -- reaches into the hands of the politicians, you cannot control them, you cannot prevent them from using it. The politician is the most stupid kind of person -- monkeyish, power-mad. Once the atom bomb was in the hands of the American politicians it had to be dropped somewhere. Hiroshima, Nagasaki, were bound to happen. And when they happened it was a wound, a great wound, for Albert Einstein. He repented his whole life.

In the last moments, when somebody asked him, "Would you like to become a scientist again if God gives you an opportunity to be born in the world again?"

He said, "No, certainly no, absolutely no! I would like rather to be a plumber than to be a physicist, a scientist. Enough is enough! I have not been a blessing to the world, I have been a curse."

He enriched the outer world certainly, but without inner growth, the outer growth creates a lopsidedness. You possess many things, but you don't possess yourself. You have all that can make you happy but you are not happy, because happiness cannot be derived from your possessions. Happiness is an inner welling-up; it is an awakening of your own energies. It is an awakening of your soul.

Buddha contributed tremendously to the subjective dimension. He is a master par excellence. Whatsoever he says is absolutely true, but it is one-dimensional -- never forget it.

My effort here is to create the fourth way: a man who joins all these three dimensions of life into himself, who becomes a trinity, a trimurti, who has all these three faces of God to him. Who has as much of a logical mind as is needed by science and who is also as poetic as is needed by aesthetics, and who is also as meditative and watchful as is proposed by the buddhas.

The fourth man is the hope of the world. The fourth way is the only possibility if man is to survive. If man is still to exist on this earth, we have to find a great synthesis between these three dimensions. And if all these three dimensions are meeting, merging, melting into one, of course that synthesis is the fourth.

I am speaking on Buddha, on Mahavira, on Jesus, on Patanjali, on Lao Tzu, and many more. But always remember that all these people are one-dimensional. I want to enrich your life through their teachings, but I don't end with them. I would like you to go a little deeper into other dimensions too.

Hence the new commune is going to be a meeting place of East and West, of the subjective and the objective. In the new commune we are going to have scientists, artists, poets, painters, singers, musicians, meditators, yogis, mystics -- all kinds of people pouring their energies into one great river. And that's how I would like the whole world to be.

Buddha is to be incorporated in it, that's why I am speaking on him. And, of course, the third dimension, the religious, is one of the most important, the most important dimension. Without it everything is soulless.

Today's sutras:

THE FOOL IS CARELESS.
BUT THE MASTER GUARDS HIS WATCHING.
IT IS HIS MOST PRECIOUS TREASURE.

Buddha calls a man foolish, not because he is ignorant, not because he is not knowledgeable. According to Buddha, a man is a fool if he is unconscious, if he behaves unconsciously, if he lives in sleep, if he is a somnambulist. If he goes on behaving without any mindfulness, then he is a fool. The word has a special meaning, remember: unconsciousness, unawareness, unmindfulness -- that's Buddha's definition of the fool.
He moves in life like driftwood, at the mercy of the winds. He does not know who he is, he does not know from where he comes, he does not know to where he is going. He is accidental; he simply lives by accident. He has no conscious, deliberate search for being, for truth, for reality. He follows the crowd; he remains a part of the mob psychology. He is not an individual. He has no authentic intelligence of his own; he simply follows others. The parents have said something, the teachers, the priests, the politicians, and he goes on following all kinds of advice. He has no idea why he is here, for what, and what he is doing, and why. He never raises such questions.
These questions are very uncomfortable to him. They create anxiety in him; he avoids these questions. He simply believes in the answers that are handed over to him; he never doubts those answers. Not that he has attained to trust

-- no, he has no trust either -- but he simply represses his doubt because doubt creates discomfort.
He remains a Hindu, a Mohammedan, a Christian. He never inquires and he never risks anything for his inquiry. He never goes into exploration. He is not an adventurer, his life is not an adventure. He is stuck, he is dormant, stagnant. You cannot separate him from his crowd; he is like a sheep. Buddha calls him the fool.
The fool can be very knowledgeable -- in fact almost always he is. He can be a pundit, a scholar, a great professor -- that's how he hides his foolishness. By gathering knowledge on the circumference he hides the ignorance that exists at the center.
There are two types of people: one, very knowledgeable people -- knowledgeable, but they know nothing. They have a kind of ignorant knowledge. And there is the other category: the people who are not knowledgeable -- but they know. They have a kind of knowing ignorance.
When Buddha uses the word 'fool', he is not talking about the second category -- because Buddha himself is not very knowledgeable, neither is Jesus, nor is Mohammed. They are innocent people, simple people, but their simplicity is such, their innocence is such, their childlike quality is such, that they have been able to penetrate into the innermost core of their beings. They have been able to know their truth; they have been able to reach the very core of their existence. They know, but they are not knowledgeable. Their knowing is not through scriptures. Their knowing has happened through watchfulness. Remember the source: real knowing comes through meditation, awareness, consciousness, mindfulness, watchfulness, witnessing. And

unreal knowledge comes through scriptures. You can learn the unreal knowledge very easily and you can brag about it, but you will remain a fool -- a learned fool, but a fool all the same.

If you really want to know you will have to drop all your knowledge, you will have to unlearn it. You will have to become ignorant again, like a small child, with wondering eyes, with alertness. You will be able to know not only your own being but also the being that exists in the world...the being that exists in the trees and the birds and the animals and the rocks and the stars. If you are able to know yourself, you will be able to know all that is.

God is another name for all that is.

THE FOOL IS CARELESS. By "carelessness" Buddha means he behaves unconsciously. He does not know what he is doing. He simply goes on doing things because he cannot remain unoccupied; he wants constant occupation. He cannot remain alone; he wants constant company. He cannot remain unengaged even for a single moment, because whenever he is unengaged, unoccupied, alone, he starts facing himself -- and he is very afraid of that.

He does not want to go into the abyss of his own being. All that he knows is meaningless there. All that he knows, he cannot carry it there. All his knowledge, all his efficiency, all his scriptures, all his theories, are utterly futile in the inner world. He clings to the outer because there he is somebody. In the inner world he is a nobody.

Just watch people! In fact it is the greatest entertainment: stand by the side of the road and just watch people. What are they doing? Why are they doing it? And then watch yourself -- what are you doing? and why?

A man picks up a young woman in a hotel lobby and goes to her apartment with her. They both undress, but then she says, "First chase me! I want to be inflamed, excited!"
He chases her for two hours, but cannot catch her and leaves in disgust.
The next night he sees her pick up another victim in the same lobby and he sneaks up on the fire-escape to watch the new sucker's discomfiture through the window. As he watches the bare legs flashing by under the partly-drawn window shade, he says to himself out loud, "Ah, brother, get a load of that!"
"You said it!" breathes a man's voice in his ear, "but you should have seen the sonofabitch that was here last night!"

Just watch people -- what are they doing? Chasing shadows, chasing things which they don't need, trying to make great effort to attain something which once attained they will not know what to do with. That's how people are running after money, after political power. Once you have it you don't know what to do with it.

A woman was saying to another woman, "Are you not worried about your husband? He continuously goes on chasing women, any woman -- and you know it!"
And the other woman laughed. She said, "There is nothing to worry about: his chasing women is like dogs chasing cars."
The other woman said, "I don't understand. What do you mean, dogs chasing cars?"

She said, "Yes, dogs chasing cars -- once they have caught one they don't know what to do with the car, and that's how my husband is. He will chase a woman, he will catch hold of her. Then he does not know what to do with her. I know him! That's why I am not worried."

This is the situation. Somebody wants to be very famous, and he will waste his whole life in becoming famous and then he will not know what to do with it. In fact, once you become very famous you want to become unfamous again, because it is such a weight. You cannot relax. You cannot go anywhere without being watched by the crowds. You have no privacy anymore, you cannot live any personal life. Everybody is looking, watching, investigating your life. You cannot laugh, you cannot talk with ease...everything becomes difficult.

Just a few days ago Jimmy Carter said that if Kennedy stands against him in the presidential election he will "whip his ass." Now he is being condemned all over the world for using that word. You cannot even use an innocent word. Now he must be feeling very repentant for what he has done. He has committed a crime.

You don't have a private life when you are famous -- when you are a president of a country, a Nobel Prize winner, you are a public thing. You are always on show, in the show-window; you always have to keep dressed up. You cannot make a simple gesture in freedom.

People have money...and then they don't know what to do with it.

The accidental man is foolish. The wise man moves deliberately, takes each step consciously. His life is a

constant inquiry for truth. He does not go astray. He remains alert in every one of his acts -- not because of others. He remains alert because it is only by being alert that he will become integrated, that he will become crystallized.
THE FOOL IS CARELESS. The wise man cares -- he cares about himself, he cares about his life, and he cares about others too. He cares about everything, because he values his life. He knows that it is very precious, that it is a God-given opportunity to grow, that is has not to be lost in a kind of drunkenness.

A reformed prostitute has joined the Salvation Army and is giving testimony on a street corner. "I used to lie in the arms of men," she confesses, "white men, black men, Chinamen. But now I lie in the arms of Jesus."
"That's right, sister," cries a drunk in the back row, "fuck 'em all!"

Just watch people and watch yourself, and you will be surprised how unconscious, how drunk we are. How careless! We don't listen to what is said, we don't see what we see. Our eyes are clouded, our minds confused, our beings have no clarity. We are not perceptive, we are not sensitive.
We go on uttering things which we don't mean, and then we suffer for them. We go on saying things which we never wanted to say. We go on doing things -- even while we are doing them we know that we don't want to do these things, still we go on doing them. Some unconscious force goes on driving us. Sometimes we even decide not to do a certain

thing, not to say a certain thing -- still we do it, even against our own decisions. We don't have any resolution, we don't have any resolve, we don't have any will.

She knew that these were to be her last few hours on this earth, so she called her husband to her side and in a halting voice told him her last request.
"I know," she said, "that you and mother have never gotten along. But would you as a special favor to me, ride to the cemetery in the same car with her?"
"Alright," replied the unhappy husband. "But it will spoil my whole day."

This is not really a joke -- this happens every day. You say things which you should have known are not right to say. But you know only later on, when the harm is done. Unconscious utterings.
Now, this man may have been crying and saying to his wife, "Without you it will be impossible to live. I will always remain empty without you, a part of my soul will die with you..." and things like that. But now, in this moment, he has forgotten all.
THE FOOL IS CARELESS. BUT THE MASTER GUARDS HIS WATCHING. IT IS HIS MOST PRECIOUS TREASURE. The fool remains a slave -- a slave of the instincts, a slave of unconscious desires, a slave of whims, a slave of the society in which he is born, a slave of the fashions -- a slave of anything that happens around him. He simply picks it up. If the neighbor is buying a new car, he has to buy a new car too. He does not need it. If the neighbor has purchased a house in the hills, he has to

purchase one. It may be difficult and hard to manage for the money. He may have to borrow, it may take years for him to pay, but he has to purchase it. His ego is hurt. People are living imitatively, very carelessly.

Among the Eskimos there is a tradition, a very beautiful tradition, that each year, the first day of the year, every family looks in the house for what is unnecessary and what is necessary -- they sort things out. And only what is absolutely necessary is saved; all that is unnecessary is given as gifts to people.

And you will be surprised to know that the Eskimo's home is the cleanest home in the world, has a purity about it -- no garbage, nothing accumulates. Spacious -- small but spacious; only that much which is necessary, absolutely necessary....

Just think of all the things that you go on accumulating: are they really necessary? do you really need them? Or is it just because people are accumulating that you also become accumulative?

The watchful man becomes the master of his life. He lives it according to his light, not according to others' lives. He lives it according to his own needs. And remember, your needs are not many. If you are wise, watchful, you will have a very very contented life, and very simple, and with small things.

But if you are imitative, then your life will become very complex, unnecessarily complex. And I am not giving you particular directions about what you should have and what you should not have. I am simply saying go on watching...whatsoever is necessary for you, have it; and

whatsoever is not necessary for you, forget about it. This is the way of a sannyasin.
I am not for renouncing things, but I am certainly for renouncing unnecessary garbage. And it is not only that you collect unnecessary things -- you desire unnecessary things, and you never meditate whether those things are really necessary. Are they going to help in any way? Are they going to make you more happy, more blissful? Before you start desiring a thing, think it over thrice...and you will be surprised. Out of a hundred of your desires, ninety-nine are absolutely useless. They simply keep you occupied; that is their only function. They keep you away from yourself; that is their only utility. They don't allow you time, space to be with yourself. They are dangerous. It is because of these unnecessary things that you will waste your life, and you will die a bankrupt.
...THE MASTER GUARDS HIS WATCHING.

I have heard:
The husband and wife are being driven crazy by the continued presence of the wife's brother, who came to spend the weekend but is still there six months later. They decide that the wife will cook a chicken and the husband will pretend it is overdone. They will put the matter to the brother-in-law. If he says the chicken is good, the husband will throw him out; if he says the chicken is bad the wife will throw him out. It can't fail!
The scene is set up as planned, with much pretended shouting and recrimination, while the brother-in-law silently stows away his food. Suddenly the husband and wife stop shouting and turn to him.

"Harry," says the husband, "what do you think?"
"Me?" says Harry, biting into the chicken leg. "I think I am staying another three months."

Must have been a very watchful man. Must have been very careful, alert. He is not caught in the trap. The trap was certainly very subtle. Unless he was very alert, it was bound to trap him. He does not give any opinion. He simply states a fact, that "I am going to stay three more months."

Live watchfully and you will not be trapped. Live unconsciously and on each step you are trapped; your life becomes more and more imprisoned. And nobody is responsible except you.

BUT THE MASTER GUARDS HIS WATCHING. IT IS HIS MOST PRECIOUS TREASURE. Whatsoever he does, he does with total awareness. Whatsoever you do, you do almost mechanically. You will have to de-automatize yourself. That's what meditation is all about: the process of de-automatization.

You have become automatic. You go on driving the car, smoking the cigarette, talking to the friend, and thinking a thousand and one thoughts inside. Most accidents happen because of this. More men are dying every year in car, train, airplane and similar accidents than die in war. Adolf Hitler may not have killed as many people as are being killed every year by the mechanical behavior of man around the earth.

But what can you do? That's your whole way of life, that's how you live. You eat -- you simply go on stuffing, you don't pay any attention to what you are eating. You make

love to your wife or your husband -- you don't even see the face of the woman. You have become very insensitive; you just go on moving through empty gestures, with no significance. They can't have any significance unless you are fully alert.
It is the light of awareness that makes things precious, extraordinary. Then small things are no longer small. When a man with alertness, sensitivity, love, touches an ordinary pebble on the seashore, that pebble becomes a kohinoor. And if you touch a kohinoor in your unconscious state, it is just an ordinary pebble -- not even that. Your life will have as much depth and as much meaning as you have awareness.
Now people are asking all over the world, "What is the meaning of life?" Of course the meaning is lost, because you have lost the way to find the meaning -- and the way is awareness. IT IS HIS MOST PRECIOUS TREASURE.

HE NEVER GIVES IN TO DESIRE.

What does Buddha mean by "desire"? Desire means your whole mind. Desire means not to be herenow. Desire means moving somewhere in the future which is not yet. Desire means a thousand and one ways of escaping from the present. Desire is equivalent to mind. In Buddha's terminology, desire is mind.
And desire is time too. When I say desire is time too, I don't mean the clock time, I mean the psychological time. How do you create future in your mind? -- by desiring. You want to do something tomorrow, you have created the tomorrow; otherwise the tomorrow is nowhere yet, it has

not come. But you want to do something tomorrow, and because you want to do something tomorrow you have created a psychological tomorrow.
And people are creating years ahead, lives ahead. They are even thinking about what to do after life, after death. They are even preparing for that! And these people are thought to be religious; they are not religious at all. Desire takes you away from the now-here, and now-here is the only reality. Hence Buddha says: HE NEVER GIVES IN TO DESIRE. He never moves into the future, he lives in the present. To live in the future is to live a false life, a pseudo life.

A fashionable actress refuses a young man who begs for her favors, on the grounds that he is Jewish, and laughs at his offer of one hundred thousand francs. She tells him that to show him how little she cares for his money he can make love to her for as long as it takes the hundred thousand francs to burn.
He comes back the next day with the money, lays ten bills out in a line with the ends just overlapping, lights the first one and leaps into bed with her. As the last bill burns away, she pushes him off her.
"Well, I have had you," he says triumphantly.
"Yes," she smiles, "and your hundred thousand francs are burnt to ashes."
"What does it matter?" he says, lighting a cigarette. "They were counterfeit."

The man who lives in the future, lives a counterfeit life. He does not really live, he only pretends to live. He hopes to live, he desires to live, but he never lives. And the

tomorrow never comes, it is always today. And whatsoever comes is always now and here, and he does not know how to live now-here; he knows only how to escape from now-here. The way to escape is called "desire," tanha -- that is Buddha's word for what is an escape from the present, from the real into the unreal.

The man who desires is an escapist.

Now, this is very strange, that meditators are thought to be escapists. That is utter nonsense. Only the meditator is not an escapist -- everybody else is. Meditation means getting out of desire, getting out of thoughts, getting out of mind. Meditation means relaxing in the moment, in the present. Meditation is the only thing in the world which is not escapist, although it is thought to be the most escapist thing. People who condemn meditation always condemn it with the argument that it is escape, escaping from life. They are simply talking nonsense; they don't understand what they are saying.

Meditation is not escaping from life: it is escaping into life. Mind is escaping from life, desire is escaping from life.

HE NEVER GIVES IN TO DESIRE....

HE MEDITATES.

He brings himself again and again to the present. Again and again the mind starts functioning and he brings it back to the present. Slowly slowly, it starts happening: the window opens and for the first time you see the sky as it is. And for the first time you feel the wind and the rain and the sun, in their immediacy, because you become meditative. You start touching life. Then life is no longer a word but a tangible

reality; then love is no longer a word but an overflowing energy. Then blessing is no longer just a desire, a hope -- you feel it, you have it, you are it.

HE MEDITATES.... Buddha is not for prayer, he is for meditation, because prayer is again somehow a kind of desiring. When you pray, you desire. Prayer is always for the future; prayer means you are asking for something. You may not be asking for money, you may be asking for God himself, but it is the same. Ask, and you have moved away. Meditation is a state of nonasking, nonquestioning, nonthinking. Prayer is still part of thinking -- a beautiful thinking, but thinking is thinking; a beautiful prison, but a prison is still a prison.

And the mind who prays is greedy, and the mind who prays goes through no transformation. It remains the same mind. And the prayer is born out of the same mind; it cannot have a very different quality. How can you pray for something which is different from you? -- it will be your prayer. It will reflect your mind, it will come out of your mind, it will sprout out of your mind. How can it take you beyond the mind? Prayer cannot take you beyond the mind. Only meditation can take you beyond the mind.

Meditation is a state of no-mind. Prayer is a state of religious mind, but mind is there. And when it has the beautiful garment of religiousness around it, it becomes even more dangerous.

A little boy on a picnic strays away from his family, and suddenly realizes that he is lost and night is falling. Becoming frightened after wandering aimlessly for some time, and shouting for his parents but receiving no answer,

he kneels down and prays with uplifted hands. "Dear Lord," he says, "please help me to find my daddy and mommy, and I won't hit my little sister anymore, honest I won't!"
As he kneels praying, a bird flies over and drops a load of shit into his outstretched palm. The little boy examines it and turns his eyes back to heaven.
"Oh please, Lord," he begs, "don't hand me that shit. I really and truly am lost!"

Your prayer is your prayer; it is part of you, an extension of you. It cannot help you to surpass yourself. Meditation is the only way to surpass oneself, the only way to transcend oneself.
And what is meditation? It does not mean meditating upon something; the English word is misleading. In English there is no word adequate enough to translate Buddha's word sammasati. It has been translated as meditation, as right mindfulness, as awareness, as consciousness, alertness, watchfulness, witnessing -- but there is not really a single word which has the quality of sammasati.
Sammasati means: consciousness is, but without any content. There is no thought, no desire, nothing is stirred in you. You are not contemplating about God or about great things...nature and its beauty, the Bible, the Koran, the Vedas, and their immensely significant statements. You are not contemplating! You are not concentrating on any special object either. You are not chanting a mantra, because those are all things of the mind, those are all contents of the mind. You are not doing anything! The mind is utterly empty, and you are simply there in that

emptiness. A kind of presence, a pure presence, with nowhere to go -- utterly relaxed into oneself, at rest, at home. That is the meaning of Buddha's meditation.
And nobody else has ever reached such a beautiful expression about meditation as Buddha. Many people have attained, but nobody has been so expressive, so capable of conveying the message, as the Buddha. HE NEVER GIVES IN TO DESIRE. HE MEDITATES.

AND IN THE STRENGTH OF HIS RESOLVE
HE DISCOVERS TRUE HAPPINESS.

Bliss is true happiness. What you call happiness is just misery in disguise. What you call happiness is nothing but entertainment, pleasure. It is momentary -- it cannot be true. Truth has to have one quality, and the quality is of eternity. If something is true it is eternal; if it is untrue it is momentary.
True happiness is found only when the mind completely ceases functioning. It does not come from the outside. It wells up within your own being, it starts overflowing you. You become luminous. You become a fountain of bliss.

HE OVERCOMES DESIRE --
AND FROM THE TOWER OF WISDOM
HE LOOKS DOWN WITH DISPASSION
UPON THE SORROWING CROWD.
FROM THE MOUNTAINTOP
HE LOOKS DOWN ON THOSE
WHO LIVE CLOSE TO THE GROUND.

As someone becomes a buddha -- desire overcome, mind overcome, time overcome, the ego transcended -- he is no longer part of this earth. He still lives on the earth, but his soul soars so high that from the sunlit tops of his being he can see the sorrowing crowd in the dark valleys of life, stumbling, drunken, fighting, ambitious, greedy, angry, violent...a sheer wastage of great opportunities. Great compassion arises in his being. His whole passion passes through dispassion and becomes compassion.

Passion means using the other as a means -- and that is the fundamental of immorality. To use somebody as a means is the most immoral act in the world, because each person is an end unto himself. To use him as a means is to exploit. And that's what we call love: the husband using the wife, the wife using the husband; the children using their parents, and the parents later on using their children -- that's what we call love!

It is not love. It is a strategy of the mind; it is poison coated with sugar. This love is really disgusting. That's why you see the whole world in such disgust. This love is sickening. It has sickened the whole soul of humanity because it is not love at all. It is passion, lust, using the other as a means.

As you start meditating you move to the second stage, dispassion -- love disappears. You come into a neutral phase; just as you change gears in the car, and each time you change gear, the gear first has to move through neutral, so passion moves through a neutral phase -- it becomes dispassion. Love disappears. For the time being, in the interval, the man who is moving towards buddhahood becomes utterly cold, dispassionate.

And then the third stage is reached. When he has attained buddhahood, he has found bliss and the inexhaustible fountains of bliss -- aes dhammo sanantano -- when he has found the principle of eternity, when he has found the inexhaustible treasure of life, he starts overflowing. Love comes back -- in fact, love comes for the first time. It is compassion. Now he showers his compassion on each and everybody; whosoever comes to him, he shares his bliss with him, he shares his way, he shares his insight.

MINDFUL AMONG THE MINDLESS,
AWAKE WHILE OTHERS DREAM,
SWIFT AS THE RACE HORSE
HE OUTSTRIPS THE FIELD.

And when you have become established in meditation and compassion you no longer fall a victim of sleep and dream. You remain awake -- even while asleep. And then your life becomes a straight arrow, moves with tremendous speed, with the speed of light, towards the goal. You become, for the first time, being.

SWIFT AS THE RACE HORSE HE OUTSTRIPS THE FIELD. MINDFUL AMONG THE MINDLESS, AWAKE WHILE OTHERS DREAM. That is the difference between Buddha and others. Others are only dreaming, not really living; hoping to live some day, preparing to live, but not living. And that day never comes -- before that day comes death.

A buddha is awake. Even while he is asleep he does not dream. When desires disappear, dreams disappear too. Dreams are desires translated into the language of sleep. A

buddha sleeps with absolute alertness. The light goes on burning within him. The body needs rest, hence the body sleeps, but he needs no rest -- the energy is inexhaustible. There, at the center of his being, a small light goes on burning. The whole circumference is fast asleep, but that light is alert, awake.
We are asleep even while we are awake: he is awake even while he is asleep.

BY WATCHING
INDRA BECAME KING OF THE GODS.
HOW WONDERFUL IT IS TO WATCH,
HOW FOOLISH TO SLEEP.

THE BHIKKHU WHO GUARDS HIS MIND
AND FEARS THE WAYWARDNESS OF HIS THOUGHTS
BURNS THROUGH EVERY BOND
WITH THE FIRE OF HIS VIGILANCE.

'Bhikkhu' is Buddha's word for sannyasin. 'Sannyasin' is my word for the bhikkhu. I have not chosen Buddha's word -- for a certain reason. Bhikkhu literally means beggar. Buddha renounced his kingdom and became a beggar. Of course, even while he is a beggar, he walks like an emperor; of course, he is far more graceful than he ever was before, and far richer that he ever was before. But because he renounced the kingdom, people started calling him a bhikkhu, a beggar. And, slowly slowly, the name was adopted by his followers too.

I don't want you to be beggars, I want you to be masters. Hence I have chosen the word 'sannyasin'. A sannyasin means one who knows how to live rightly. It is not renunciation; on the contrary, it is rejoicing, it is celebration.

THE BHIKKHU WHO GUARDS HIS MIND AND FEARS THE WAYWARDNESS OF HIS THOUGHTS BURNS THROUGH EVERY BOND WITH THE FIRE OF HIS VIGILANCE.

Yes, meditation is fire -- it burns your thoughts, your desires, your memories; it burns the past and the future. It burns your mind and the ego. It takes away all that you think that you are. It is a death and a rebirth, a crucifixion and a resurrection. You are born anew. You lose your own identity totally, and you attain to a new vision of life. That vision of life is what is meant by god, dhamma, tao, logos. You can choose your name for it because it has no name of its own. In fact it is not expressible at all; it can only be indicated, hinted at.

THE BHIKKHU WHO GUARDS HIS MIND
AND FEARS HIS OWN CONFUSION
CANNOT FALL.
HE HAS FOUND THE WAY TO PEACE.

Mind is confusion. Thoughts and thoughts -- thousands of thoughts clamoring, clashing, fighting with each other, fighting for your attention. Thousands of thoughts pulling you into thousands of directions. It is a miracle how you go on keeping yourself together. Somehow you manage this togetherness -- it is only somehow, it is only a facade. Deep

behind it there is a clamoring crowd, a civil war, a continuous civil war. Thoughts fighting with each other, thoughts wanting you to fulfill them. It is a great confusion, what you call your mind.

But if you are aware that the mind is confusion, and you don't get identified with the mind, you will never fall. You will become fallproof! The mind will become impotent. And because you will be watching continuously, your energies will slowly be withdrawn, away from the mind; it will not be nourished any more.

And once the mind dies, you are born as a no-mind. That birth is enlightenment. That birth brings you for the first time to the land of peace, the lotus paradise. It brings you to the world of bliss, benediction. Otherwise you remain in hell. Right now you are in hell. But if you resolve, if you decide, if you choose consciousness, right now you can take a jump, a leap from hell into heaven.

It is up to you: you can choose hell, you can choose heaven. Hell is cheap. Heaven needs great effort, perseverance, resolve. Hell means you can remain unconscious, you can remain as you are. Heaven means you have to rise above yourself, you have to transcend. You have to move from the valley towards the peaks.

And those peaks are yours, but you have to pay for them. Climbing to those peaks is arduous effort. Be watchful, be meditative, and one day you will find yourself on the sunlit peaks. That is liberation, moksha. That is nirvana -- cessation of the ego and the birth of God.

You are entitled to be gods. If you are not, only you are responsible and nobody else. Listen to the Buddha. Don't

only listen to the Buddha -- act, be committed to the life of consciousness, get involved.
But let me remind you again: this is only one dimension of life -- immensely rich, but still one dimension. You will have to do something more. I am giving you a more arduous task than Buddha did. Buddha gave you one dimension; I want you to have all three dimensions, and a synthesis.
A new man is needed on the earth. The old is rotten and finished, it has no future, it can't survive. It has come to the very end of its tether. It is on the deathbed. Unless a new man is born -- East and West meeting, all three dimensions together -- humanity is doomed.
This experiment that I am doing here is just to create the first specimen of the new man. You are participating in a great experiment of tremendous import. Feel blessed. Feel fortunate. You may not be aware of what you are participating in, but you may create history! It all depends on how committed, how involved you become with me and with my experiment.
This is the greatest synthesis possible, that has ever been tried....
Enough for today.

The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 1

Chapter #8
Chapter title: The beginning of a new phase
28 June 1979 am in Buddha Hall

The first question:
Question 1
BELOVED MASTER,
I NEVER DID GET TURNED ON BY CLASSICAL MUSIC, AND ART GALLERIES BORED ME SILLY. SO, IS IT POSSIBLE TO GO FROM THE FIRST LAYER, THE HEAD, TO THE THIRD LAYER, THE CENTER, AND SORT OF BYPASS ALL THIS AESTHETIC GARBAGE?

Nirgun, yes, it is true: in the name of aesthetics, there is much garbage. But when I use the word 'aesthetics' I don't mean the garbage collected in the museums and art galleries.
When I use the word 'aesthetics' I mean a quality in you. It has nothing to do with objects -- paintings, music, poetry -- it has something to do with a quality in your being, a sensitivity, a love for beauty, a sensitivity for the texture and taste of things, for the eternal dance that goes on all around, an awareness of it, a silence to hear this cuckoo calling from the distance....
It is not garbage: it is the very core of existence.
But I can understand that you must be getting bored with the so-called classical music and paintings collected in the art galleries. And you must be a little bit puzzled why people go on talking so much about all this nonsense.
Aesthetics is just an artistic approach towards life, a poetic vision. Seeing colors so totally that each tree becomes a painting, that each cloud brings the presence of God, that colors are more colorful, that you don't go on ignoring the radiance of things, that you remain alert, aware, loving, that

you remain receptive, welcoming, open. That's what I mean by the aesthetic attitude, the aesthetic approach.
Music has to be in your heart, your very being has to be musical, it has to become a harmony. A man can exist as a chaos or as a cosmos. Music is the way from chaos to cosmos. A man can exist as a disorder, a discord, just noise, a market place, or a man can exist as a temple, a sacred silence, where celestial music is heard on its own, uncreated music is heard on its own.
The Zen people call it the sound of one hand clapping. In India, for centuries mystics have been talking about anahat nad -- the unstruck sound. It is there in your very being; you need not go anywhere to listen to it. It is the ancientmost music, and the latest too. It is both the oldest and the newest. And it is the music of your own being, the hum of your own existence. And if you can't hear it, you are deaf.
And there is no way, Nirgun, to bypass it. Museums you can bypass, art galleries you can bypass -- in fact, you should bypass them. You need not be worried about art and art criticism -- forget all about it. But you have to become an artist of life itself.
I say Buddha is a poet, although he never composed a single poem. Still I insist that he is one of the greatest poets who has ever lived. He was not a Shakespeare, a Milton, a Kalidas, a Rabindranath -- no, not at all. But still I say: Shakespeare, Milton, Kalidas, Rabindranath, are nothing compared to his poetry. His life was his poetry -- the way he walked, the way he looked at things....
Just the other night I came across one of the most beautiful statements of Saint Teresa of Avila. She says: All that you

need is to look. Her whole message is contained in this simple statement: All that you need is to look. The capacity to look -- and you will find God. The capacity to hear -- and you will find his music. The capacity to touch -- and every texture becomes his texture. Touch the rock and you find God.

It is not a question of objects of art: it is a question of an inner approach, a vision -- of seeing things artistically. And, Nirgun, you have that quality! In fact, because of that quality you were bored by classical music and you were bored by galleries -- because in an unconscious way, in a groping way, you feel something far superior inside you. But you are not yet fully aware of it.

Bypass the art galleries and you will not be losing anything. But you cannot bypass the aesthetic layer of your being: you have to go through it. Otherwise you will always remain impoverished; something will be missing, something of immense value. Your enlightenment will never be total. A part of your being will remain unenlightened; a corner of your soul will remain dark -- and that corner will remain heavy on you. One has to become totally enlightened. Nothing should be bypassed, no shortcuts are to be invented. One has to move very naturally through all the layers, because all those layers are opportunities to grow.

Remember it: whenever I use the words 'music' or 'poetry' or 'painting' or 'sculpture', I have my own meaning.

When Helen Keller, the blind woman, came to India, she visited Jawaharlal Nehru. She was blind, deaf. She touched Nehru's face; with both her hands she felt Nehru's face, and

she was immensely delighted. She expressed her great joy. She stated, "I have felt the same quality in Nehru's face as I felt when I touched beautiful Roman statues -- the same coolness and the same proportion and the same form."
Now this woman has a heart of a sculptor -- blind, deaf, but she has the genius of a great artist. Because she was deaf and blind, she had to find new ways to feel life. And sometimes curses prove blessings. She would touch water, she would feel its coolness, its flow, its life, its vibe. You will never feel it, because you can see the water; you can say, "What is there?" Because she could not see, she could only feel the texture of a rock...you can see and you will miss -- you will not feel the texture of it.
Sometimes it is tremendously significant to close your eyes and just touch the rock, and feel as if you are blind and you have only hands and you have to use the hands as your eyes. And you will be surprised -- you are in for a surprise. For the first time you will see that the texture has its own dimension.
Because she had no eyes and no ears, her sense of smell was just at the optimum. She could feel the perfume of things, of people. She could discriminate between one tree and another tree just by the fragrance of it. She could even distinguish persons just by their smell.
Now she is as aesthetic as any Picasso, Dali, Van Gogh -- or even more so.

Nirgun, the aesthetic garbage is certainly there, because whatsoever man creates in his unconsciousness is bound to be garbage. The paintings of Picasso represent the mind of Picasso. Now this man seems to be insane somewhere deep

down. In fact, his paintings are a way to remain sane; his paintings are cathartic. What you do in your Dynamic Meditation he is doing through his paintings: throwing out tensions, nightmares, all the ugliness that is in the mind. It has to be thrown out of the system, and it can be done through painting very easily.

Carl Gustav Jung used to tell his patients to paint. And many insane people have painted really beautiful paintings. But, certainly, those paintings are insane! How can an insane person paint a sane painting? It may have a certain beauty of its own -- the beauty of insanity -- it may have a certain proportion, a certain arrangement of colors, or it may even have a certain vision, but something of his insanity is bound to be lurking there around it. And Jung became aware, slowly slowly, that through painting insane people can be helped tremendously -- painting can become a therapy. And, certainly, he is right. If you can paint your nightmares, you will be getting free from them. It is an expression! Expression always brings freedom. Repression brings bondage, expression brings freedom. And this is one of the beautiful ways to express, to paint.

If you are afraid of death, tortured by the idea of death, if you have nightmares about death, and you can paint many paintings of death, you will get rid of those ideas. You have brought them to the conscious from the unconscious. Anything that is brought to the conscious from the unconscious, you become free of it.

But humanity has been doing just the opposite. We have been told for centuries to throw things from the conscious to the unconscious -- that's what repression is. Yes, in a way, you appear to have got free of them, but not really. In

fact, they have gone deeper in you, they have sunk deeper in you. They will trouble you even more. Now they will control you from the unconscious and you will not even be aware of them.

The whole approach of psychoanalysis is against repression: bring all that is repressed in the unconscious to the conscious. It can be done in many ways. Psychoanalysis is the longest route; it takes three years, six years, even ten. Then too the analysis is never complete. There is not a single person in the whole world whose psychoanalysis is complete and finished.

It cannot be finished, because the process is slow. Twice a week or thrice a week you see your psychoanalyst; lying on the psychoanalyst's couch you throw out your garbage for one hour. He listens patiently -- at least he pretends that he is listening patiently. And because he is listening you go on bringing it out. He gives you encouragement, so you go on digging deeper and deeper, and you bring things from the unconscious to the conscious. His presence, his expertise, his name, his authority, make you courageous. You are not afraid of bringing things up which would scare you if you brought them up when you were alone -- because you would see yourself on the verge of going mad. But his authority and his presence...and that may be only in your belief, because he himself may be more insane than you are. But you can have just the belief that he knows that he will be able to help, that he is there, so you need not be afraid; you can go and dig deep into your unconscious. The more you bring to the conscious, the more you are freed -- it is very unburdening. But once, twice or thrice a week you unburden, and the whole week you go on

gathering again. The three hours' doing is undone; you remain the same. It becomes a vicious circle. In the society, in the family, you again accumulate repressions, and you go to the analyst and you express those suppressions. A little bit unburdened, you are back in the society -- the same society, the same people. You listen to the same priest, you read the same newspaper, you go to the same political rally. You remain a communist or you remain a Catholic. The same wife, the same husband, the same children, the same people to associate with.... Again repression happens. This is a very temporary relief.

Many other ways are being found. Painting is one of the ways -- far more significant, because the unconscious knows the language of pictures and not the language of words. The unconscious expresses itself in pictures. That's why in your dreams your unconscious expresses itself more adequately. Hence the psychoanalyst wants to know about your dreams more and more. Dreams are a pictorial, primitive language, unsophisticated, more innocent. And that's exactly what happens when you paint.

Painting is bringing your dreams out into the light -- it can help tremendously. My own feeling is that if Picasso had been prevented from painting he would have gone mad. It was his painting that saved him -- although he was unaware that it was his painting that was saving him. But his painting has the quality of madness in it.

If you look at a Picasso painting and meditate over it you will feel dizzy, you will feel uneasy, you will feel tense, you will not feel relaxed. And if you live in a room where on all the walls are Picasso paintings, there is every danger

that you will have nightmares, or you may go mad. Those paintings will provoke your insanity.

So, Nirgun, you can avoid the art galleries, you can bypass Picassos, but you cannot bypass the aesthetic layer of your being. You cannot bypass the aesthetic dimension; otherwise you will remain impoverished, lopsided, something will be missing in you. And I would not like anything to be missing in my sannyasins. They have to be as scientific as possible. I don't mean -- again remember -- that you have to become a physicist or a chemist or a biologist or a physiologist. I don't mean that! When I say you have to be a scientist, I mean you have to be scientific -- it is a metaphor. Always remember: I am talking in metaphors and similes and parables.

You have to be scientific. To approach the world, the objective world, rightly, the only way is science. If the Bible says that the earth is not round but flat, don't believe in it -- be scientific. The earth is round and not flat. The Bible has no right to say anything about something objective. The Bible is a religious book; it has its own dimension. Don't confuse these dimensions.

Because of this confusion there has arisen a great conflict between science and religion. There is no need at all. Science has its own realm, its own territory. First the priests started interfering with science; now, the whole story is again being repeated in the opposite order. Now scientists are trying to interfere in the world of religion.

Don't ask a scientist whether God exists or not -- that is none of his business. What does he know about God? That is not his dimension. And whatsoever he says about God is stupid; whatsoever he says is going to be wrong.

It is like asking a great doctor about poetry -- he may be a great doctor, a great physician, but asking him about poetry just because he is a great physician is foolish. Or asking a great poet about your illness because he is a great poet...you can see the stupidity of it. You will not go to a great poet to be diagnosed just because he is a great poet. You will go to a doctor -- he may not be a poet at all.
The scientist has no right to say anything about the interiority of humanity -- that is not his world. But now he is interfering. He is doing the same wrong that the priests have been doing for centuries.

Galileo was called by the pope, forced in his old age to apologize because he had said that it is not the sun that goes round the earth, but the earth that goes round the sun. Now, it is against the Bible. The priests were very much annoyed: "How can you deny the Bible? Who are you?" In his old age -- he was seventy, ill, bed-ridden -- he was forced to go to the court, he was forced to kneel down before the pope, and he was asked to apologize.
He must have been a man of humor, he must have had a great sense of humor. He said, "Yes, sir, I apologize. I declare that the Bible is right, that the earth does not go round the sun but the sun goes round the earth. Are you satisfied, sir?"
And they were all happy. They said, "We are satisfied."
And then Galileo laughed. He said, "But whatsoever I say, it makes no difference -- the earth goes round the sun. My statements, what do they mean? What can they do? What can I do? My saying it won't help -- the earth won't listen. But I apologize, I am wrong and the Bible is right. But

remember well: the earth goes round the sun -- it has no obligation to fulfill my desire. I would like it to go according to the Bible and according to you, but I am helpless, utterly helpless."

The Bible has many unscientific statements, the Vedas have many unscientific statements. All old scriptures have many unscientific statements, for a certain reason: because in those days there was no science as a separate phenomenon. The religious scripture was the only scripture available. So it used to collect everything; whatever knowledge was available was collected in the scripture. It contains art, it contains mathematics, it contains geography, it contains history, it contains science -- it contains everything that was available. And the knowledge was so small that it could be contained in a single scripture.

But now, centuries have passed, man has grown, has come of age. Now, science has its own world. We should drop all that is scientific from the religious scriptures -- they have nothing to do with it. Neither does science have anything to do with religious scriptures or the religious dimension. But this is how stupid minds go on quarreling.

I would like you to be scientific -- as far as the world is concerned, be scientific. As far as your inner reality is concerned, be religious. And there is a world between the two, the world of in-between, the twilight world, where the objective and the subjective meet. That is the world of aesthetics. About that, be an artist, be a poet, be a musician. All these dimensions fulfilled and you will become spiritual; all these dimensions enriched will make you the fourth man, the spiritual man. My sannyasins have to be the

fourth -- integrated, whole. Nothing has to be bypassed, Nirgun. Everything has to be lived, loved, experienced. Everything has to be absorbed, so that you become as rich as it is possible to become.

The second question:
Question 2
BELOVED MASTER,
WILL YOU SAY SOMETHING MORE ABOUT RELAXATION? I AM AWARE OF A TENSION DEEP AT THE CORE OF ME AND SUSPECT THAT I HAVE PROBABLY NEVER BEEN TOTALLY RELAXED. WHEN YOU SAID THE OTHER DAY THAT TO RELAX IS ONE OF THE MOST COMPLEX PHENOMENA POSSIBLE, I GLIMPSED A RICH TAPESTRY IN WHICH THE THREADS OF RELAXATION AND LET-GO WERE DEEPLY INTERWOVEN WITH TRUST, AND THEN LOVE CAME INTO IT, AND ACCEPTANCE, GOING WITH THE FLOW, UNION AND ECSTASY....

Anurag, total relaxation is the ultimate. That's the moment when one becomes a buddha. That is the moment of realization, enlightenment, christ-consciousness. You cannot be totally relaxed right now. At the innermost core a tension will persist.
But start relaxing. Start from the circumference -- that's where we are, and we can start only from where we are. Relax the circumference of your being -- relax your body, relax your behavior, relax your acts. Walk in a relaxed way, eat in a relaxed way, talk, listen in a relaxed way. Slow

down every process. Don't be in a hurry and don't be in haste. Move as if all eternity is available to you -- in fact, it is available to you. We are here from the beginning and we are going to be here to the very end, if there is a beginning and there is an end. In fact, there is no beginning and no end. We have always been here and we will be here always. Forms go on changing, but not the substance; garments go on changing, but not the soul.

Tension means hurry, fear, doubt. Tension means a constant effort to protect, to be secure, to be safe. Tension means preparing for the tomorrow now, or for the afterlife -- afraid tomorrow you will not be able to face the reality, so be prepared. Tension means the past that you have not lived really but only somehow bypassed; it hangs, it is a hangover, it surrounds you.

Remember one very fundamental thing about life: any experience that has not been lived will hang around you, will persist: "Finish me! Live me! Complete me!" There is an intrinsic quality in every experience that it tends and wants to be finished, completed. Once completed, it evaporates; incomplete, it persists, it tortures you, it haunts you, it attracts your attention. It says, "What are you going to do about me? I am still incomplete -- fulfill me!"

Your whole past hangs around you with nothing completed -- because nothing has been lived really, everything somehow bypassed, partially lived, only so-so, in a lukewarm way. There has been no intensity, no passion. You have been moving like a somnambulist, a sleepwalker. So that past hangs, and the future creates fear. And between the past and the future is crushed your present, the only reality.

You will have to relax from the circumference. The first step in relaxing is the body. Remember as many times as possible to look in the body, whether you are carrying some tension in the body somewhere -- at the neck, in the head, in the legs. Relax it consciously. Just go to that part of the body, and persuade that part, say to it lovingly "Relax!" And you will be surprised that if you approach any part of your body, it listens, it follows you -- it is your body! With closed eyes, go inside the body from the toe to the head searching for any place where there is a tension. And then talk to that part as you talk to a friend; let there be a dialogue between you and your body. Tell it to relax, and tell it, "There is nothing to fear. Don't be afraid. I am here to take care -- you can relax." Slowly slowly, you will learn the knack of it. Then the body becomes relaxed.

Then take another step, a little deeper; tell the mind to relax. And if the body listens, mind also listens, but you cannot start with the mind -- you have to start from the beginning. You cannot start from the middle. Many people start with the mind and they fail; they fail because they start from a wrong place. Everything should be done in the right order.

If you become capable of relaxing the body voluntarily, then you will be able to help your mind relax voluntarily. Mind is a more complex phenomenon. Once you have become confident that the body listens to you, you will have a new trust in yourself. Now even the mind can listen to you. It will take a little longer with the mind, but it happens.

When the mind is relaxed, then start relaxing your heart, the world of your feelings, emotions -- which is even more

complex, more subtle. But now you will be moving with trust, with great trust in yourself. Now you will know it is possible. If it is possible with the body and possible with the mind, it is possible with the heart too. And then only, when you have gone through these three steps, can you take the fourth. Now you can go to the innermost core of your being, which is beyond body, mind, heart: the very center of your existence. And you will be able to relax it too.
And that relaxation certainly brings the greatest joy possible, the ultimate in ecstasy, acceptance. You will be full of bliss and rejoicing. Your life will have the quality of dance to it.
The whole of existence is dancing, except man. The whole of existence is in a very relaxed movement; movement there is, certainly, but it is utterly relaxed. Trees are growing and birds are chirping and rivers are flowing, stars are moving: everything is going in a very relaxed way. No hurry, no haste, no worry, and no waste. Except man. Man has fallen a victim of his mind.
Man can rise above gods and fall below animals. Man has a great spectrum. From the lowest to the highest, man is a ladder.
Anurag, start from the body, and then go, slowly slowly, deeper. And don't start with anything else unless you have first solved the primary. If your body is tense, don't start with the mind. Wait. Work on the body. And just small things are of immense help.
You walk at a certain pace; that has become habitual, automatic. Now try to walk slowly. Buddha used to say to his disciples, "Walk very slowly, and take each step very consciously." If you take each step very consciously, you

are bound to walk slowly. If you are running, hurrying, you will forget to remember. Hence Buddha walks very slowly. Just try walking very slowly, and you will be surprised -- a new quality of awareness starts happening in the body. Eat slowly, and you will be surprised -- there is great relaxation. Do everything slowly...just to change the old pattern, just to come out of old habits.

First the body has to become utterly relaxed, like a small child, then only start with the mind. Move scientifically: first the simplest, then the complex, then the more complex. And then only can you relax at the ultimate core.

You ask me, Anurag, "Will you say something more about relaxation? I am aware of a tension deep in the core of me and suspect that I have probably never been totally relaxed."

That is the situation of every human being. It is good that you are aware -- millions are unaware of it. You are blessed that you are aware, because if you are aware then something can be done. If you are not aware, then nothing is possible. Awareness is the beginning of transformation.

And you say, "When you said the other day that to relax is one of the most complex phenomena possible, I glimpsed a rich tapestry in which the threads of relaxation and let-go were deeply interwoven with trust, and then love came into it, and acceptance, going with the flow, union and ecstasy...."

Yes, Anurag, relaxation is one of the most complex phenomena -- very rich, multidimensional. All these things are part of it: let-go, trust, surrender, love, acceptance, going with the flow, union with existence, egolessness,

ecstasy. All these are part of it, and all these start happening if you learn the ways of relaxation.
Your so-called religions have made you very tense, because they have created guilt in you. My effort here is to help you get rid of all guilt and all fear. I would like to tell you: there is no hell and no heaven. So don't be afraid of hell and don't be greedy for heaven. All that exists is this moment. You can make this moment a hell or a heaven -- that certainly is possible -- but there is no heaven or hell somewhere else. Hell is when you are all tense, and heaven is when you are all relaxed. Total relaxation is paradise.

The third question:
Question 3
BELOVED MASTER,
EVERY TIME YOU HAVE SPOKEN ON A MASTER, I HAVE FELT YOU TO BE IN LOVE WITH THAT MASTER AND YOU FLOWING THROUGH HIS SUTRAS. IN THIS SERIES THOUGH, I FEEL YOU STANDING APART FROM THE BUDDHA AND NOT REALLY IN LOVE WITH HIS WORK.
IS SOMETHING CHANGING OR AM I IMAGINING THINGS?

Nishant, you are not imagining things. With me, you will have to be always on the move -- things will be changing. As you grow up I will be telling you things which I could not tell you before. It is not that my love for Buddha is less -- my love cannot be less or more; my love is just love, it is a quality, it has no quantitative dimension to it. It can never be less or more -- it simply is.

I love Buddha, I love Jesus, I love Zarathustra, I love Lao Tzu, I love Patanjali -- BECAUSE I love...because I love you, because I love the trees, because I love the birds. My love is not less.

And you are perfectly right that I am standing apart -- I will be standing apart more and more in the future. I am preparing for the new phase. The work has to take a quantum leap, and much preparation is needed. The work has to take on a totally different quality now. Now I have people with me of great trust, of love, people who are committed and surrendered.

In the beginning I was talking to the masses. It was a totally different kind of work: I was in search of disciples. Talking to the masses I was using their language; talking to the masses was talking to a primary class. You can't go very deep; you have to talk superficially. You have to look to whom you are talking.

Then, slowly slowly, a few people started turning from students to disciples. Then my approach changed. It was now possible to communicate on higher levels. Then disciples started changing into sannyasins -- they started becoming committed, they started becoming involved with me, with my destiny. My life became their life, my being became their being. Now communication took a jump: it became communion.

Now I have got enough sannyasins...the work will have to move deeper.

I was talking about Buddha before, and I was talking as if I was simply allowing him to flow through me. Now this is not going to be the case. This series is the beginning of a new phase.

Nishant, you have suspected rightly. Now I will have to make it clear what the points are in which I differ from Buddha, from Jesus, from Krishna. I have to make it very clear where I differ from them.

Twenty-five centuries have passed since Buddha. Much has happened since then -- much water has flowed down the Ganges. Everything has changed! If Buddha comes into the world he will not be able to recognize that it is the same world that he had left.

I belong to this century. In these twenty-five centuries many new things have been added. For example, Buddha knew nothing about science -- he could not. I am not saying that he should have known -- he could not! It was impossible. Albert Einstein had not happened yet. Buddha was not aware of many things of which we are aware, I am aware. I have to incorporate all those things. Sigmund Freud and Karl Marx and Albert Einstein and many more have to be incorporated. Religion has to become more and more rich every day.

I will have to make it clear where I differ. I will have to make clear what MORE I am trying to add to the religious heritage. I will not be just a vehicle anymore. That phase is complete. It was needed up to now, because I wanted...the people who loved Buddha, I wanted to approach them; the people who loved Mahavira, I wanted to approach them; the people who loved Jesus, I wanted to approach them. Humanity is divided: a few are with Jesus, a few are with Buddha, a few are with Krishna...and so on and so forth. There are no free human beings available. I had to pick and choose from different sects, from different communities, from different religions. The only way was: to speak the

way Buddha spoke, then only would a few Buddhists become involved with me; otherwise it would have been impossible for them, they would not have understood me. Now they have become involved with me it is going to be a totally different matter. Now their love has arisen for me, it is easy for me to say where I differ from Buddha and they will be able to understand. It won't create any trouble for them, it will not be confusing to them.

But remember, my love is not less because I am standing apart: my love is the same. My love is not going to change; it is not something that can change. But more and more it will happen: I will stand apart and separate.

Now I have got my own people. And I have to make it very clear where I differ, where I am trying to give something new, something more; where I am trying to enrich the heritage, where I am contributing. And sometimes I will have to criticize too -- but I love so much that I can criticize.

Sometimes I am going to criticize Buddha, Mahavira, Jesus. Not that I don't love them -- I love them, otherwise why should I speak on them? Even if I criticize them, that means my love is so much that I will take even that trouble, to criticize them.

Buddha has given much to humanity, but humanity is an on-going process. And everything that happens to humanity brings its advantages and also brings its disadvantages.

In this world, nothing can remain absolutely pure. When it rains the water is pure. The moment it touches the earth...in fact even before that: the moment it enters into the atmosphere, the polluted air starts contaminating it. The earth is surrounded by a thick layer of air; when the water

enters into this layer of air, it starts becoming polluted. And when it falls on the earth it becomes muddy, it becomes dirty. Still it is water, but it is no longer pure.
That's what happens to every truth. When Buddha uttered something, it was absolutely pure. The moment it was heard by people it became impure. When it was recorded -- and remember it was recorded after many years, after three hundred years...now can you imagine that people can record after three hundred years exactly the same thing that Buddha said? It is impossible! People are people; they will automatically destroy it, distort it -- they will give their own colors to it.
The day Buddha died, his followers were divided into thirty-six schools -- immediately! Thirty-six interpretations. Nobody was agreeing on what he said, or even if they were agreeing about the words, they were not agreeing about the meaning that was given to the words.

I am reminded:
In the last year of his life, Sigmund Freud called all his disciples -- the important ones, the chief ones. He was feeling death coming close by, he must have heard the first steps of death, and he wanted to have a last gathering. They were sitting at the table, nearabout thirty people from all over the world -- all the chief disciples -- and they started arguing about something that Freud had said a few days before. Freud was there! He was the host, but they completely forgot about Freud. They became so involved in the argument: somebody was saying one thing, and somebody else was saying something else, and somebody else was contradicting both. And they were arguing about

what Freud really meant.... And Freud watched, listened, and then shouted, "Stop all this nonsense! Do you think I am dead? I am here, present -- why don't you ask me what my meaning was? And if you can do this to me while I am alive, what are you going to do when I am dead? You don't bother to ask me, and you have wasted one hour in arguing with each other, fighting, getting irritated, annoyed, shouting at each other...and the master is present!"

And Freud is not an enlightened man. If this can happen to an unenlightened person, what about the Buddha who speaks from the highest peaks of existence? The moment he utters something, it is no longer the same as it was in his heart. When it is heard, it is no longer the same as it was uttered. When it is interpreted, it is totally something else. Many times I will criticize. Many times I will tell you about all the advantages and all the disadvantages that have happened. Buddha is the purest religious dimension, the purest possible, but how can I avoid saying that he is a one-dimensional man? If I don't say it, it will be untrue. If I don't say it, my love for truth is not total then. I have to say it, that he is one-dimensional -- the purest in his dimension, but he lacks the other dimensions.

He has no appreciation of beauty, not at all. He has no appreciation of music, not at all. He has no appreciation of love, not at all. The aesthetic dimension is missing, he has bypassed it. And he has no scientific approach; he cannot have -- science was not yet developed enough. He is one-dimensional purity, but one-dimensional.

And because he is one-dimensional, this whole country has remained one-dimensional. Buddha is one-dimensional,

Mahavira is one-dimensional, Patanjali is one-dimensional. All the great religious masters of this country were religious people. They reached to the purest religious experience, and they tried to convert the whole country to their vision. But the disadvantage was that the country became poor. Without science no country can ever become rich. The country became outwardly ugly, starving, ill. Without science and technology, no country can be outwardly beautiful, healthy, affluent.

Now, I cannot avoid mentioning it -- that will not be true, and that will not be right either. That will be deceiving you! That will be a crime against humanity. It is time that somebody should have the guts to say it! Nobody in the whole world is doing it, and the time is ripe that somebody should shout and say that Buddha, Mahavira, Patanjali, Lao Tzu, are immensely beautiful people, and they have contributed much -- humanity would not have been what it is without them -- they are our very soul, that is absolutely true, but there is a disadvantage because they are all one-dimensional. Other dimensions have remained paralyzed, crippled. And now the time has come: other dimensions have to be fulfilled too.

I would like this country to become rich, scientific, technological, healthy, well nourished -- not only this country but the whole of humanity. And I don't see that it is against religion. On the contrary: the more rich a country is, the more religious it can become -- because richness gives you opportunity, richness gives you facility, richness gives you time and space and energy, to move inwards. If you don't move, that's your responsibility. Nothing is wrong in being rich. If a rich person is not religious, he is simply

mediocre, stupid; it is nothing against richness: it is simply an indication that he is foolish.

If a rich person is not religious, I call him stupid; and if a poor person is religious, I call him intelligent, really intelligent. Rare intelligence is needed for the poor man to become religious. When a Kabir becomes religious he shows more intelligence than Buddha himself -- because it is impossible, almost impossible to become religious when you are poor. When you have not known what riches are, how can you get beyond them? One can go beyond a certain thing only when it has been experienced; it is only through experience that one surpasses and transcends. If somebody transcends without experiencing something, that simply means that he has such intelligence that he learns from others' experiences; he need not go into all those things on his own.

Kabir must have looked at the rich people and seen the futility of it all. Hence he dropped that ambition, that desire. Buddha was the son of a king; he lived richly, and through experience he came to understand that all is futile and all is vanity. He came through his own experience: Kabir came by watching others' experiences. Certainly, Kabir needs more intelligence.

Poor persons can become religious, but poor societies cannot become religious. Rich persons may avoid religion, but rich societies cannot avoid religion.

Now, this new dimension has to be added. Religion need not worship poverty. Religion need not console poor people by saying false things to them, by consoling them, by giving them invented theories of past lives and future lives and fate, etcetera. The whole earth is now capable of

becoming affluent. Science has released so much power -- but it has to be used rightly!

Hence I am not in favor of the Western approach. The West is missing the soul, the very soul -- it is only a body. And the danger is that the stupid politicians in the East are going to imitate the West.

Now, every country wants to create atomic energy -- even India. Poor countries like India or Pakistan, they want to create atomic bombs. Why? People are poor and starving. Just a few days ago, India launched a satellite, Bhaskar, into the sky, to study.... Industries don't have electricity; five days in a week, industries are being closed. You don't have electricity, but you launch a satellite to study the possibilities of the sky -- competition, foolish competition. Now there are five hundred man-made satellites going round the earth. One of them, the American Skylab, is going to fall because it has gone out of control. It can create great danger. Poona is on its way; from Bombay to Poona, and from Poona up to Kannada, somewhere it will fall. And it will not fall in one piece in one place -- at least five hundred pieces, and each piece will be like a bomb. It can fall on an atomic generator and can destroy the whole earth. And all those five hundred satellites, sooner or later, are going to go out of control. If the American satellite can go out of control, what about the Indian? Just two years ago, India launched its first satellite. Now it is functioning almost like an Indian -- the name of the satellite was Aryabhatta -- now it goes on giving wrong information. It is a nuisance! You cannot believe it. In the beginning they used to believe it, but then they found that it was giving absolutely wrong information. How like the Indian mind!

How representative! Now they want to get rid of it, they want it to shut up, but it won't...it continues to send information. You cannot shut it up.

Poor countries imitating the West -- the whole thing is so foolish. The poor countries certainly need more scientific understanding, but they don't need sophisticated scientific instruments -- that is not their need.

And now science has released enough energy for the whole earth to be transformed into a paradise.

Buddha has contributed immensely, but as a side effect he has been one of the causes of India's poverty. I cannot ignore that fact. I have to state it. I have not stated it up to now, but now I have my own people who will understand. Mahavira has contributed tremendously to India's spiritual enrichment, but the by-product of his teachings has been slavery for one thousand years; because of his teaching of nonviolence, India became one of the most cowardly countries in the world.

Now, Krishna is right in saying to leave everything to God -- in the religious dimension that's how things should be: trust God. But not in the scientific dimension -- there is a totally different mechanism that functions: doubt, not trust. Trust is the foundation of the religious world, doubt the foundation of the scientific world.

Krishna is perfectly right when he says to Arjuna, "Trust God! Surrender to God. Trust that whatsoever he is doing is right." Now, what has been the side effect? The side effect has been: "If you are poor, trust God; if you are ill, trust God. Whatsoever he is doing is right." This is the side effect. In the religious dimension it is perfectly right, but

when you bring it to the scientific dimension it becomes absolutely wrong.

Now I have to say it. And I know I am going to suffer much because of these statements, because in India people are not accustomed to hearing any criticism of Krishna, Mahavira or Buddha -- no, not at all.

First I will make it clear to you where I differ. And soon I will start criticizing the side effects too.

Nishant, wait a little more, because I have to tell you the whole truth -- the whole truth as it is, whatsoever the consequences. I will appreciate whatsoever is worth appreciating and I will condemn whatsoever needs to be condemned.

India's poverty, slavery, long long suffering, cannot simply be tolerated, ignored. And Krishna, Mahavira and Buddha cannot be forgiven -- they are responsible. If they are to be praised for what they have contributed to the spiritual, they have to be criticized too because they have been the root cause of India's fall.

And now the time has come when everything should be put right. And it is not only a question of India: it is a question of the whole world. Just as Indian fools can imitate the West, there are Western fools who can imitate India, and can go on committing the same kind of mistakes that India has committed in the past.

We have to put things absolutely clear. We have to be very very dispassionate. That's why, Nishant, you are feeling there is a certain difference -- there is. You are not imagining things. My work is going into a new phase, I am entering into a new phase. Before the new commune happens, I am preparing for it....

The last question:
Question 4
BELOVED MASTER,
WHY AM I TIRED OF SEX?

Sandhan, sex is tiring -- and that's why I say to you: Don't avoid it. Unless you know its stupidity you will not be able to get rid of it. Unless you know its sheer wastage, you will not be able to transcend it.
It is good that you have started feeling tired -- that is natural. Sex simply means energy being dissipated downwards. The energy has to move upwards, then it is nourishing. Then it opens inexhaustible treasures in you -- aes dhammo sanantano. But if you go on and on into sex like a maniac, soon you will find yourself utterly exhausted, wasted.

A newly married couple go to Niagara Falls for their honeymoon. When they arrive, they immediately check into a hotel and are not heard of for three days, no room service or anything. After a while the manager gets a bit worried, so he decides to check up on them.
He knocks on the door, hears a little scurrying in the room, and then a pale-looking man opens the door with just his shorts on. "We were worried," said the manager.
"Well, we just got married," replied the man.
"I understand," says the manager, "but you have one of the great wonders of the world...."

At that a tiny voice from the back of the room interrupts, "If you show that thing to me one more time, I will jump out of the window."

You don't get it! ...Three days continuously -- the woman is bound to jump out of the window.
Man can go on living stupidly only to a certain extent -- beyond that he has to become aware of what he is doing to himself. Sandhan, it is time now. There are far more important things in life than sex. Sex is not all. It is significant, but not all. If you remain trapped in it you will miss all the glories of life.
And I am not against sex, remember. That's why my teaching becomes a little contradictory. I am a paradox. I cannot help it because truth itself is a paradox. I am not against sex, because those who are against sex, they will always remain sexual. I am for sex, because if you go deep into it you will come out of it soon. The more consciously you go into it, the sooner you will come out of it. And the day when a person comes out of sex totally is a day of great blessing.
It is good that you are feeling tired. Now don't go to a physician for some medicine -- that won't help, or that may only postpone your tiredness a little bit more. If you are feeling tired that simply shows that you have come to the point from where you can jump out of it.
What is the point of remaining in it if you are feeling tired? Get out of it! And I am not saying repress it. When you are feeling much energy for it and you try to get out, there will be repression. But when you are exhausted and tired and you see the futility of it, you can come out of it without

repression. And to come out of sex without repression is to be free of it.
Freedom from sex is a great experience. Freedom from sex makes your energies available for meditation, for samadhi.
Enough for today.

The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 1

Chapter #9
Chapter title: Seated in the cave of the heart
29 June 1979 am in Buddha Hall

AS THE FLETCHER WHITTLES
AND MAKES STRAIGHT HIS ARROWS,
SO THE MASTER DIRECTS
HIS STRAYING THOUGHTS.

LIKE A FISH OUT OF WATER,
STRANDED ON THE SHORE,
THOUGHTS THRASH AND QUIVER.
FOR HOW CAN THEY SHAKE OFF DESIRE?

THEY TREMBLE, THEY ARE UNSTEADY,
THEY WANDER AT THEIR WILL.
IT IS GOOD TO CONTROL THEM.
AND TO MASTER THEM BRINGS HAPPINESS.

BUT HOW SUBTLE THEY ARE,
HOW ELUSIVE!
THE TASK IS TO QUIETEN THEM,
AND BY RULING THEM TO FIND HAPPINESS.

WITH SINGLEMINDEDNESS
THE MASTER QUELLS HIS THOUGHTS.
HE ENDS THEIR WANDERING.
SEATED IN THE CAVE OF THE HEART,
HE FINDS FREEDOM.

Freedom is the goal of life. Without freedom, life has no meaning at all. By "freedom" is not meant any political, social or economic freedom. By "freedom" is meant freedom from time, freedom from mind, freedom from desire. The moment mind is no more, you are one with the universe, you are as vast as the universe itself.

It is the mind that is the barrier between you and the reality, and because of this barrier you remain confined in a dark cell where no light ever reaches and where no joy can ever penetrate. You live in misery because you are not meant to live in such a small, confined space. Your being wants to expand to the very ultimate source of existence. Your being longs to be oceanic, and you have become a dewdrop. How can you be happy? How can you be blissful? Man lives in misery because man lives imprisoned.

And Gautama the Buddha says that tanha -- desire -- is the root cause of all our misery, because desire creates the mind. Desire means creating future, projecting yourself in the future, bringing tomorrow in. Bring the tomorrow in and the today disappears, you cannot see it anymore; your eyes are clouded by the tomorrow. Bring the tomorrow in and you will have to carry the load of all your yesterdays, because the tomorrow can only be there if the yesterdays go on nourishing it.

Each desire is born out of the past and each desire is projected in the future. The past and the future, they constitute your whole mind. Analyze the mind, dissect it, and you will find only two things: the past and the future. You will not find even an iota of the present, not even a single atom. And the present is the only reality, the only existence, the only dance there is.

The present can be found only when mind has ceased utterly. When the past no more overpowers you and the future no more possesses you, when you are disconnected from the memories and the imaginations, in that moment where are you? who are you? In that moment you are a nobody. And nobody can hurt you when you are a nobody, you cannot be wounded -- because the ego is very ready to receive wounds. The ego is almost seeking and searching to be wounded; it exists through wounds. Its whole existence depends on misery, pain.

When you are a nobody, anguish is impossible, anxiety simply unbelievable. When you are a nobody there is great silence, stillness, no noise inside. Past gone, future disappeared, what is there to create noise? And the silence that is heard is celestial, is sacred. For the first time, in those spaces of no-mind, you become aware of the eternal celebration that goes on and on. That's what the existence is made of.

Except man, the whole existence is blissful. Only man has fallen out of it, has gone astray. Only man can do it because only man has consciousness.

Now, consciousness has two possibilities: either it can become a bright light in you, so bright that even the sun will look pale compared to it.... Buddha says it is as if a

thousand suns have risen suddenly -- when you look within with no mind it is all light, eternal light. It is all joy, pure, uncontaminated, unpolluted. It is simple bliss, innocent. It is wonder. Its majesty is indescribable, its beauty inexpressible, and its benediction inexhaustible. Aes dhammo sanantano: so is the ultimate law.

If you can only put your mind aside you will become aware of the cosmic play. Then you are only energy, and the energy is always herenow, it never leaves the herenow.

That is one possibility: if you become pure consciousness. The other possibility is: you can become self-consciousness. Then you fall. Then you become a separate entity from the world. Then you become an island, defined, well defined. Then you are confined, because all definitions confine. Then you are in a prison cell, and the prison cell is dark, utterly dark. There is no light, no possibility of light. And the prison cell cripples you, paralyzes you.

Self-consciousness becomes a bondage; the self is the bondage. And just consciousness becomes freedom.

Drop the self and be conscious! That is the whole message -- the message of all the buddhas of all the ages, past, present, future. The essential core of the message is very simple: drop the self, the ego, the mind, and be.

Just this moment when this silence pervades...who are you? A nobody, a nonentity. You don't have a name, you don't have a form. You are neither man nor woman, neither Hindu nor Mohammedan. You don't belong to any country, to any nation, to any race. You are not the body and you are not the mind.

Then what are you? In this silence, what is your taste? How does it taste to be? Just a peace, just a silence...and out of

that peace and silence a great joy starts surfacing, welling up, for no reason at all. It is your spontaneous nature.
The art of putting the mind aside is the whole secret of religion, because as you put the mind aside your being explodes into a thousand and one colors. You become a rainbow, a lotus, a one-thousand-petaled lotus. Suddenly you open up, and then the whole beauty of existence -- which is infinite! -- is yours. Then all the stars in the sky are within you. Then even the sky is not your limit; you don't have any limits anymore.
Silence gives you a chance to melt, merge, disappear, evaporate. And when you are not, you are -- for the first time you are. When you are not, God is, nirvana is, enlightenment is. When you are not, all is found -- and when you are, all is lost.
Man has become a self-consciousness; that is his going astray, that is the original fall. All the religions talk about the original fall in some way or other, but the best story is contained in Christianity. The original fall is because man eats from the tree of knowledge. When you eat of the tree of knowledge, the fruits of knowledge, it creates self-consciousness.
The more knowledgeable you are, the more egoistic you are -- hence the ego of the scholars, pundits, maulvis. The ego becomes decorated with great knowledge, scriptures, systems of thought. But they don't make you innocent; they don't bring you the childlike quality of openness, of trust, of love, of playfulness. Trust, love, playfulness, wonder, all disappear when you become very knowledgeable.
And we are being taught to become knowledgeable. We are not taught to be innocent, we are not taught how to feel the

wonder of existence. We are told the names of the flowers, but we are not taught how to dance around the flowers. We are told the names of the mountains, but we are not taught how to commune with the mountains, how to commune with the stars, how to commune with the trees, how to be in tune with existence.

Out of tune, how can you be happy? Out of tune you are bound to remain in anguish, in great misery, in pain. You can be happy only when you are dancing with the dance of the whole, when you are just a part of the dance, when you are just a part of this great orchestra, when you are not singing your song separately. Only then, in that melting, is man free.

That's what freedom is. It is not political, not economic, not social. Freedom is spiritual. The social, the economic, and the political freedom are freedoms only if they help people to be spiritually free. If they don't help people to become spiritually free, then they are pretenders. Then in the name of freedom man is made more and more a slave. Beautiful names become facades hiding ugly realities. If you are not spiritually free you are not free at all. Then all your freedoms are bogus, phony, pseudo. Then you have been duped. Then you have been given toys to play with.

Buddha is talking about the reality -- the real freedom. He calls it nirvana. The word 'nirvana' is very beautiful; it means cessation of self-consciousness, utter cessation of the self, the naked state of egolessness. It brings great ecstasies, great harvest; inexhaustible treasures it brings.

Hence Buddha goes on repeating again and again...two statements he repeats in THE DHAMMAPADA. One is: aes dhammo sanantano. This is the ultimate law of life: that

you disappear and you will find yourself. Very paradoxical -- that just by disappearing one finds. By dropping the self one becomes the ultimate self. By disappearing as a dewdrop one becomes the ocean.

And the other statement that he repeats again and again is: aes dhammo visuddhya -- such is the law of purity, of becoming innocent, pure. What is the law of purity? A simple law: become disidentified with the mind, don't think of yourself as a mind. Not that Buddha is against the mind, not that he does not want you to use it -- he wants you to use it, but not to be used by it. And usually the second is the case: the mind is using you. You have become a slave. The master has become the slave and the slave has become the master. Everything has gone topsy-turvy.

You are standing on your head! Now how can you walk, how can you move, how can you dance? Have you seen anybody dancing standing on his head? Your life will not be a life of movement anymore if you are standing on your head. Your life will be stagnant, it will become a dirty pool of water. You will start stinking soon. Standing on your head you are crippled, paralyzed.

If you just stand on your legs again -- a small change, a very small change, but it brings a radical revolution -- immediately you are capable of movement, and movement is life. Not to move is to die.

How do you define death? When a person cannot move in any possible way. He cannot breathe -- that is one kind of movement; he cannot see -- that is another kind of movement; he cannot walk, he cannot talk -- these are all kinds of movement, different dimensions of movement. Because all movement has ceased we say the man is dead.

The more movement you have, the more life, the livelier you are. Have multidimensional movement! But that is possible only if you stop standing on your head. You have to be put right.

The day you come to me you come in a topsy-turvy state. Initiation into sannyas means nothing except that I persuade you to stand on your feet and not to go on doing this shirshasana -- headstand -- your whole life.

Be natural, be part of nature. Don't brag. Don't go on puffing up your egos. We are tiny parts -- immensely beautiful if we function with the whole, but absolutely ugly if we function against it.

But you have been told by your societies to fight, to struggle, because life is a struggle for survival, because if you don't fight you will be defeated. And you have to be victorious, and you have to be famous. You have been given great ambitions and all those ambitions have become chains, all those ambitions are keeping you tethered. All those ambitions are the root cause of your mind; they create the mind.

Buddha's word 'tanha' contains all the meanings of desire, ambition, achievement. These are the nourishments of the mind. If you go on nourishing the mind you are poisoning yourself. And the mind will become bigger and bigger and you will become smaller and smaller. The mind becomes almost a cancerous growth.

Sannyas means an operation. Buddha transformed thousands of people through sannyas, through initiation. He was a great surgeon.

And once you become aware that you are the cause of your own misery, things start changing. You no longer help your

own misery, you no longer feed it. And once you become aware that you are not your mind but a witness to it, you start rising above the mind, you are no longer tethered. You start growing wings, you start soaring higher and higher. Mind remains always groping in the dark valleys of life, but you can become an eagle, you can soar high. You can be the master and then you can use the mind -- and very purposely it can be used.
These sutras are how to become the master of your mind. They contain the science of becoming the master.
The Buddha says:

AS THE FLETCHER WHITTLES
AND MAKES STRAIGHT HIS ARROWS,
SO THE MASTER DIRECTS
HIS STRAYING THOUGHTS.

Now meditate: are your thoughts directing you, or do you direct your thoughts? -- because much depends on that insight. Are you being dominated by your thoughts? Do they go on driving you hither and thither? Do they suggest to you, do they fascinate you, do they obsess you? Do they pull your strings and are you simply a slave? Or are you the master, and can you say to your thoughts "Stop!" and they have to stop -- can you put them on or off?
People never meditate over it because it makes them feel very humiliated. It shows them their impotence: they cannot even stop thoughts, their own thoughts.

There is a famous Tibetan parable:

A man served a master for many many years. The service was not pure; there was a motivation in it. He wanted some secret from the master. He had heard that the master has the secret -- the secret to do miracles. With this hidden desire he was serving the master day in, day out, but he was afraid to say anything. But the master was continuously watching his motivation.

One day the master asked, "It is better that you please speak your mind, because I am continuously seeing a motive in all your service that you do for me. It is not out of love, certainly not out of love. I don't see any love in it and I don't see any humility in it. It is a kind of bribery. So please, just tell me, what do you want?"

The man was waiting for this opportunity. He said, "I want the secret of doing miracles."

The master said, "Then why did you waste your time so long? You could have said it the very first day you had come. You tortured yourself and you tortured me too, because I don't like people around me who have motives. They are ugly to look at. They are basically greedy, and greed makes them ugly. The secret is simple -- why didn't you ask me the first day? This is the secret...."

He wrote down a small mantra on a piece of paper, just three lines maybe: "Buddham sharanam gachchhami, sangham sharanam gachchhami, dhammam sharanam gachchhami -- I go to the feet of the Buddha, I go to the feet of the Buddha's commune, I go to the feet of the dhamma, the ultimate law."

And the master told the man, "You take this small mantra with you, repeat it five times, just five times. It is a simple process. Just remember one condition: while you are

repeating it, take a bath, close the door, sit silently -- and while you are repeating it, please don't remember monkeys."

The man said, "What nonsense are you talking about? Why should I remember monkeys in the first place? I have never remembered them my whole life!"

The master said, "That is up to you, but I have to tell you the condition. This is how the mantra was given to me, with this condition. If you have never remembered monkeys, so far so good. Now go home, and please never come back to me. You have the secret, you know the condition. Fulfill the condition and you will have miraculous powers, and whatsoever you want to do you can do: you can fly in the sky, you can read people's thoughts, you can materialize things, and so on and so forth."

The man rushed home; he even forgot to thank the master. That's how greed functions: it does not know thankfulness, it does not know gratitude. Greed is absolutely unaware of gratitude; it never comes across it. Greed is a thief and thieves don't thank.

The man rushed, but he was very much puzzled: even on the way to his home monkeys started appearing in his head. He saw many kinds of monkeys: small and big, and red-mouthed and black-mouthed, and he was very much puzzled -- "What is happening?" In fact he was not thinking of anything else but the monkeys. And they were becoming bigger and they were crowding all around.

He went home, he took a bath, but the monkeys were not leaving him. Now he was becoming suspicious that they were not going to leave him while he would be chanting the mantra. He had not even chanted the mantra yet, he was

simply preparing. And when he closed his doors the room was full of monkeys. It was so crowded that he had no space for himself! He closed his eyes and there were monkeys, and he opened his eyes and there were monkeys. He could not believe what was happening! The whole night he tried. Again and again he would take a bath, and again and again he would try and fail, and fail utterly.
In the morning he went to the master, returned the mantra and said, "Keep this mantra with you. This is driving me mad! I don't want to do any miracles, but please help me to get rid of these monkeys!"

It is so impossible to get rid of a single thought! And if you want to get rid of it, it becomes even more difficult, because when you want to get rid of a thought it is a question -- a very decisive moment -- of who is the master: the mind or you? The mind will try in every possible way to prove that he is the master and not you.
The master has been a slave for centuries, and the slave has been the master for millions of lives. Now the slave cannot leave all his privileges, priorities, so easily. He is going to give you great resistance.
You try it! Today take a bath, close your doors, repeat this simple mantra: Buddham sharanam gachchhami, sangham sharanam gachchhami, dhammam sharanam gachchhami -- and don't let the monkeys come to you....
You are laughing at the poor man. You will be surprised: you are that man.

Sigmund Freud used to tell another story:

It happened once in a big hotel that a man came to stay. The manager was a little hesitant in giving him a room although there was an empty room. The man said, "Why are you hesitating so much?"

The man said, "The reason is, just below that room there is a politician staying, a very famous man and very powerful, a big gun. And he is annoyed by small things, so we have kept the room above him empty for three days since he has been here -- because if anybody walks some noise is created, if you move something some noise is created, and he becomes so irritated and so angry that he creates much fuss about it."

The stranger said, "Don't be worried! I will be very careful. Moreover, I am going to stay only overnight. I will be coming nearabout twelve in the night because I have much work to do in the town, and I will be leaving early in the morning, five o'clock. There is not much possibility that between twelve and five I will do anything which will irritate the great man. At the most I will be asleep and dreaming, and I don't think my dreams will disturb him."

The manager was convinced: "If he is going to stay just for five hours there is no problem." He was allowed.

At twelve the man reached his room exhausted: the whole day's work, a thousand and one things clamoring in his head. He had completely forgotten the politician. He entered his room. He was so tired. He sat on his bed, took off one of his shoes and threw it in the corner of the room. Then suddenly the noise of the shoe reminded him that maybe the politician, the great leader, would get disturbed, may be awakened. So the other shoe he put down very silently.

After one hour the politician knocked on his door. He came out of his sleep, opened the door and said, "Have I done anything? -- because for one hour I have been asleep." The politician was red with anger. He said; "Yes! Where is the other shoe? I cannot manage to sleep. That other shoe goes on hanging, a continuous question in my mind -- where has the other shoe gone? Is this man sleeping with one shoe on? One I know you have thrown, but what happened to the other one? I have tried in every possible way to get rid of the idea -- that this is not my concern. How am I concerned with his shoe? But the more I have tried to get rid of the idea the more I have become possessed by it. Now there is only one possible way to go to sleep: to come and wake you and ask you what happened. Unless I know I cannot sleep."

It is very difficult even to get rid of an absurd thought, utterly meaningless to you, of no purpose, something which is just accidental, none of your business. But still it can pursue you, it can haunt you, it can torture you. It can become such a powerful thing that it can drive you mad. People don't look in. They know that it is better not to look in because it is very humiliating. To see oneself as a slave is humiliating. And the mind has been on the throne so long, it has become accustomed to being the master. And it is not the master.

You are born as a consciousness, not as a mind. Your innermost core is consciousness, not mind. Mind is nothing but accumulated thoughts, junk of the past. You are totally different from it.

Watching it, slowly slowly you will see the distance. A thought arises in you, watch it. Watch it without any judgment. Don't be for or against, simply look at it, see into it, just like a mirror reflecting it. And one thing will become certain: that it is separate from you. It comes and goes, and you abide forever. The reflection in the mirror is not the mirror. Many reflections come and go, the mirror remains. The mirror is only the capacity of mirroring. A thought is there -- anger, greed, jealousy -- some thought, some kind of thought is there. It is not you!

But our whole training, our whole conditioning, is basically wrong. Our languages are basically wrong because they give us wrong notions. When you see the thought of hunger arise in your mind you immediately say, "I am hungry," which is utter nonsense. You have never been hungry and you cannot be hungry, because consciousness has nothing to do with hunger, food, satiation. What is actually happening is: the body is hungry -- you are aware of it. You are simply reflecting the situation of the body.

To be exactly precise you should say, "I am aware that my body is hungry, I am seeing that my body needs food." But every language says, "I am hungry, I am thirsty." I know it is simpler to say, "I am thirsty," than to say again and again, "I am aware that my body is thirsty."

One of the great Indian mystics visited America -- his name was Swami Ram. He used to speak of himself in the third person, he never used to use the word 'I'. He would only call himself Ram. He would say, "Ram is hungry. Ram is thirsty. Now Ram is feeling sleepy." It is a very strange way because we are not accustomed to it.

When he went to America for the first time, people could not understand him or would understand him only in a wrong way, misunderstand him. He would say, "Ram is hungry." They would look all around -- where is Ram? And then he would show them: "This body is Ram, this body is hungry."

And they would say, "Then why don't you simply say 'I am hungry'? Why go so roundabout, why go in circles? 'Ram is hungry.' Then we have to ask, 'Who is Ram?' Then you have to say, 'This body is Ram.'"

But Ram would say, "I cannot assert something which is not true. I cannot say 'I am hungry' because I am not."

Once it happened that he was sitting in a park, a public park, and a few people who had gathered around him were asking questions. One man asked, "We have heard about Krishna that when he used to play on his flute that people would forget their jobs and just rush towards him enchanted, as if possessed. What was his secret?"

Ram was only wearing one single cloth, he had just wrapped a blanket around himself. He threw the blanket -- rather than answering he created a situation. That's how great mystics work. He threw the blanket, he was utterly naked, and he ran away. All the people ran with him! Not only those who were surrounding him but others also who were standing here and there or who had come for a morning walk, and people who were sitting on the benches reading their newspapers, they threw their newspapers. A great crowd was following him, and he was laughing and giggling, and the whole crowd was following him.

And then he stood under a tree and he said, "Why are you following me? For what? I have not even played on the

flute! And you had asked me why people used to become possessed by Krishna's flute."
Wherever something of the beyond happens, people become enchanted. "You are enchanted," he said. "And Ram has not done anything special. Ram has only become naked and has been running like a child in the morning sun."
Somebody who was not acquainted with his way of talking asked, "Who is this Ram?" And again he said, "This body is Ram, this mind is Ram, and I am a watcher just as you are a watcher. Just as you watched this body running naked in the morning sun, I was also watching. You are watching from without, I am watching from within. We are both watchers."

This is the way to become disidentified from the mind: be a watcher.
Buddha says: AS THE FLETCHER WHITTLES AND MAKES STRAIGHT HIS ARROWS, SO THE MASTER DIRECTS HIS STRAYING THOUGHTS. Then it will be possible and only then: when you have become an observer, when you have reduced your thoughts to observed objects, the content of the mind is no longer powerful. You have slipped out of its power, you are standing apart. You are a spectator, a witness. When you have become a witness, you will be able to direct your thoughts. Then thoughts can be used, then thoughts are beautiful.
The mind is the most sophisticated mechanism in the whole of existence, and the human mind more so than any other. It is the most evolved machine, it can be used for great

things. But you have to be the master, only then can you use it.

But the situation is such that the car is driving the driver. The driver has become completely unaware of himself; maybe he is drunk. He is simply moving wherever the car is leading him. Now he is bound for a ditch, bound for an accident! And if your life is so full of accidents it is not an accident at all -- it has to be so.

You are following a machine. It is a biocomputer, your mind; beautiful if you can use it as a master, dangerous if it uses you. This is slavery. To be free of it is to know something of freedom.

And the first effort should be like the fletcher who makes his arrows straight.

Your minds are not in a state of harmony; your minds are in a mess, nothing is straight there. Everything has become a very complicated labyrinth, a riddle. You don't know what is what and which is which. You don't know what you are doing and why. And one moment one thought possesses you, another moment another thought possesses you, and both may be contradictory. So by one hand you make something and by the other hand you unmake it. Hence the utter failure of life, a sheer wastage of energy and time and opportunity.

Watch how contradictory your thoughts are. One part says yes, another part immediately says no, never misses the opportunity to say no. Now saying yes and no together is wasting your energy. Either say yes and be total, then your thought is straight; or say no and be total, then your thought is straight. But saying yes and no together, or alternately -- one moment yes, another moment no -- where are you

going to reach? You take one step in one direction, another step in another direction. You will remain stuck in the same place, or at the most you will move in circles, But your life will not be a life of growth, you will not grow. You may certainly grow old but you will never grow up, you will never attain to maturity.

Straighten out your thoughts! It is almost a complete jungle in your mind -- all paths are lost. You don't know what is happening. You can't stop either, because it makes you frightened to stop. Everybody else is doing so much, everybody else is achieving, reaching, fulfilling their ambitions, how can you stop? You have to go on, and you have to go on with great speed and great gusto and enthusiasm. And you don't know where you are going, what the goal is. What do you really want to achieve in life? Money? And even if you achieve much money what will you do with it?

You can purchase more misery, of course, when you have more money; that's what you are going to do. You will go on purchasing the same things that you are purchasing now. Of course, you can purchase them in bigger quantities, that's all. You will live in bigger houses, but you will live; the house is not going to live it. If you are anxious in a small house you may be more anxious in a bigger house, because you will have more space to be anxious in. If you are ignorant, utterly ignorant of yourself, how is money going to help? How is being famous going to help? You may become a world-renowned person, but that will not change anything. Your inner darkness will remain the same; it may even become darker.

The first thing Buddha says is: ...THE MASTER DIRECTS HIS STRAYING THOUGHTS. He does not allow the thoughts to go into contradictory pathways. He does not allow one thought to be destroyed by another. He does not allow thoughts to direct him -- he is the director. He masters them; he uses them as beautiful implements, instruments. And then certainly he comes to fulfillment, because he knows where he is going and he knows what he is doing.

On each step of his journey he is perfectly aware of his whereabouts; he has a certain sense of direction. He does not go on running in all the directions simultaneously; he has a direction. Naturally he becomes integrated, he becomes a great power. Without attaining any political power he becomes a great power. His power arises from his own being, it is his own. Nobody can take it away; it does not depend on anybody. Even death cannot take it away from him, even death is impotent.

But people are living in such an insane state. This state is insane! People feel offended when I say that the whole of humanity is insane, but what can I do? -- it is so. The fact has to be stated, howsoever painful it is. I am also pained by it, I feel sorry for humanity, but it has to be said: that the whole of humanity is mad. What you call normal human beings are not normal at all. They are normally mad, certainly; their madness is almost the same, hence they are normal. But they are not the norm, they are not the principle, they are not the criterion of health. The whole earth is a big madhouse.

Kahlil Gibran has a beautiful story:

One man becomes insane; he is put in an insane asylum. A friend comes to visit him. The friend is a professor, a professor of philosophy, has written many books, is a well-known scholar, is also a psychologist. The madman is sitting on a bench under a tree in the garden, surrounded by a big wall. The professor comes, sits by his side and asks him, "How are you feeling inside this place?"
The madman laughs. He says, "I am feeling so good -- as I have never felt before."
The professor is puzzled. He says, "Why? Why are you feeling so happy being in this madhouse?"
The madman says, "Madhouse? This you call a madhouse? I have left the madhouse outside -- this is the sanest place in the world! The madhouse is outside; this wall protects us from mad people. If ever you become tired of the mad people outside, you are always welcome here. Come in! It is very peaceful here -- nobody interferes in anybody's work. It is very silent here. Very few people are here, and I have never seen such sane people in my whole life -- they are all like me!"

That's his definition of sanity: he is sane and they are like him. The people who are outside are insane.
But the same criterion is followed by the people outside: you think yourself sane because you are exactly like your neighbors. But who knows? -- the neighbors may be insane too.
The whole history of humanity proves that this is an insane humanity; something is basically wrong with it. In three thousand years man has fought five thousand wars. Will you call this humanity sane? Everybody is greedy, jealous,

possessive -- and you call this humanity sane? Everybody is at each other's throats -- and you call this humanity sane? Normal of course -- normal in the sense that they are all alike.

Once Mark Twain advertised, as a hoax, that he had lost a cat so black that it could not be seen by ordinary light, and he wanted it back. Nearly a thousand people contacted him claiming to have seen it.

Just look around, just observe people, and you will be surprised seeing the utterly insane state which is known as normal. What is normal? What is the definition of a normal human being?
He should be full of love, he should be full of bliss. He should be fearless. He should be joyous and ecstatic. He should be able to sing and laugh and dance. He should be able to enjoy the small things of life. He should be total in whatsoever he is doing. His thoughts will be straight: if he says no he means no, if he says yes he means yes. He will not be diplomatic, he will not be political in that he says one thing, he means another, and will do a third thing. You cannot figure it out, you can never be sure what the political person is going to do. He has one face outside and another reality inside. He is double-faced, in a double bind. He smiles at you, he greets you -- and he hates you, he curses you inside. He is an enemy, yet he pretends to be a friend.
This is insanity! This hypocrisy is insanity, this split is insanity. This schizophrenic atmosphere is insane. It is not a healthy human being that we have been able to produce.

We have failed up to now...and we have to do something very drastic now, otherwise humanity is doomed. Now the insane people have so much destructive power in their hands that one war more and humanity is finished and this planet is finished.
Something tremendously drastic is needed, a quantum leap is needed. But this is possible only through those people who listen to the buddhas.
...THE MASTER DIRECTS HIS STRAYING THOUGHTS.

LIKE A FISH OUT OF WATER,
STRANDED ON THE SHORE,
THOUGHTS THRASH AND QUIVER.
FOR HOW CAN THEY SHAKE OFF DESIRE?

Thoughts cannot live out of desire, just as a fish cannot live out of the sea. Thoughts cannot live out of the sea of desire: thoughts are basically instruments of a desiring state. And we are continuously desiring, desiring this and that. We cannot stop thinking if we go on desiring. First the desire, the very root, has to be cut.
What is there to desire in life? Those who have known, those who have realized life, say there is nothing worth desiring in life. Live it! and live as wholly as possible, and live each moment to its uttermost. Squeeze it totally. But there is nothing to desire. Desire leads you astray because it leads you into the future.
Drink out of the present moment, because the present moment is the door to God. God has only one tense: the present. He knows no past and no future. If you also want

to be part of God...and that's the only way to be sane, to be healthy. Only a religious person is sane and healthy. If you want to be part of God, you will have to learn to relax in the present moment.
Die to the past and die to the future, and live in the present. Don't allow yourself to move from the present, not even a single inch here and there; otherwise you will always go on missing the train.
And the mind is continuously running from one object to another, from one person to another. You have a wife, but the mind is running after other people's wives. You have children, but they never look so beautiful as other people's children. The grass is always greener on the other side of the hedge. Everybody else seems to be happier than you. And then, of course, you logically deduce: "They have bigger houses, better children, a beautiful woman, more money, more power, more prestige, so these are the things I also need. Unless I have all these things, how can I be happy?" You make your happiness conditional. And the moment a man makes his happiness conditional he is doomed; he will remain unhappy his whole life.
Happiness is not conditional; nothing is needed to be happy. Only to be alive is needed -- and that you are, you already are. Only to be conscious is needed -- and that you already are. Hence the mystics and the buddhas say that bliss is our very nature. But the mind is a runner and it keeps dragging you.

The sultan called for his eunuch. "I am in the mood," he said. "Go get me wife number 256."

So the eunuch ran out of the palace and into the harem. He ran through the garden, past the orchard, and up the steps. Soon he returned with wife 256. A bit later the sultan sent for the eunuch again and said, "I want more. Go get me wife 87." The eunuch ran and got her. Then the king wanted wife 68, and soon after, wife 92.
When he returned with wife number 92 the eunuch was panting heavily. Then he suddenly collapsed and died.
Moral: It is not the loving that kills you, it is the running around.

The mind is continuously running around. It never sits, it can't sit. Sitting seems to be death to it, and in a way it is. That's why Zen people say, if you can sit silently for a few hours every day, doing nothing, not even chanting a mantra, because that is again a running of the mind, the same mind.... It can sing pop songs, it can chant a religious mantra, it makes no difference. It wants some work, it wants activity, it wants occupation, it wants to run. Its life is in the running.
The Zen people say just sit, don't do anything. The most difficult thing in the world is just to sit doing nothing. But once you have got the knack of it.... If you go on sitting for a few months doing nothing for a few hours every day, slowly slowly, many things will happen. You will feel sleepy, you will dream. Many thoughts will crowd your mind, many things. The mind will say, "Why are you wasting your time? You could have earned a little money. At least you could have gone to a film, entertained yourself, or you could have relaxed and gossiped. You could have watched the TV or listened to the radio, or at least you

could have read the newspaper you have not seen. Why are you wasting your time?"
Mind will give you a thousand and one arguments, but if you just go on listening without being bothered by the mind.... It will do all kinds of tricks: it will hallucinate, it will dream, it will become sleepy. It will do all that is possible to drag you out of just sitting. But if you go on, if you persevere, one day the sun rises.
One day it happens, you are not feeling sleepy, the mind has become tired of you, is fed up with you, has dropped the idea that you can be trapped, is simply finished with you! There is no sleep, no hallucination, no dream, no thought. You are simply sitting there doing nothing...and all is silence and all is peace and all is bliss. You have entered God, you have entered truth.

THEY TREMBLE, THEY ARE UNSTEADY,
THEY WANDER AT THEIR WILL.
IT IS GOOD TO CONTROL THEM.
AND TO MASTER THEM BRINGS HAPPINESS.

Watch, and you will see the trembling mind, the quivering thoughts chasing each other, running in every possible direction, consistent, inconsistent, meaningful, meaningless.
Just one day sit down in your room, close the doors, and start writing the thoughts that are happening to you. That will help you to become aware. Just go on writing whatsoever is happening. Don't edit, don't make them look consistent, beautiful. It is not to be shown to anybody, it is just for your observation. For fifteen minutes go on writing,

then read it, and you will be puzzled: are you mad or something? What kind of things are going on in your head? All kinds of things, so irrelevant that you cannot conceive any possible relationship with them. Anything leads to anything just accidentally.

The dog starts barking in the neighborhood and your mind starts functioning. You remember a dog you used to have in your childhood, and suddenly the mind jumps from the dog to a friend who was also known in the childhood...and from the friend to the school, and the teacher. And this way the mind goes on hopping, and you will land nobody knows where. And it was just started by the barking of the dog who knows nothing about you, who is not interested at all in you, but he triggered a process. You may reach anywhere! And each time it happens you will reach some other place.

Mind goes on jumping from one place to another, and mind has so much information that it can produce all kinds of worlds.

Watching it you will see the truth of Buddha's statement: THEY TREMBLE, THEY ARE UNSTEADY, THEY WANDER AT THEIR WILL. They don't listen to you, they have their own will. Each thought has its own will and insists on remaining itself. It does not want to be tinkered with, it does not want you to interfere. If you interfere, it resists, it protests. Every thought wants its own individuality. And these millions of thoughts in your head destroy your individuality, because they all claim their own individuality and they all claim to be autonomous and free. And if you say anything, they ask, "Who are you?" And

each time they will show you your place, they will reduce you to nothing.
Unless they are controlled, Buddha says, there is no possibility of bliss happening to you. You will remain in a mess, you will remain a confusion.

Inmate: "I have a mad, insane desire to crush you in my arms."
Lady psychiatrist: "Now you are talking sense!"

It depends on you what you call sense and what you call nonsense. There are philosophers in the world who say all is nonsense, and there are philosophers in the world who say everything is sense, sensible. This is the most rational world, they say, very logical. It all depends on you what you call sense and what you think is sensible. It depends on your training, your upbringing, your conditioning, the way you have been hypnotized.
Now, eating meat is sensible if you have been brought up in a house where nobody ever thought of vegetarianism; even if they talked about it, they talked only to laugh at vegetarians: "These foolish people who think that by becoming vegetarians they are becoming religious." If you are born in a vegetarian house, in a vegetarian family, then the people who eat meat are monsters. They are not people at all; they are untouchable, they are not human beings, they are animals.
You yourself never know what is right, what is wrong; you know only according to what others have said to you. This is not a way which can lead you into sanity. You will have to become more aware, more alert, more watchful. You will

have to decide on your own. You have lived a borrowed life. You will have to reflect -- you become a human being only when you start reflecting on things on your own. When you observe accurately, precisely, when you judge, when you value, when you weigh things and you start living according to your own consciousness more and more, you will attain to freedom. And freedom brings bliss. Freedom means you have to control the mind, your so-called mind, which is not yours at all because it has been given to you by others, in fragments. A part of it belongs to your mother, another part to your father, another part to your uncle, and so on and so forth...to the priest, to the teacher, to the neighborhood boy.... You have gathered fragments from all over the world -- from the books you have been reading and the films you have been seeing. If you look into it you will be surprised -- you don't have any mind of your own. Everything is borrowed! How can you be authentic? You are just a piled-up phenomenon, fragments from so many different sources that they can never melt and become one. But one thing is not borrowed in you and that is your consciousness, that is your awareness. That you have brought with you, that is part of your inner core. Depend on it and never depend on the mind. Become independent of the mind and absolutely dependent on consciousness, and you are taking the greatest step of your life.

BUT HOW SUBTLE THEY ARE,
HOW ELUSIVE!
THE TASK IS TO QUIETEN THEM,
AND BY RULING THEM TO FIND HAPPINESS.

It is not going to be an easy job. It is arduous, because the mind is very cunning and thoughts are very subtle.

One soldier is explaining transmigration of souls to another and tells him that if he is killed his body will decay on the battlefield and finally sink into the ground. In the spring a beautiful flower will come up on the spot.
"And that is me, is it?" asks the other soldier.
"No, wait a minute. Then a cow comes along and eats the flower and leaves behind a big pile of cowflop. Then I come strolling through the field with my girl, I sees this cowflop and I taps it with my walking-stick and I says, 'Hello, Bill! Why, you ain't changed a bit!'"

Mind is very cunning -- it can always find its ways to remain the same. It can find new ways so that it can remain old. It can find new garments so it can hide behind them; it can find beautiful rationalizations.
Beware! Mind is not a simple phenomenon, it is complex, subtle, very elusive. If you try to catch hold of it you will be in difficulty. If you push it out through the front door, it will come from the back. If you want to control it and repress it, it will start functioning from your unconscious -- which is far more dangerous because it will control you still, although now you will be absolutely unaware of its control. The enemy is no longer visible, that's all, but the enemy is there. And when the enemy is invisible the enemy is more powerful.
...HOW SUBTLE THEY ARE, and HOW ELUSIVE! THE TASK IS TO QUIETEN THEM.... So remember, they are

not to be repressed, they are not to be caught. THE TASK IS TO QUIETEN THEM, AND BY RULING THEM TO FIND HAPPINESS.

It is through stilling them that one becomes a ruler, not by ruling them that you quieten them. Remember that process: it looks similar, it is not. It is very very different, diametrically opposite in fact. You have to quieten them first, still them first.

And the way to still them is just to watch silently without judgment, without saying this is good, this is bad. The moment you say good and bad you have jumped into the mire. The mind has already caught you, you are already entrapped.

You simply watch! Your moral teachers don't allow you watching. You sit and just look...a thought of murdering somebody comes. Your mind is enjoying the thought of murdering somebody. This is one part. Another part of the mind says, "This is very bad, this is a sin. You should not even think such a thought, even to think it is a sin." This is another part of the mind. You become identified with the other part, the moral part. You say, "This is my conscience." It is not your conscience: it has been put into you. It is the society controlling you from within; it is a strategy of the society to control you. You don't know what is right and what is wrong.

Be innocent! Just watch, watch both. One part of the mind is saying, "Murder that man -- he has insulted you!" Another part of the mind is saying, "This is bad, this is immoral. You will fall into hell, you will suffer in your next birth, you will be punished for it." Know well, the second is also mind, and there is no choice between two

fragments of the mind. Watch both, enjoy both. See the contradiction of the mind -- don't get identified with any part.
Remember, the ego wants to be identified with the good part, the moral part. It feels beautiful: "I am against murder, look! I am not for it." You are just getting caught by another part of the mind. You are still a slave. Your sinners and your saints, both are slaves.
The really free man is free from both good and bad. He is beyond good and evil. He is just consciousness and nothing else. He simply observes. And if you can just observe without being identified, slowly slowly mind quietens down, and in that quietening is your power. One day when the mind is completely gone, has become totally still, you are the sovereign.

WITH SINGLEMINDEDNESS
THE MASTER QUELLS HIS THOUGHTS.
HE ENDS THEIR WANDERING.
SEATED IN THE CAVE OF THE HEART,
HE FINDS FREEDOM.

And when the mind is no more, where do you go?
Suddenly, when the mind is no more, you enter into the heart. You slip out of the mind, out of the grip of the head. And then the heart, the cave of the heart, is your palace. The mind is a by-product of the society: the heart is an extension of God.
This is possible only if you work singlemindedly to still the mind, to be aware of the mind, to be utterly watchful, without any judgment and without any identification.

THE MASTER QUELLS HIS THOUGHTS. HE ENDS THEIR WANDERING. SEATED IN THE CAVE OF THE HEART, HE FINDS FREEDOM.
The head is a slavery, the heart the freedom. The head is a misery, the heart the ultimate bliss.
AES DHAMMO SANANTANO.
Enough for today.

The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 1
Chapter #10
Chapter title: Neither this nor that
30 June 1979 am in Buddha Hall

The first question:
Question 1
BELOVED MASTER,
WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN YOU AND OTHER GODMEN?

Sunil Sethi, I am not a godman, I am simply God -- as you are, as trees are, as birds are, as rocks are. I don't belong to any category. 'Godman' is a category invented by journalists. I simply don't belong to any category. You don't belong to any category either. All categories are false. The deeper you go into yourself, the more and more you will find that you simply are -- neither this not that. The seers of the Upanishads say: neti, neti -- neither this nor that. No category is applicable.

There is a beautiful story about Buddha:

He was sitting under a tree. One astrologer approached him -- he was very puzzled, because he saw the footprints of the Buddha on the wet sand and he could not believe his eyes. All the scriptures that he had been studying his whole life had been telling him about certain signs that exist in the feet of a man who rules the world -- a chakravartin -- a ruler of all the six continents, of the whole earth. And he saw in the footprints in the wet sand on the riverbank all the symbols so clearly that he could not believe his eyes! Either all his scriptures were wrong and he was wasting his life in astrology...otherwise, how was it possible on such a hot afternoon, in such a small, dirty village, a chakravartin would come and walk barefoot, on the burning hot sand?
He followed the footprints, just in search of the man to whom these footprints belonged. He found the Buddha sitting under a tree. He was even more puzzled. The face was that of a chakravartin -- the grace, the beauty, the power, the aura -- but the man was a beggar, with a begging bowl!
The astrologer touched the feet of the Buddha and asked him, "Who are you, sir? You have puzzled me. You should be a chakravartin, a world ruler. What are you doing here, sitting under this tree? Either all my astrology books are wrong, or I am hallucinating and you are not really there."
Buddha said, "Your books are absolutely right -- but there is something which belongs to no category, not even to the category of a chakravartin. I am, but I am nobody in particular."
The astrologer said, "You are puzzling me more. How can you be without being anybody in particular? You must be a

god who has come to visit the earth -- I can see it in your eyes!"
Buddha said, "I am not a god."
The astrologer said, "Then you must be a gandharva -- a celestial musician."
Buddha said, "No, I am not a gandharva either."
And the astrologer went on asking, "Then are you a king in disguise? Who are you? You can't be an animal, you can't be a tree, you can't be a rock -- who exactly are you?"
And the answer the Buddha gave is of immense importance to understand. He said, "I am just a buddha -- I am just awareness, and nothing else. I don't belong to any category. Every category is an identification and I don't have any identity."

Sunil Sethi, exactly the same is my answer: I don't belong to any category, and godman is a category. I am simply awareness. I am simply a watchfulness. And this is not something special; this is part of your innermost core, too. You are as divine as anybody else -- a Buddha, a Krishna, a Christ. You are as divine as anybody else. The highest and the lowest, all are divine, because only God exists.
This is the first thing to be remembered: that I don't belong to any category. Neither do you belong to any category. Are you a Hindu, a Mohammedan, a Christian? Are you black or white? These are things which are outside -- you are not these things. Consciousness cannot be black and cannot be white; consciousness can't have any color. Are you rich or poor? Consciousness cannot be rich or poor either. Are you a man or a woman? Consciousness is neither a man nor a woman.

Consciousness is simply consciousness! To realize this is to declare, "aham brahmasmi! -- I am God!" It is not a new category. When somebody declares "I am God!" it is not a new category, it is simply disappearing from all categories. That is exactly the meaning of the word 'God'.
When Mansoor says, "ana'l haq! -- I am the truth!" he is saying the same thing. He is saying, "I am consciousness."
I have no claim to be a godman -- I am not.
The second thing: between me and the so-called godmen there are many differences. The most basic is that I am life-affirmative and they are life-negative. I love life; they hate life. I would like you to go deeper and deeper into life; they would like you to shrink back, withdraw. They are all for renunciation, I am all for rejoicing. To me "Rejoice!" is the only message. "Renounce!" is escaping. Renouncing is committing a slow suicide. Rejoice! and rejoice tremendously. Only then will you be able to know what God is all about.
At the optimum of your being, when the intensity is total, when you are not holding anything back, when you dance with abandon, when you sing so totally that the singer disappears in the singing...when you love so infinitely that there is no lover left behind, you simply become the energy called love, then you affirm life. And life IS God.
I am life-affirmative; your so-called godmen are life-negative. And because basically life can not be negated -- you are life, how can you negate it? -- they create hypocrisy. It is bound to happen. Your so-called godmen down the ages have been creating hypocrisy. They don't allow you to be authentic. They don't allow you to be

natural -- how can they allow you to be authentic? They create a division in you.
They are the root cause of all schizophrenia, and the whole of humanity suffers from schizophrenia. The differences between one person's schizophrenia and another's are only of degrees. You are split! Who has done this wrong to you? Your so-called godmen, the so-called saints, the so-called mahatmas. They are at the very root of all your misery because their very teaching is "Deny nature! Fight nature! Go against the stream; push the river!" And you are part of nature, just a wave in the river -- how can you fight with nature? Fighting, you will be defeated. If you are a sincere person, you will go mad; if you are not yet mad, that will simply show that you are not a sincere person. You say one thing and you do another.

I have heard:
A sodomist was given a room in a hotel with another man, who, the room clerk assured him, was not averse to a bout, but that for form's sake he might put up a struggle. "But don't you pay any attention to him. You go ahead -- he likes it."
Next morning, the sodomist came down and the clerk asked him how he had fared. "It was quite easy," he answered. "He put up no struggle at all."
"My God!" said the clerk, "I put you in the wrong room. That was the archbishop!"

It is bound to happen. Hypocrisy is a natural by-product of all your pseudo godmen. And they can only be pseudo! If someone has realized God, he is not a godman -- he is

simply God! Why 'godman'? And he knows that not only is he God but everybody is God. When he says "I am God," he is not using the word in a comparative sense. He is not saying, "I am holier than thou." He is simply saying, "I am what you are, but I am aware and you are not aware yet." The difference is not in our qualities, in our beings, but only in our consciousness. You have the same treasure that I have, but I have stumbled upon it and you are still seeking and groping. Sooner or later you will find it. If you go on seeking, it is bound to be found -- because it is there. How long can you go on missing? Even in the deepest darkness, if you search for it you are bound to find it.
When I say I am God, I am simply declaring that the whole of humanity is divine. I am simply declaring that all human beings are divine; I am simply declaring that all that exists is divine. A godman, a so-called godman, declares that he is God and you are sinners. He creates a new kind of superiority, a new hierarchy. And his whole trade secret is to make you feel guilty. And the more guilty you feel, the more you are in his grip.
How to make you feel guilty? Just condemn natural things and it will start happening. Condemn sex -- you will have sexual desires arising and you will feel guilty. Condemn food...condemn everything that is a natural inclination in you.

The wife-swapping party is raided by the crusading minister, who plans to put an end to these goings-on. When he rings the bell, the man of the house arrives and does not seem a bit embarrassed.

The minister says, "I was told you had a party here tonight."
"We do," says the man. "We are playing guessing games right now. The women are blindfolded trying to guess the men's names by feeling their pricks. You ought to come on in, Reverend, your name has been guessed eight times already!"

The whole priesthood down the ages has proved only one thing: that you cannot fight against nature. Although there is a way to surpass it -- but the way does not go against it; it goes through it.
That is my first and most fundamental difference: I affirm life as it is. That does not mean that there is no growth possible beyond life -- there is immense possibility of growth -- but all growth has to be founded on a deep, passionate love of life. It is only through experiencing life that transcendence happens.
I would like you to go beyond sex, but I don't condemn sex. Sex is a natural desire, and is good in its own place. But one should not stop with it; it is only a beginning, a glimpse -- a glimpse of the beyond. In deep sexual orgasm, you become aware for the first time of something which is not of the ego, of something which is not of the mind, of something which is not of time. In deep orgasm, mind, time, all disappear; the whole world stops for a moment. For a moment you are no longer part of the material world; you are just a pure space.
But this is only a glimpse -- and at great cost. You should move ahead. You should seek and search for ways and means so that this glimpse becomes your very state. That's

what I call realization, enlightenment. An enlightened person is in a state of orgasmic joy twenty-four hours a day. What the sexual person attains only once in a while, with great effort, the spiritual man attains without any effort and without any wastage. The spiritual man simply lives there; on those ultimate peaks is his abode. You only see those peaks from thousands of miles away.

I am not against sex, because sex is the first window into spiritual existence. I am not against food, because I am not against any enjoyment. There are all kinds of experiences that you will come across through enjoying things -- food, love, music, dance, nature...it is only through enjoying all these things that you will, slowly slowly, become aware of the invisible.

It is because of this that the Upanishads say: annam brahma -- food is God. A tremendously significant statement: food, and God? made synonymous? -- annam Brahma. Food is God? What are they saying? These people knew, they knew what they were saying -- the taste of food is the taste of God. The taste of any joy is the taste of God -- howsoever far away, howsoever much a reflection.

The moon reflected in the lake is still a reflection of the moon, although you will not find it in the lake. If you jump in the lake you will only disturb the reflection and you will not find the moon there. The reflection is not the moon, the reflection reflects the moon. And if you are a little intelligent you will not jump into the lake, you will look up into the sky where the real moon is.

God is reflected when you enjoy food. God is reflected when you enjoy sex. God is reflected in a thousand and one

lakes of life. Take the key from the reflection; take the indication, the clue, and start moving to the original.
That's my fundamental difference. I am not against life or anything that life implies -- neither sex nor food, neither the body nor bodily pleasures. I am not averse to comfort, I am not against luxuries either.
Just the other day there was a question. Somebody has asked -- he must be a newcomer and an Indian -- he has asked, "Are you not a hypocrite? Why do you live in luxury?" He does not know the meaning of the word 'hypocrite'. I may be the only person in the world who is not a hypocrite.
A hypocrite is one who says one thing and does another. A hypocrite is one whose inner and outer lives are different -- not only different but diametrically opposite. I am not against luxury, so why should I be a hypocrite? I am not against comfort -- I am not a masochist, that's all. I don't believe in torturing myself or anybody else. I don't believe in torture.
I would like the whole earth to live in luxury. Certainly, I know that today that is not the case. The whole earth is not even getting the minimum necessities of life. But I am not going to torture myself just because of that, because that is not going to help them either. If there are one thousand people in misery, there will be one thousand and one people in misery -- that's all.
I don't believe in misery. And I am not living a double life. My life is very simple -- simple in the sense that it has a kind of integrity. I am doing what I am saying. I believe in luxury; to me, religion is the highest form of luxury. If I cannot make everybody live in luxury, at least I can

manage to live in it myself. Otherwise people will say to me, "Physician, first heal thyself."

But these so-called godmen, they all live in luxury and they are all against luxury. These are hypocrites! They talk about poverty and the spirituality of poverty, and they all live in luxury -- they are hypocrites.

I hate poverty! I don't respect poverty, I don't appreciate poverty. It is out of stupidity that people are poor; it is out of superstitious minds that people are poor. People need not be poor. It is because of thousands of years of teaching that poverty has something spiritual in it that people are poor.

A very famous German thinker, Count Keyserling, came to India. He wrote a diary while he was traveling in India. In his diary he notes many significant things. One thing he wrote was, "I became aware, visiting India, about two things. One: that to be poor is to be spiritual; and the other: that to be ill, starved, ugly, is to be holy."

I am not teaching these things. I would like my whole commune to live in as much comfort as possible. The commune has to become a model -- a model for the whole world. My sannyasins are to live in every possible joy: physical, psychological, spiritual. The joys of the body and the joys of the mind and the joys of the spirit -- all have to be lived in such a harmony that the fourth man is born out of that harmony.

That's why I say: Be scientific, be aesthetic, and be religious. Out of these three dimensions, out of the meeting of these three rivers, the fourth will be created. And the fourth is my way.

Any kind of unnatural approach towards life creates complexities, creates pathologies. It does not make people sane; it drives them insane.

Patient in psychiatrist's office: "Doctor, you have got to help me. I keep dreaming about food, continually dreaming about food."
Doctor: "Don't you ever dream about girls?"
Patient: "Yes, but I keep pouring ketchup over them."

Now, if you make somebody feel guilty about his food -- that's what so-called religious people are doing -- then he will start dreaming about food. And to eat is healthy, nourishing, good; to dream about it is ugly and pathological. Dreaming about food simply says that you are somehow depriving your body of what it needs.
Who dreams about food? Only a person who represses his desire for food. You can try it: fast for one day and then see what happens.... The whole day you will think about food; from everywhere the mind will come again and again to the idea of food. And in the night you are bound to dream about food.
Repress sex and you will dream about sex. Repress anything and you start becoming pathological. A really healthy man has no dreams -- he has nothing to dream about. He lives each moment totally; he never represses anything. Hence his unconscious remains utterly empty and clean. Repress, and your unconscious becomes cluttered with unnecessary furniture. And in dreams you are bound to face your unconscious. You have to face it; in deep sleep

you have to pass through it. It creates a turmoil throughout your whole life.

I am life-affirmative. I am in tremendous love with life, and that's my teaching. The so-called godmen are all against life; they are creating a pathological humanity.

Secondly, they are all otherworldly; I am this-worldly. Not that I don't believe in the other world -- there is no question of believing in it; I know it is -- but one need not worry about it. Worrying is not going to help. The other world is going to be born out of this world. Make this life beautiful, live this life as sensitively as possible, and the other will be born out of it. It will be far more beautiful than this if you can make this beautiful.

Buddha says just in the first sutras that if this life is beautiful, the other is going to be even more beautiful. But if you think of the other life, if you project about the other life, if you dream about the other life, life after death, you will make this life so ugly, so ill at ease, that the other will become more ugly.

You need not think of the tomorrow, the today is enough unto itself. Live this day with such joy and ecstasy...from where is the tomorrow going to come? It will be born out of this ecstasy, it will be more ecstatic. And then you have the key -- the key that unlocks all the doors of life.

Live the moment! I believe in the moment. Those godmen, they talk about the other life, life after death, heaven and hell -- all that is absolutely unnecessary. People are already much too puzzled; don't puzzle them any more.

My teaching is very simple, to the point: live moment to moment, dying to the past, not projecting any future...enjoying the silence, the joy, the beauty, of this

moment. And out of this, that will be born. It comes of its own accord. As Buddha says: Just as the shadow follows you, the future follows you. If your present is ugly, the future is going to be hell; if your present is beautiful, the future is going to be paradise.

Thirdly, up to now, these so-called godmen have been dividing humanity into Hindus and Christians and Mohammedans and Jainas and Sikhs and Parsis...there are three hundred religions on the earth and at least three thousand sects within those three hundred religions. These godmen have been creating hatred amongst people. They talk about love, but they create the context in which only war happens. Religions have been fighting with each other, destroying each other, murdering each other, butchering each other. More blood has been shed in the name of religion than in the name of anything else. Not even politics is so criminal as your so-called religions.

Now, all your godmen are either Hindus or Mohammedans or Christians. I am neither a Hindu nor a Christian -- I am nobody. And I help people to become nobodies. I help people to become unburdened of all this nonsense. It is enough to be -- there is no need to be a Mohammedan or a Hindu or a Christian. There is no need to go to any temple, mosque or church. The whole existence is their temple, and the trees are continuously in worship, and the clouds are in prayer, and the mountains are in meditation...just start looking around.

Look rightly! Look without belief in your eyes, look without prejudices, and you will find God. You cannot miss him because he is everywhere! He is not like a target that you can miss; hit anywhere and you will find him, because

he is everywhere. It is impossible to miss him. All that you need is an innocent heart. But a Hindu cannot be innocent, a Mohammedan cannot be innocent. He is full of garbage: full of theories, theologies, full of borrowed knowledge -- that's what I call garbage.

I am not saying that Mohammed is not right, I am not saying that Buddha is not right; otherwise, why should I speak on Buddha, on Mohammed, on Christ? They are true, but their truth cannot be your truth -- you will have to find it on your own. Truth cannot be borrowed, truth is untransferable; it never becomes part of your heritage. You have to seek and search on your own; it has always to be individual.

My truth is my truth. It's my experience. I can talk about it, I can sing songs in its praise, I can dance it. I can show you my ecstasy -- but still, that which has been experienced remains unexpressed. No scripture has been able to express it. All scriptures are efforts to express, but all efforts have failed: truth is inexpressible.

The scriptures simply show the compassion of the people who attained, but they don't prove that the compassion has succeeded in expressing the truth.

Rabindranath was dying and somebody said to him, "You should be happy and glad and thankful to God -- you are the greatest poet the earth has ever known. You have written six thousand poems; nobody else has done that. Even Shelley, who is thought to be the greatest poet in the West, has written only two thousand songs. You are thrice great!"

But tears started rolling down from Rabindranath's eyes. The man was puzzled; he could not figure out why Rabindranath was crying. He said, "Why are you crying? Feel thankful to God! He has fulfilled your life. You have attained all that one aspires to attain."
Rabindranath said, "I have not attained anything! Those six thousand songs are proof of my failure." Listen attentively. Rabindranath says, "Those six thousand songs are proofs of my failure. I was trying to say something, but I have not been able to say it. Each time I tried, I failed. I tried again and again and again, six thousand times I tried, and I have failed. The song that I had come to sing is still unsung. I am taking it with me."

That is the case with a Buddha, a Mohammed, a Zarathustra -- with all those who have known. You cannot be a believer and religious together. If you want to be religious, you have to drop all beliefs. That is my third basic difference.
I teach you to be religious, but not believers. You have to be inquirers, explorers. You cannot take things for granted: because so many people say it, then it must be true. Truth has to become your own experience -- you have to be a witness to it. And the moment you are a witness to it, you will not be able to say that you are a Hindu or a Mohammedan or a Christian. These are all philosophies, guesswork, theologies, logic, calculation, cleverness -- but the experience is missing.
My whole approach is existential, experiential. I am not giving you any dogma; I am not trying to give you a certain doctrine. On the contrary, I am trying to take all doctrines

away. I would like you to be utterly empty of doctrines and beliefs and prejudices.
In that emptiness you are God -- as much as I am, as much as Buddha is. That emptiness opens the doors to your divinity.
I am not a godman. I am as ordinary as you are, as everybody else is; as ordinary or as extraordinary -- it means the same. I am not superior to anybody and I am not inferior to anybody. Nobody is superior and nobody is inferior. We belong to one reality -- how can we be inferior and superior?

The second question:
Question 2
BELOVED MASTER,
THERE IS A QUESTION I HAVE NEVER BEEN ABLE TO GET AN ANSWER TO. IT IS A STUPID QUESTION AND YET I FEEL THAT I WANT SO MUCH TO KNOW THE ANSWER.
CAN YOU TELL US WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF CREATION, WHY LIFE EXISTS, WHY EVERYTHING EXISTS? I DON'T BELIEVE IN ACCIDENTS.

Prem Patrick, the question is certainly stupid, you are absolutely right about it. And the question is not answerable. Anybody who answers it will only create a few more questions in you. You have not been able to get any answer because there is none. Life is a mystery -- hence this question cannot be answered. You cannot ask "Why?" If the "Why?" is answered, life is no longer a mystery.

That's the whole effort of science: to destroy the mystery of life. And the way is to find the answer to every why. And science believes -- of course, arrogantly and ignorantly -- that one day it will be able to answer all whys. It is not possible. Even if we answer all whys, the ultimate why will remain: Why does life exist at all? What is the meaning of existence? What is the purpose of all this? This question is ultimate -- it cannot be answered.

If somebody gives you an answer, that will simply create another question. If somebody says...for example, these answers have been given -- a few people believe that God created the world because he wanted to help humanity. Now, what kind of answer is this? He created humanity to help humanity. What was the need to create? A few others say God created the world because he was feeling very lonely. If God too feels very lonely, then there is no possibility of anybody ever becoming a buddha.

And suddenly God started feeling lonely -- what was he doing before he created the world? For eternity he had remained alone...then suddenly one day, one morning, he went crazy, or what? Suddenly he started feeling lonely after breakfast! And what need was there to create the whole world? Just one woman would have been enough! And now how is he feeling today? Too crowded? Too much in the marketplace? Must be planning to destroy the world soon. What kind of God are you talking about? Is your God a person who can feel lonely?

These are foolish answers to foolish questions.

Then there are a few people who say it is God's play -- his leela. Can't he sit silently? And what kind of play is this? Adolf Hitler and Mussolini and Joseph Stalin and Mao

Zedong, Genghis Khan, Tamerlane, Nadirshah...God's play? Millions of people are being massacred and it is God's play? Six million Jews killed by Adolf Hitler and God is playing a game? Why can't he play golf? or chess? Why torture people? So much misery in the world, and these fools go on saying it is God's play? Children are being born paralyzed, blind, deaf, dumb...God's play? What kind of God is this? Either he is nuts or he is not God at all, at least not godly. Must be very evil.

Now, these answers don't help -- they create more questions. Patrick, I can only say this much: that life has no purpose, cannot have any purpose.

All purposes are within life. Yes, a car has a purpose; it can take you from one place to another. And food has a purpose; it can nourish you, it can keep you alive. A house has a purpose; it can give you shelter when it rains and when it is hot. And clothes have a purpose.... All purposes are within life, but life itself cannot have any purpose because it is not a means to some end. A car is a means, a house is a means.

Life has no goal, life is not going anywhere. Life is simply here! It has never been created -- forget that idea of creation. That creates many stupid questions in the mind. It has never been created, it has always been here, and it will always be here -- in different forms, in different ways, the dance will continue. It is eternal. Aes dhammo sanantano -- so is the ultimate law.

There is no purpose -- that's the beauty of life! If there were some purpose, then life would not be so beautiful. Then there would be a motivation, then it would be businesslike, then it would be very serious. Look at the roses and the

lotuses and the lilies -- what purpose? The lotus in the early morning sun opening up, and the cuckoo starts calling...what purpose? Is it not intrinsically beautiful? Does everything need a purpose outside itself?

Life is intrinsically beautiful. It has no extrinsic purpose, it is not purposive. It is just like the song of a bird in the dark of the night, or the sound of water, or the sound of the wind passing through the pine trees....

Man is goal-oriented because your mind is goal-oriented. It creates questions like this: "What is the goal of life?" There must be some goal. But if somebody says, "This is the goal of life," then you will ask, "What is the goal of this goal? Why should we attain it? What purpose is it going to serve?" And then somebody says, "This is the goal of this goal." The same question arises again, and you fall into a regress, ad infinitum.

You ask me, "Can you tell us what is the purpose of creation?"

The world has never been created. The word 'creation' is not right. It has always been here, it is eternal. There is no creator. God is not the creator of the world: God is the very creative energy of existence -- creativity rather than a creator. He is not the poet but the poetry, not the dancer but the dance, not the flower but the fragrance.

You ask me, "Why does life exist?"

These questions look very philosophical, and can torture you very much, but are absurd. It is like asking, "What is the taste of the color green?" Now, it is irrelevant. The color green has no taste; color and taste are not related at all. "Why does life exist?" Just look at the words: 'life' and 'existence' mean the same thing; it is a tautology. If you are

asking: Why is life life? then it will be clear to you. But when you ask, "Why does life exist?" the language deceives you.
You are asking: Why is life life? You are asking: Why is a rose a rose? Would you be satisfied if the rose were a marigold? Then you would ask: Why is a marigold a marigold? How are you going to be satisfied?
If life does not exist, will you be satisfied? Just conceive of yourself without body, without mind, a ghost, asking the question: Why doesn't life exist? What happened to life? Why did it disappear? The same question will persist and persecute you.
Life is a mystery. There is no why, no purpose, no reason. It is simply here. Take it or leave it, but it is simply here. And when it is here, why not take it? Why waste your time in philosophizing? Why not dance and sing and love and meditate? Why not go deeper and deeper into this thing called "life"? Maybe at the ultimate core you will know the answer. But the answer comes in such a way that it cannot be expressed. It is like the dumb man's taste of sugar. It is sweet -- he knows that it is sweet, but he cannot say it. The buddhas know but they cannot say. And the idiots know not and they go on saying, and they go on giving you answers. Idiots are very clever in that way -- in finding, fabricating, manufacturing answers. Ask any question and they will answer you.

When Gautama the Buddha used to move in his country from one place to another, a few of his disciples would go ahead of him and declare in the town: "Buddha is coming, but please don't ask these eleven questions." And one of

those eleven questions was: Why does life exist? and another was: Who created the world? In those eleven questions the whole of philosophy is contained. In fact, if you drop those eleven questions nothing remains to ask. Buddha used to say these are useless questions. They are not answerable -- not because nobody knows the answer. They are not answerable in the very nature of things.

One great philosopher, Maulingaputta, came to Buddha, and he started asking questions...questions after questions. Must have been an incarnation of Patrick! Buddha listened silently for half an hour. Maulingaputta started feeling a little embarrassed because he was not answering, he was simply sitting there smiling, as if nothing had happened, and he had asked such important questions, such significant questions.
Finally Buddha said, "Do you really want to know the answer?"
Maulingaputta said, "Otherwise why should I have come to you? I have traveled at least one thousand miles to see you." And remember, in those days, one thousand miles was really one thousand miles! It was not hopping in a plane and reaching within minutes or within hours. One thousand miles was one thousand miles. It was with great longing, with great hope that he had come. He was tired, weary from the journey, and he must have followed Buddha because Buddha himself was traveling continuously. He must have reached one place and people said, "Yes, he was here three months ago. He has gone to the north" -- so he must have traveled north.

Slowly slowly, he was coming closer and closer and then the day came, the great day, when people said, "Just yesterday morning he left; he must have reached only the next village. If you rush, if you run, you may be able to catch him." And then one day he caught up with him, and he was so joyous he forgot all his arduous journey and he started asking all the questions he had planned all the way along, and Buddha smiled and sat there and asked, "Do you really want to have the answer?"

Maulingaputta said, "Then why have I traveled so long? It has been a long suffering -- it seems I have been traveling my whole life, and you are asking, 'Do you really want the answer?'"

Buddha said, "I am asking again: Do you really want the answer? Say yes or no, because much will depend on it."

Maulingaputta said, "Yes!"

Then Buddha said, "For two years sit silently by my side -- no asking, no questions, no talking. Just sit silently by my side for two years. And after two years you can ask whatsoever you want to ask, and I promise you I will answer it."

A disciple, a great disciple of Buddha, Manjushree, who was sitting underneath another tree, started laughing so loudly, started almost rolling on the ground. Maulingaputta said, "What has happened to this man? Out of the blue, you are talking to me, you have not said a single word to him, nobody has said anything to him -- is he telling jokes to himself?"

Buddha said, "You go and ask him."

He asked Manjushree. Manjushree said, "Sir, if you really want to ask the question, ask right now -- this is his way of

deceiving people. He deceived me. I used to be a foolish philosopher just like you. His answer was the same when I came; you have traveled one thousand miles, I had traveled two thousand."

Manjushree certainly was a great philosopher, more well-known in the country. He had thousands of disciples. When he had come he had come with one thousand disciples -- a great philosopher coming with his following.

"And Buddha said, 'Sit silently for two years.' And I sat silently for two years, but then I could not ask a single question. Those days of silence...slowly slowly, all questions withered away. And one thing I will tell you: he keeps his promise, he is a man of his word. After exactly two years -- I had completely forgotten, lost track of time, because who bothers to remember? As silence deepened I lost track of all time.

"When two years passed, I was not even aware of it. I was enjoying the silence and his presence. I was drinking out of him. It was so incredible! In fact, deep down in my heart I never wanted those two years to be finished, because once they were finished he would say, 'Now give your place to somebody else to sit by my side, you move away a little. Now you are capable of being alone, you don't need me so much.' Just as the mother moves the child when he can eat and digest and no longer needs to be fed on the breast. So," Manjushree said, "I was simply hoping that he would forget all about those two years, but he remembered -- exactly after two years he asked, 'Manjushree, now you can ask your questions.' I looked within; there was no question and no questioner either -- a total silence. I laughed, he laughed, he patted my back and said, 'Now, move away.'

"So, Maulingaputta, that's why I started laughing, because now he is playing the same trick again. And this poor Maulingaputta will sit for two years silently and will be lost forever, will never be able to ask a single question. So I insist, Maulingaputta, if you really want to ask, ASK NOW!"
But Buddha said, "My conditions have to be fulfilled."

And, Patrick, the same is my answer to you: fulfill my condition -- meditate, sit silently, just be here, and all questions will disappear. I am not interested in answering you, I am interested in dissolving your questions. And when all questions disappear, the questioner also disappears -- it cannot exist without questions. When there is no question and no questioner, what bliss, what ecstasy! You cannot imagine, you cannot dream, you cannot comprehend right now. Then the whole mystery of life opens up, mysteries upon mysteries...there is no end to it.

The third question:
Question 3
BELOVED MASTER,
I HAVE HEARD MANY SPIRITUAL SAINTS IN MY LIFE -- WHY DO THEY ALL SPEAK A VERY DIFFICULT LANGUAGE?

Kamla Kant, they have to, because they know nothing. If they speak simple language as I am speaking to you, the day-to-day language, they will not be able to hide their ignorance. Behind the camouflage of big words they can hide their ignorance; that is one of the trade secrets. And

people are so foolish that if they can't understand what is being said to them, they think it must be something great. The incomprehensible looks to them as if it is something profound. The comprehensible seems to be superficial. Hence, down the ages your so-called saints have been using very complicated, complex, difficult language, using big words, using dead languages, so nobody understands. Latin, Sanskrit, Arabic -- that's what is being used by your so-called saints.

When you hear them you can't figure it out, what it is all about, and, naturally, you cannot say, "I don't understand your language" -- that is humiliating. So you start nodding your head, "Yes, it is true." They are hiding their ignorance, you are hiding your ignorance -- this is a mutual conspiracy. You know it perfectly well.

When you go to the physician, he writes the prescription in Latin or Greek. Why can't he write in simple English or Hindi or Marathi? If he writes in simple English that you understand, you will think him a fool, because he is writing such things -- how can such simple things help your great complex disease? And if he writes in simple language, you are not going to give the chemist fifty rupees for it; you will go to the marketplace and purchase the same things for two rupees.

The physician writes the prescription in such a language...and it is always illegible. Even if you go back again to the doctor to ask what he has written, he will be in difficulty.

I have heard that Mulla Nasruddin was using a prescription from a doctor for many things: he has used it as a ticket in a

train, because the conductor could not read it; he used it in the moviehouse, because the ticket-checker could not read it -- he used it in many many ways. He used it as a pass to see a certain minister. He told me, "For two months this prescription has been such a help -- wherever I want to enter and whatsoever I want to do, I just present this prescription because they cannot read it and they cannot admit that they cannot read it. They simply allow me, they have to allow me."

This is a well-known secret, that saints who are bogus are bound to use very difficult language; otherwise, you will be able to see that they are as ignorant as you are, or sometimes even more ignorant than you are. They create a great camouflage, a facade, of big words from dead languages. They quote scriptures, high-sounding words, and you are simply at a loss as to what to do. Either accept your ignorance and ask them what they are saying, or simply say that it must be something very profound -- how can a man like you, a sinner, ignorant, unknowledgeable, irreligious, understand it?

A preacher was asked to conduct a revival in a small southern town. There being no hotel, he was housed with one of the church sisters, a young widow. After the revival, taking his leave, he said to the hostess, "Sister Jones, never in all my ecclesiastical career have I encountered such an abundant, satisfying and abiding manifestation of thorough, complete, and delightful exemplification of gratitude, graciousness, appreciativeness and hospitality as you have demonstrated."

Sister Jones smiled, simpered, and answered, "Parson, I don't know what all those big words mean, but want to say that you are a real world beater, a strong repeater, and that you do it neater, sweeter and more completer with less peter than any other person I ever had here!"

You can use very complex language, but you cannot deceive those who know -- you can only deceive those who don't know. If you read Hegel's books you will come across sentences which go on running for pages. By the time you reach the end of the sentence, you have already forgotten the beginning. It is almost impossible to make any sense out of it. Hence, when Hegel was alive, he was thought to be the greatest philosopher who had ever lived on the earth. But as people went into his books more closely -- scholars worked and thrashed it out and figured things out -- it was found that he was not saying anything very special. Much was absolute nonsense -- but with great words.
Great words attract people, big words fascinate people, hypnotize people.
You ask me, "Why do they all speak a very difficult language?"
...Otherwise, who is going to listen to them? For what?

A farmer with two lazy sons, once ordered them to clean out the crapperhole. They simply dug a new one and moved the shit-house a few feet over. One night the old man had a call of nature and ran out back along the well-worn path, falling into the pit. Up to his neck in shit, he began hollering, "Fire! Fire!"

People came running, pulled him out, and cleaned him off, then asked why he had yelled "Fire!"
"Do you think anyone would have come if I hollered 'Shit!'?"

The reason why they use difficult language is simple; otherwise, who is going to come? They can't talk like me -- I am simply using the language that you use. I am simply talking to you! This is not a sermon, just a dialogue between friends, gossiping -- it is not a gospel.
And you can use simple words, day-to-day words only if you really have something to convey, otherwise not. If you don't have anything to convey, then you will have to use big words out of necessity.

The last question:
Question 4
BELOVED MASTER,
ARE NOT ALL THE PRIESTS THE WORST ENEMIES OF GOD?

Deepesh, not all the priests, but just the few -- the pope, the shankaracharyas. These are the people who are the enemies of God; otherwise, poor priests are simply trying somehow to make their bread and butter. They have nothing to do with God -- they are not friends, they are not enemies. They don't have any time for God. It is just a profession, and a poor profession at that. The poor priest doesn't get more money than the lowest clerk, and he runs the whole day from one temple to another, from one house to another -- he is almost a beggar! No, he is not the enemy of God. He just

doesn't know any other way to earn his bread, particularly in India.
In India, priests are brahmins, and brahmins are the poorest people. They don't know anything else, and they can't do anything else -- the traditional mind won't allow them. They can't be cobblers, they can't be carpenters, they can't be sweepers.... The brahmins down the ages have lived on only one thing: praying to gods. But if you simply go on praying to God, you will die, you will starve. Money is not going to shower on you from the skies; it has never happened. So you have to use your praying capacity, your scriptural knowledge, as a profession.
But the poor priest is not the enemy or anything. He does not know anything about God, he is not really interested in God at all.

I remember:
A priest used to live just behind my house when I was a child. I used to torture him with great questions: "Does God exist? Is the soul immortal? What is the philosophy of karma?" One day he said to me, "You please don't bother me. I tell you the truth: I don't know anything. And you are a kind of nuisance! Nobody asks me these questions -- I am a simple priest. People just ask me to do puja -- worship -- so I go, and they pay me two rupees, three rupees, per day. Somehow I am managing. I have three children, an old father, mother, wife, and also I have to pretend that I am living perfectly well, because that's how a brahmin should pretend. He is the high caste, so I have to pretend that everything is going well.

"And then after the whole day's work when I come home, you are sitting here! I have earned only three rupees in the whole day, and we are almost starving. Now, who bothers whether God exists or not! And I don't know at all. I only know how to worship, and I can worship any god -- just give me the money."

So please, Deepesh, don't think that all the priests...not all the priests, only a few cunning ones are against God. They are worshippers of the Devil, they are the reason that very few people have been able to become buddhas. But the other priests, ninety-nine percent of them, are just poor people not knowing what to do. Traditionally, just knowing one thing, they can beg. But they are high caste, so they beg with a method. That method is their ritual for worship.

A man sees signs on the highway saying ONE MILE TO GRANDMA'S CAT-HOUSE. Overcome by curiosity and surprise that anyone should have the nerve to advertise so plainly, he goes in.
An old lady admits him and snaps, "Two dollars, please, and you can go right through the door ahead of you at the end of the hall."
He pays, goes through the door, which slams shut behind him, and finds himself out in the yard, which is full of wooden boxes with wire fronts, inside of which are some mangy cats. Overhead is a small hand-lettered sign: "You have now been screwed by grandma. Please do not tell the secret -- I am just an old lady trying to make ends meet."

Enough for today.

The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 2

Talks given from 01/07/79 am to 10/07/79 am
English Discourse series
10 Chapters
Year published:
The original tape and book title was "The Book of the Books, Vols 1 - 6". Later reissued as twelve volumes under the present title.

The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 2
Chapter #1
Chapter title: The wisdom of innocence
1 July 1979 am in Buddha Hall

HOW CAN A TROUBLED MIND
UNDERSTAND THE WAY?
IF A MAN IS DISTURBED
HE WILL NEVER BE FILLED WITH KNOWLEDGE.

AN UNTROUBLED MIND,
NO LONGER SEEKING TO CONSIDER
WHAT IS RIGHT AND WHAT IS WRONG,
A MIND BEYOND JUDGMENTS,
WATCHES AND UNDERSTANDS.

KNOW THAT THE BODY IS A FRAGILE JAR,
AND MAKE A CASTLE OF YOUR MIND.

IN EVERY TRIAL
LET UNDERSTANDING FIGHT FOR YOU
TO DEFEND WHAT YOU HAVE WON.

FOR SOON THE BODY IS DISCARDED.
THEN WHAT DOES IT FEEL?
A USELESS LOG OF WOOD, IT LIES ON THE GROUND.
THEN WHAT DOES IT KNOW?

YOUR WORST ENEMY CANNOT HARM YOU
AS MUCH AS YOUR OWN THOUGHTS,
UNGUARDED.

BUT ONCE MASTERED,
NO ONE CAN HELP YOU AS MUCH,
NOT EVEN YOUR FATHER OR YOUR MOTHER.

Once I was asked, "What is philosophy?" I said, "Philosophy is the art of asking the wrong questions." The blind man asking "What is light?" -- this is philosophy. The deaf asking "What is music? What is sound?" -- this is philosophy.
If the blind man asks, "How can I get my eyes back?" this is no longer philosophy, this is religion. If the deaf goes to the physician to be treated so that he can hear, then he is moving in the direction of religion and not in the direction of philosophy.
Philosophy is guesswork, it is speculation; knowing nothing, one tries to invent the truth. And the truth cannot be invented, and anything invented cannot be true. The

truth has to be discovered. It is already there...all that we need is open eyes -- eyes to see it, a heart to feel it, a being to be present to it. The truth is always present but we are absent, and because we are absent we cannot see the truth. And we go on asking about the truth, and we don't ask the right question: How to be present? How to become a presence?

We ask about the truth and that asking is also going away from it, because the asking implies that an answer is possible from somebody else. Asking implies that somebody else can tell you what the truth is. Nobody can tell you it, it can't be told.

Lao Tzu says: The truth that can be said is no longer truth. Once said, it becomes a lie.

Why? -- because the person who knows, knows it not as information; otherwise, it would have been very easy to transfer the information to anybody who was ready to receive it. The truth is known as an inner experience. It is like a taste on the tongue. If a man has never tasted what sweetness is, you cannot explain it to him -- it is impossible. If a man has not seen color, you cannot explain to him what it is.

There are things which can only be experienced, and through experience understood. God is that ultimate experience, which is utterly inexpressible, untransferable. It cannot be conveyed. At the most, a few hints can be given; but those hints are also to be received with a very sympathetic heart, otherwise you will miss them.

If you interpret them with your mind you are going to miss them, because what can your mind do as far as interpretation is concerned? It can bring only its own past.

It can bring only its own chaos. It can bring its conflicts, doubts, confusions. And all those it will impose on the truth, on the hint given to you, and immediately everything is distorted. Your mind is not in a state to see, to feel. Religion simply means creating a space in your mind which is capable of seeing, which is capable of nonconflict, which is capable of being one without any split, which is capable of integrity, clarity, perceptiveness. A mind which is full of thoughts cannot perceive; those thoughts go on interfering. Those thoughts are there, layer upon layer. By the time something reaches your innermost core, if it ever reaches, it is no longer the same as it was delivered by someone who had known. It is a totally different phenomenon.

Buddha used to repeat each hint thrice. Somebody asked him, "Why do you repeat one thing thrice?"

He said, "Even thrice is not enough. When I say it for the first time, you only hear the words. Those words are empty, just empty, hollow shells, with no content. You cannot hear the content the first time. The second time, you hear the content with the words, a fragrance comes, but you are so dazed, you are so mystified by its presence, that you are not in a state to understand. You hear, but you don't understand. That's why I have to repeat it thrice."

I go on repeating again and again for the simple reason that you are so asleep -- it has to be repeated, hammered. Maybe in some moment, some auspicious moment, you will not be so deep in sleep; you may be close, very close to awakening, and something may enter into you. You may be able to hear. Yes, there are moments when you are very close to awakening -- not awake, not asleep, just in the middle, somewhere in between.

Each morning you know, there are a few moments when the sleep is no more but you are not yet awake, you cannot say you are awake. You can hear, in a very vague way, the sounds of the birds, and the milkman, and the wife talking to the neighbor and the children getting ready to go to school, and the traffic noise, and a train passing by -- but in a very vague way, not totally, partially. And you go on dozing off into sleep. One moment you hear the noise of the train passing by, another moment you have gone deeper into your sleep.

Now the sleep researchers say that it happens continuously in your sleep: if you sleep for eight hours, you are not on the same level continuously, your level goes on changing, peaks and valleys. The whole night you are going up and down. Sometimes you are very deep in sleep where even dreams disappear -- Patanjali has called it SUSHUPTI, dreamless sleep -- and sometimes you are full of dreams. And sometimes you are just on the verge of awakening. If something shattering, shocking happens, you will be awake, suddenly awake.

That's the effort of all the buddhas: waiting for that right moment when you are very close to awakening. Then a little push and your eyes open and you can see.

God cannot be explained but can be seen, can be experienced -- can NOT be explained. Any explanation about God is nothing but explaining him away; hence, the more priests, theologians, professors there are, the less religion there is in the world. The more popes and the more shankaracharyas, the less religion there is in the world -- because these people go on explaining and God cannot be explained. They have stuffed your minds with so many

explanations, now those explanations are in conflict. Now it is almost impossible to figure it out, what is what, which is which. You are in utter confusion. Man has never been in such confusion before, because humanity has never been so close before. The earth has REALLY become a village, a global village.

In the ancient days the Buddhist knew only what the Buddha had said, and the Mohammedan knew only about what Mohammed had said, and the Christian knew only about Jesus. Now we have become inheritors of the whole heritage of humanity. Now you know Jesus, you know Zarathustra, you know Patanjali, you know Buddha, you know Mahavira, you know Lao Tzu and hundreds of other explanations, other hints -- and they are all jumbled up in you. Now it is very difficult to pull you out of this confusion. The only possible way is to drop this whole noise, not in parts but in toto. That's what my message is. And by dropping it, you will not be dropping Jesus or Mohammed or Buddha; by dropping it you will come closer to them. By dropping it, you will simply be dropping the priests and the traditions and the conventions and the exploitation that goes on in the name of tradition and convention. By being clear of all this, forgetting the Bible and the Vedas and the Gita, you will attain to a clarity, a cleanliness. Yes, you need a spring cleaning, you need a total unburdening of the heart. Only then, in that silence, will you be able to understand.

Buddha says:

HOW CAN A TROUBLED MIND

UNDERSTAND THE WAY?

Thousands had gathered around Buddha, just as you have gathered around me -- thousands of seekers had come to Buddha and they were asking all kinds of questions. And Buddha was not interested in their questions at all; he was not interested in answering them. He was interested, certainly, in showing them the way, but the problem was that they were so much troubled with their questions AND the answers that they had collected, they were so much disturbed by all the knowledge that they had been carrying all along, that it was impossible, almost completely impossible to show them the way. Hence this sutra: HOW CAN A TROUBLED MIND UNDERSTAND THE WAY?
So rather than giving them more answers, more explanations, more knowledge, Buddha started taking away their knowledge, their ready-made answers, their a priori conceptions, their prejudices. India has never been able to forgive Buddha for that. Immediately after he died the traditional mind of this country started uprooting all the plants that he had planted; all the rosebushes were burned. Buddha was completely thrown out of this country. The greatest son of this land had no shelter here; the teaching had to seek shelter in foreign lands.
This is not accidental, this has happened always. Jesus was condemned by the Jews, crucified by the Jews, and Jesus was the greatest Jew who has ever been on the earth, the greatest flowering of the Jewish consciousness, the uttermost expression, the crescendo, the Everest. But why did the Jews deny him? They should have been happy, they should have danced and celebrated, but they could not --

they could not forgive him, because his presence made them feel very mediocre; that was his crime. He had to be punished for it, for being so high, for being so beyond, for being so superior, for being so graceful, for bringing such love. For his presence he had to be punished, because his presence was making people feel ugly by comparison. He had to be removed so the mediocre mind could feel at ease. Jesus was not killed by Jews, he was killed by the mediocre mind. It happened to be the Jewish mediocre mind in the case of Jesus. The same happened with Buddha. Buddha has not been forgiven by the Hindus, and he was the greatest Hindu ever. He was the purest Hindu possible, the very quintessence of Hinduism. What the Upanishads were saying, he had actualized it. He was the realization of the deepest longings of this land, but he was uprooted from here, he was thrown out of here.

Buddhism disappeared from India, not even a trace was left behind -- utterly washed away. Why? He was tremendously respected in Tibet, in China, in Korea, in Japan, in Thailand, in Burma, in Sri Lanka. The whole of Asia loved the man, so unique is his teaching, so pregnant are his words. But India simply forgot all about him -- the Indian mediocre mind. It has nothing to do with the Indian -- again the mediocre mind. The mediocre mind never allows the genius; the mediocre person is happy with other mediocre people. The stupid people are happy with stupid leaders. The more stupid the leader is, the more people are happy -- because he looks so much like them.

I have heard:

A new superintendent was appointed in a mental asylum. The old one was giving his charge over, he was retiring, and a small feast was arranged for the old one to be thanked for all his services, for the new one to be received by the inmates. All the mad people gathered.
The old superintendent was a little puzzled; he had never seen them so happy. All the mad people were so happy, so joyous, that he could not resist the temptation of asking them -- and he was to leave the same day, so he had to ask immediately; otherwise it would always remain a curiosity in his mind and he would never know the answer.
He asked the mad people. "Why are you looking so happy?"
They said, "Because of the new superintendent -- he looks just like us! You were a foreigner amongst us, you were sane. He looks mad!"
And that was a truth -- the new superintendent was almost insane. But the insane people were very happy. Somebody had now come who would not make them feel insane.

This has always been the situation on the earth -- this earth is the madhouse -- and whenever a sane person happens, we misbehave with him. Thousands of people had come to Buddha to ask, "Where is God? What is God?" And especially the brahmins, the pundits, the scholars, who were fully informed, well informed about the scriptures, they used to come to him to ask, "Do you believe in God? Define your belief, explain your concept."
And Buddha insisted again and again: HOW CAN A TROUBLED MIND UNDERSTAND THE WAY? He used to say, "Please don't ask about God. Your asking

about God is just like a blind man asking about light -- it cannot be explained. I am a physician," he insisted. "I can treat your eyes, I can give you your vision back. And then you will be able to see by yourself, and the light has to be seen by you. My seeing the light is not going to help. I may see the light, I may even describe it, but it is not going to give you any idea of what it is."

In fact there is no possible way to explain to the blind man what light is. Light is an experience, something existential, unexplainable. And God is the ultimate light, the light of all the lights, the light behind all the lights, the source of all lights. How can God be explained to you if you are blind? Hence Buddha never talked about God. And the pundits and the brahmins would go back to their places spreading rumors and saying that "This man does not answer the question because he does not know; otherwise, why can't he say simply yes or no? We asked a very simple question, 'Do you believe in God?' He could have said yes or no -- if he knows then the answer is simple. But he talks in a roundabout way; we ask about God and he talks in parables. He says, 'How can it be said? How can it be explained?' The real fact is he does not know. The real fact is that he is an atheist in disguise; he is deceiving people, corrupting people."

Hindus have invented a very cunning story about Buddha. They say that God created the world, and at the same time he created hell and heaven -- hell for those who were to be punished and heaven for those who were to be rewarded for their virtues. But it happened that thousands of years passed and nobody entered hell, because nobody committed a sin.

Of course, the Devil was very tired of waiting and waiting and waiting -- with no work, with no business! Not even a single soul had turned up!

Tremendously angry, he approached God and said, "Why have you made this hell, for what? And why have you put me there in charge? We are tired, my whole staff is tired. Nobody ever turns up. We open the shop and we sit the whole day and not a single customer! We keep the doors open -- not a single soul ever enters. What is the point? Please make us free from this job."

God said, "Why didn't you come earlier? I had completely forgotten about it. I will make arrangements. Soon I will be born in the world as Gautama the Buddha, and I will corrupt people's minds. I will corrupt their minds so much that you will be overcrowded. You just go back to hell and wait."

And that's how it happened. The story says, God came to the world as Gautama the Buddha, corrupted people's minds, destroyed their beliefs, uprooted their conventions, shook their faith, created doubt in their minds, suspicions. Since then hell is so crowded that the Devil goes again and again and says to God, "Now stop! Please stop! We are tired, so many people! We are running a twenty-four-hour service, day in and day out; even in the night the doors can't be closed. People simply go on coming!"

A very cunning story. Do you see the delicate cunningness in it? In one sense Buddha is recognized as God's AVATARA. Hindus are more cunning in that way than Jews. They simply denied that Jesus was the Son of God, they rejected Jesus. Hindus are more sophisticated in that

way, more polished, more cultured -- of course, a more ancient civilization. And the more ancient the civilization becomes, the more cunning it becomes.

See the cunningness: Buddha is accepted as the tenth incarnation of God, and yet God takes this incarnation into the world to corrupt people's minds. So although Buddha is God, beware, don't listen to him! You see the strategy, the trick? They don't deny Buddha godhood -- in fact it was almost impossible to deny Buddha godhood.

H.G. Wells has said that Gautama the Buddha is a paradox: the most godless man and yet the most godly. He never talked about God, he never told people to believe in God. God is simply missing from his teaching. It is not a necessary hypothesis, it is not needed. The most godless and yet the most godly...nobody seems to be so godly as Buddha, so graceful as Buddha -- just a lotus flower, the purest consciousness conceivable, as fresh as dewdrops in the early morning sun.

They could not deny that, they had to accept that he was God. But they could not accept his approach because his approach, if accepted, would destroy the whole established religion, the whole establishment. He takes away all the beliefs; in fact he makes it a very important thing, very essential, that a man of belief will not be able to know ever. He does not mean become a disbeliever, because disbelief is again belief in a negative way. Neither be a believer nor be a disbeliever.

Buddha's approach is that of an agnostic. He is neither a theist nor an atheist -- he is an inquirer. And he wants you to remain open to inquire. Go with no prejudice, go with no ready-made idea -- because if you go with a certain idea,

you will project your idea onto reality. And if you have some deep-rooted idea in your mind, you will see that idea being fulfilled in reality and it will be only a hallucination, a dream projected by you. You have to go utterly empty. If you really want to know the truth you have to be absolutely empty, you should not carry any idea, any ideology; you should go naked, nude, empty. You should function from the state of not knowing. The state of not knowing is the state of wonder.

There is an ancient saying of Jesus, not recorded in the Bible, but Sufis have preserved it. Sufis have preserved many beautiful sayings of Jesus. The saying is so tremendously important that one wonders why it was not recorded in the Bible, but if you ponder over it the reason becomes clear.

The saying is: Blessed is the one who marvels, because his is the kingdom of God. Blessed is one who wonders. This has not been recorded in the Bible. Why? -- because the Bible wants to create a certain religion, a certain sect; it wants to propagate a certain ideology. And the man of wonder has to drop all ideology.

Blessed is the one who wonders, because only in wondering can you be like a child, innocent. And only in that innocence can you know that which is. HOW CAN A TROUBLED MIND UNDERSTAND THE WAY?

So whenever a person would come to Buddha and inquire -- great questions about life and life's mysteries -- Buddha would say, "You wait, you meditate. First let your troubled mind become untroubled. Let this storm of your mind go past. Let silence come, because silence will give you the eyes. I can show you the way to be silent, and then you

don't need anybody's guidance. Once you are silent, you will be able to see the way and you will be able to reach the goal."

And our minds are really troubled. A thousand and one troubles are there. First, everybody is in a state of schizophrenia, more or less; the differences are only of degrees. Everybody is split because the exploiters, both religious and political, have depended on this strategy: divide the man, don't allow man integrity, and he will remain a slave. A house divided against itself is bound to be weak. So you have been taught to fight with the body; that is the root strategy of division, of dividing you. "Fight the body, the body is your enemy. It is the body that is dragging you towards hell. Fight, dagger in hand! Fight day and night! Fight for lives together! Only then, one day, will you be able to win over it. And unless you are victorious over your body, you are not going to enter into the world of God."

For centuries this nonsense has been taught to people. And the result is that everybody is divided, everybody is against his body. And if you are against your body, you are bound for trouble. You will fight with your body, and you and your body are one energy. The body is the visible soul, and the soul is the invisible body. The body and soul are not divided anywhere, they are parts of each other, they are parts of one whole. You have to accept the body, you have to love the body, you have to respect the body, you have to be grateful to your body. Only then will you attain to a certain kind of integrity, a crystallization will happen; otherwise you will remain troubled. And the body will not

leave you so easily; even after hundreds of lives the fight will be there. You cannot defeat the body.

I am not saying that the body cannot be won over, mind you, but you cannot defeat the body. You cannot defeat it by being inimical towards it. You can win over it by being friendly, by being loving, by being respectful, by trusting it. That's exactly my approach: the body is the temple, you are the deity of the temple. The temple protects you, shelters you against rain, against wind, against heat. It is in your service! Why should you fight? It is as stupid as the driver fighting the car. If the driver fights with his car, what is going to happen? He will destroy the car and he will destroy himself in fighting with it. The car is a beautiful vehicle, it can take you on the farthest journeys.

The body is the most complex mechanism in existence. It is simply marvelous! -- and blessed are those who marvel. Begin the feeling of wonder with your own body, because that is the closest to you. The closest nature has approached to you, the closest God has come to you, is through the body. In your body is the water of the oceans, in your body is the fire of the stars and the suns, in your body is the air, your body is made of earth. Your body represents the whole existence, all the elements. And what a transformation! What a metamorphosis! Look at the earth and then look at your body -- what a transformation, and you have never marveled about it! Dust has become divine -- what greater mystery is possible? What greater miracles are you waiting for? And you see the miracle happening every day. Out of the mud comes the lotus...and out of the dust has arisen our beautiful body. And such a complex

mechanism, running so smoothly -- no noise. And it is really complicated.

Scientists have made very complicated machines, but nothing to be compared with the body. Even the most sophisticated computer is just a toy compared to the inner mechanism of the body. And you have been taught to fight with it. That creates a split, that keeps you troubled, that keeps you in a constant civil war.

And because you fight with yourself -- which is utterly stupid -- your life becomes less and less one of intelligence and more and more one of stupidity. And then you want great transformations -- you want jealousies to drop and you want anger to disappear and you want no greed in you. It is impossible! With such misunderstanding from the very beginning, how can you create the space where transformations happen, where anger becomes compassion, where hate becomes love, where greed becomes sharing, where sex becomes samadhi? How can you hope, how can you expect such great transformations, with such a troubled state?

The fundamental thing is to drop the split, to become one. Be one, and then all else is possible; even the impossible is possible.

HOW CAN A TROUBLED MIND UNDERSTAND THE WAY?

The way is very simple and direct. Even a child can understand it. It is as simple as two plus two equals four, or even more simple. It is as simple as the song of a bird, as simple as a roseflower -- simple and beautiful, simple and of tremendous grandeur. But only an untroubled mind can understand it, only an untroubled mind has the capacity to

see it; otherwise you will live in greed and you will live in anger, and you will live in jealousies and possessiveness, and you will live in hatred. You can pretend, you can become a saint on the surface, but you will remain a sinner deep down. And the greatest sin is to divide yourself. The greatest sin is not committed against others, it is always committed against yourself. This is a state of suicide, creating this division between your body and yourself. Condemning the body you can become only a hypocrite, you can only live a life of pretensions.

In a first-class railroad compartment, two beautifully dressed ladies are discussing clothes while a gentleman in the corner pretends to be asleep. When one lady says she finds the cost of clothes impossible nowadays, the other suggests she should follow her example and take a boyfriend on the side: "He will give you five hundred a month for a little present -- your husband would never do that."
"But what if I can't get a friend with five hundred dollars?"
"Then take two with two hundred and fifty each."
The gentleman speaks up: "Listen, ladies, I am going to sleep now. Wake me up when you get down to twenty bucks."

People are pretending in every possible way. The person who is pretending to be a saint may be just the opposite, and the person who is pretending to be awake may be asleep, and the person who is pretending to be asleep may be awake...all kinds of pretensions, because the society creates the context where it allows you only either to live

an utterly condemned life, the life of a criminal, or the life of a hypocrite, of a pretender. The society gives you only two alternatives: either be honest and be a criminal, or be dishonest and be respectable. It does not allow you the third alternative. Why does it not allow you the third alternative? -- because the third alternative creates a Jesus, a Buddha, a Krishna, and their presence makes the crowd feel very mediocre, very insulted, humiliated.
So please don't decide by looking at people's appearances. More are the chances, almost ninety-nine point nine percent, that whatsoever they appear on the surface they will not be deep down. You can be certain about it; I say almost completely certain, because only point one percent can you miss -- which is not much. Only once in a while will you come across a Buddha, whose appearance is the same as his inwardness; otherwise you will come across people who are one thing on the outside and another on the inside. Don't be deceived by appearances.

An actress picks up an out-of-work tramp and takes him to her apartment because he has very large shoes on and she has been told that men with big feet have big pricks. She gives him a steak dinner with plenty of pepper and beer, and then drags him off to bed.
In the morning the man wakes up alone and finds a ten-dollar bill on the mantlepiece, with a brief note: "Buy yourself a pair of shoes that fit you."

But that's how we all go on deciding...from the outside. In fact, because we don't even know our own insides, how can we look into other people's insides? We don't know the art

of looking in. First you have to practice the art with yourself. First you have to go into your interiority, your inner world. You have to go deeper and deeper into your consciousness, to the very center of it. Once you have penetrated the core of your being, you will be able to see into anybody else's core of being. Then nobody can deceive you, because then you don't see the appearance -- you see the reality.

HOW CAN A TROUBLED MIND UNDERSTAND THE WAY?

The troubled mind cannot understand anything. It is not a state where understanding is possible. Understanding does not mean knowledge. A troubled mind can become very knowledgeable -- you can go to the universities and you can see the professors, very knowledgeable -- but they are more troubled than you, far more in inner conflict than you. Their knowledge does not help them at all. Knowledge has never helped anybody, it only burdens. It gives you respectability, certainly. It is a great ego trip, and the ego feels very puffed up; but the more the ego is puffed up, the more you will be in trouble inside because the ego is a false phenomenon. And when you become too attached to the false, you start losing contact with the real. When you start growing roots in the false, you forget to grow roots in the real.

The man of knowledge is as unconscious as you are. The ignorant and the knowledgeable are not in different boats; they are fellow-travelers. The difference between them is only of information -- which is not a difference at all, which is not a difference that makes any difference. I may know only a few things, you may know a few more,

somebody else may know a thousand and one things, and somebody else may be just a walking ENCYCLOPAEDIA BRITANNICA -- that makes no difference at all.
A buddha is not a man of knowledge, he is a man of understanding -- not full of information but full of insight. Full of vision, not full of thoughts -- a clarity, a mirrorlike clarity, and a great awareness.
You are moving like a somnambulist, a sleepwalker. You don't know what you are doing, you don't know why you are doing it; you don't know where you are going, you don't know why you are going. Your life is accidental, and an accidental life is an unconscious life -- it is like a robot.

A man at the theater with his wife goes out to the toilet at the intermission, but goes through the wrong door and finds himself in the garden. As it is too well kept to think of using the ground, he lifts a plant out of a flowerpot and uses that, then replaces the plant.
He goes back and finds the next act has already begun. "What has happened so far in this act?" he asks his wife in a whisper.
"You ought to know," she says coldly. "You were in it!"

Man lives in unconsciousness. He is not aware, not at all aware. You can watch any person, you can watch yourself, slowly slowly, and you will see so many unconscious acts happening that it will be almost unbelievable how you have lived up to now. You are lying for no reason at all! And when you catch yourself red-handed lying, you will be surprised: why were you lying in the first place? -- because there is no reason, you are not going to gain anything out of

it. Just a habit, just a mechanical routine. You become sad for no reason at all.
Now there are a few researchers who say you can make a calendar of your moods, and I find their research significant -- you can really make a calendar of your moods. Just go on noting down for one month: Monday in the morning how you felt, and in the afternoon and in the evening and in the night...just at least eight times per day, go on noting every day at the exact same times how you feel. And within three or four weeks you will be surprised that on each Monday at the same time you feel exactly the same.

Now this cannot be because of any circumstances outside, because each Monday they are different. It is something inner -- although you will find excuses outside, because nobody wants to feel responsible for his own misery. It feels good to make others feel responsible for your misery. And you can find excuses, you can invent them if they are not there.
That's where people have become very very creative. In fact their whole creativity consists in creating excuses: "Why am I sad?" and you can find a thousand and one reasons. The wife said this and the children are not behaving well and the neighbors and the boss in the office and the traffic and prices are rising high...and you can find a thousand and one things; they are always there. And you can paint the whole world very gloomy, dark, and then you can feel at ease that it is not your responsibility that you are sad.
But the same world, and Tuesday morning you are feeling very bubbly, very joyous, radiant -- again you can find

excuses: "This is a beautiful morning, and the sun and the birds and the trees and the sky, and all is so full of light -- such a beautiful morning!" You can find excuses for all kinds of moods, but if you make a diary of four to eight weeks you will be really shocked that everything that happens to you is almost completely dependent on you. You have an inner wheel that goes on moving, and the same spokes go on coming on top again and again.
Yes, there are circumstances outside, but they are not causes; at the most they trigger. A certain mood that is bound to happen is triggered by a certain circumstance. If this circumstance were not there, then something else would have been the triggering point -- but it was bound to be triggered.
People who have lived in isolation have become aware of this fact. Buddha used to send his disciples for isolation. In the new commune we are going to have underground caves so I can send you for one month's isolation -- absolute isolation. You disappear from the world, so you cannot blame any circumstances outside because there is nothing outside...you and the walls of the cave. And you will be surprised: one day you are happy, one day you are unhappy, one day you are feeling very greedy, one day you are feeling angry and there is nobody who has insulted you, irritated you. One day you will find you are telling lies to yourself because you cannot find anybody else.

"Could I buy you a drink?" he asked, by way of striking up a conversation.
"No thank you," she said. "I don't drink."
"What about a little dinner with me in my room?"

"No, I don't think that would be proper," she said.
Having had no success with the subtler approaches, the young man pressed directly to the point: "I am charmed by your refreshing beauty, mademoiselle, and will give you anything your heart desires if you will spend the night with me."
"Oh, no, no, monsieur, I could never do a thing like that."
"Tell me," the young man said, laughing, "don't you ever do anything the slightest bit improper?"
"Oui," said the French girl, "I tell lies."

You watch how many times in the day you tell lies -- and for no reason at all -- and how many times you become angry, for no reason at all, and then you will see that you are living in an inner world, a subjective world of your own. Understanding means understanding these fundamentals of life's functioning. And if you understand these fundamentals, transformation is not difficult. In fact, understanding itself becomes the transformation.
HOW CAN A TROUBLED MIND UNDERSTAND THE WAY?

IF A MAN IS DISTURBED
HE WILL NEVER BE FILLED WITH KNOWLEDGE.

The word 'knowledge' does not mean what YOU mean by knowledge. When Buddha uses the word 'knowledge' he means wisdom, not information; he means knowing, not knowledge.

IF A MAN IS DISTURBED...is in conflict, is in confusion, is in a divide, is split inside, if a man is a crowd within...HE WILL NEVER BE FILLED WITH wisdom.
Wisdom needs unity, wisdom needs integration, wisdom needs a crystallization of awareness, of watchfulness, of watching your acts, your moods, your thoughts, your emotions...of watching everything that is happening in your inner world. By just watching it, a miracle starts happening. If you start seeing that you tell lies for no reason at all, just that very awareness will become a hindrance. Next time you are just on the verge of telling a lie a voice within you will say, "Watch, beware -- you are moving into the trap again." The next time you are falling into sadness, something inside you will make you alert, will alarm you. This is the path of transforming your energies -- AES DHAMMO SANANTANO. AES MAGGO VISUDDHYA -- this is the way of purification, this is the eternal law of transformation.

AN UNTROUBLED MIND,
NO LONGER SEEKING TO CONSIDER
WHAT IS RIGHT AND WHAT IS WRONG,
A MIND BEYOND JUDGMENTS,
WATCHES AND UNDERSTANDS.

So the first requirement for a sannyasin is: AN UNTROUBLED MIND,NO LONGER SEEKING TO CONSIDER WHAT IS RIGHT AND WHAT IS WRONG....
A tremendously important and revolutionary statement. Buddha is saying: Don't consider what is right and what is

wrong, because if you consider what is right and what is wrong you will be divided, you will become a hypocrite. You will pretend the right and you will do the wrong. And the moment you consider what is right and what is wrong, you become attached, you become identified. You certainly become identified with the right.

For example, you see on the side of the road a hundred-rupee note; it may have fallen from somebody's pocket. Now the question arises: To take it or not to take it? One part of you says, "It is perfectly right to take it. Nobody is looking, nobody will ever suspect. And you are not stealing -- it is just lying there! If you don't take it, somebody else is going to take it anyway. So why miss it? It is perfectly right!"

But another part says, "This is wrong -- this money does not belong to you, it is not yours. In a way, in an indirect way, it is stealing. You should inform the police, or if you don't want to be bothered with it, then go ahead, forget all about it. Don't even look back. This is greed and greed is a sin!"

Now, these two minds are there. One says, "It is right, take it," the other says, "It is wrong, don't take it." With which mind are you going to identify yourself? You are certainly going to identify with the mind which says it is immoral, because that is more ego-satisfying. "You are a moral person, you are not ordinary; anybody else would have taken the hundred-rupee note. In such times of difficulties, people don't think of such delicacies." You will identify yourself with the moral mind. But there is every possibility you will take the note. You will identify yourself with the moral mind, and you will disidentify yourself from the

mind which is going to take the note. You will condemn it deep down; you will say, "It is not right -- it is the sinner part of me, the lower part, the condemned part." You will keep yourself aloof from it. You will say, "I was against it. It was my instinct, it was my unconscious, it was my body, it was my mind, which persuaded me to do it; otherwise, I knew it, that it was wrong. I am the one who knows that it was wrong."

You always identify yourself with the right, the moralistic attitude, and you disidentify from the immoral act -- although you do it. This is how hypocrisy arises.

Saint Augustine has said in his confessions: God, forgive me, because I go on doing things which I know I should not do, and also I don't do things which I know I should do. This is the conflict, this is how one becomes troubled.

Hence Buddha gives you a secret key. This is the key that can take you out of all identification: don't be identified with the moral mind -- because that too is part of the mind. It is the same game: one part saying good, another part saying bad -- it is the same mind creating a conflict in you. Mind is always dual. Mind lives in polar opposites. It loves and it hates the same person; it wants to do the act and it does not want to do the act. It is conflict, mind is conflict. Don't get identified with either.

Buddha is saying: Become just a watchfulness. See that one part is saying this, another part is saying that. "I am neither -- NETI, NETI, neither this nor that -- I am just a witness." Only then is there a possibility that understanding will arise.

AN UNTROUBLED MIND,NO LONGER SEEKING TO CONSIDER WHAT IS RIGHT AND WHAT IS WRONG,

A MIND BEYOND JUDGMENTS, WATCHES AND UNDERSTANDS.

To go beyond judgments of good and bad is the way of watchfulness. And it is through watchfulness that transformations happen. This is the difference between morality and religion. Morality says, "Choose the right and reject the wrong. Choose the good and reject the bad." Religion says, "Simply watch both. Don't choose at all. Remain in a choiceless consciousness."

Religion is very very different from morality. Morality is very ordinary, mundane, mediocre; morality cannot take you to the ultimate, it is not the way of the divine. Morality is only a social strategy. That's why one thing is right in one society and the same thing is wrong in another society; one thing is thought to be good in India and the same thing is thought to be bad in Japan. One thing is thought to be good today and may become wrong tomorrow. Morality is a social by-product, it is a social strategy to control. It is the policeman inside you, the judge inside you -- it is a trick of the society to hypnotize you according to certain conceptions that the society wants to be imposed upon people. So if you are born in a vegetarian family, then the nonvegetarians are the greatest of sinners.

One Jaina monk once told me that "I love your books, but why do you mention Jesus, Mohammed and Ramakrishna with Mahavira? You should not mention them in the same line. Mahavira is Mahavira -- how can he be compared and put in the same way, in the same category with Jesus, Mohammed and Ramakrishna?"

I said, "Why not?"

He said, "Jesus drinks wine, eats meat -- what greater sin can one commit?"

Mohammed ate meat and got married to nine women! One has to renounce the woman -- and not only one but nine! A perfect number. In fact, there are no more numbers; nine is the last number, then again repeats the same....

"Mohammed got married to nine women, was a meat-eater -- how can you put Mohammed with Mahavira? And how can you put Ramakrishna with Mahavira? He used to eat fish."

A Bengali is bound to eat fish.

His only criticism of my books is that I have put these people together.

Now ask a Christian.... I once asked a Christian missionary, "What do you say about this Jaina monk? He has said this...have you any objection?"

He said, "Certainly! How can you put Mahavira with Jesus? Jesus lived for humanity, sacrificed himself for humanity -- what has Mahavira done? Mahavira is utterly selfish, he thinks only of his own salvation. He cares nothing about others! He never healed a blind person, he never raised a dead person from death. He was just meditating for twelve years in the mountains, in the forests -- what more selfishness...? And the world is suffering and people are in great pain, and he didn't come to console them. What more luxury can there be? Just meditating by the side of a river in the forest -- what more luxury! What has he done for the poor humanity? Jesus sacrificed himself -- he lived and died for others. His whole life was nothing but pure sacrifice. How can you put Mahavira with Jesus?"

And he too seems to be right. Now, how do you decide? Buddha never healed the sick, the blind, the deaf, the dumb -- just meditated. Seems to be selfish! He should have opened hospitals, or at least schools; should have distributed medicine, should have gone to the flood areas and served people...he never did anything like that. What kind of spirituality is this? According to a Christian, it is pure selfishness.

Now, who is right? And who is going to decide? We live according to our prejudices.

The Jaina monk is wrong and the Christian missionary is wrong, because both are judging -- and to judge is wrong. Jesus is Jesus -- he lives in his own way. Buddha is Buddha -- he lives in his own way. Unique personalities, unique expressions of God. Neither is a copy of the other, and neither needs to be a copy of the other. And it is beautiful that the world has variety. If there were only Jesuses and Jesuses again and again, they would look like Ford cars coming out on an assembly line -- each second a Ford car coming out, the same, exactly the same as each other. It is beautiful that Jesus is one and simply one and unrepeatable. And it is good the Buddha is alone and unrepeatable.

A really religious person has a nonjudgmental approach. The moralist cannot avoid judgments, he becomes a judge. Now, this Jaina monk, an ordinary person, stupid, is ready to judge Jesus, Ramakrishna, Mohammed. He knows nothing, understands nothing, has never meditated -- has not known himself yet. That's why he had come to me. He had come to me to understand what meditation is and how to meditate. Meditation has not happened yet, but judgment is there -- and he is ready to judge even a man

like Jesus, is not even ashamed of what he is doing, is not shy, is very arrogant. And so is the case with the Christian missionary! He knows nothing of meditation, what Buddha was doing, what Mahavira was doing. He knows nothing of the subtle ways in which a Buddha functions. Just his becoming enlightened is the greatest service to humanity possible -- nothing more can be done. He has certainly not cured physical eyes, but he is the man who has cured thousands of people's spiritual eyes -- and that is real service! He has made thousands of people hear, listen, understand -- THAT is real service.

But this Christian missionary, because he runs a primary school and a hospital, thinks himself somebody who is authorized to judge. The moralist always judges, the religious person never judges. He lives in a nonjudgmental consciousness.

A MIND BEYOND JUDGMENTS, WATCHES AND UNDERSTANDS. He simply watches and understands. If Buddha had come across Jesus, he would have understood; if Jesus had come across Mahavira, he would have understood. Just watching, seeing, and there is understanding.

KNOW THAT THE BODY IS A FRAGILE JAR,
AND MAKE A CASTLE OF YOUR MIND.

By 'mind' Buddha means consciousness. By 'mind' Buddha means Mind with a capital M -- not this ordinary mind that you have but the Mind which happens when all thoughts have disappeared, when the mind is utterly empty of

thoughts. Make a castle of your Mind because this body is going to die -- don't depend on it.

IN EVERY TRIAL
LET UNDERSTANDING FIGHT FOR YOU
TO DEFEND WHAT YOU HAVE WON.

And remember continuously, because the struggle is long, and the journey is arduous. Many times you will fall and forget, many times you will start judging. Many times you will start getting identified with this or that, many times the ego will assert itself again and again. Whenever the ego asserts itself, whenever identification happens, whenever judgment arises, immediately remember: watch, simply watch, and there will be understanding.
And understanding is the secret of transformation. If you can understand anger, immediately you will be showered with compassion. If you can understand sex, immediately you will attain to samadhi. 'Understanding' is the most important word to remember.

FOR SOON THE BODY IS DISCARDED.
THEN WHAT DOES IT FEEL?
A USELESS LOG OF WOOD, IT LIES ON THE GROUND.
THEN WHAT DOES IT KNOW?

Don't depend on the body and don't remain confined to the body. Use it, respect it, love it, care for it, but remember: you have to leave it one day. It is only a cage, it will be left behind, and the bird will be gone. Before that happens, take

care of the bird too. Cleanse your consciousness, because that will be going with you. Your understanding will go with you, not your body.
So don't waste too much time in decorating it with cosmetics, with clothes, with ornaments -- don't waste too much time with the body, because the body belongs to the earth and the earth will claim it back. Dust unto dust. You don't belong to the earth, you belong to some beyond, to some unknown. Your home is in the unknown, here you are only a visitor. Enjoy the visit and use it as much as possible to grow in understanding and maturity, so that you can take home your maturity, your understanding, your wisdom.

YOUR WORST ENEMY CANNOT HARM YOU
AS MUCH AS YOUR OWN THOUGHTS,
UNGUARDED.

When thoughts are unguarded, unwatched, your mind is your greatest enemy.

BUT ONCE MASTERED,
NO ONE CAN HELP YOU AS MUCH,
NOT EVEN YOUR FATHER OR YOUR MOTHER.

But the same mind, if mastered -- mastered by watchfulness, mastered by meditation -- is transformed. It becomes the greatest friend. Nobody can help you as much as it.
The mind is a ladder: unguarded it takes you downwards, guarded it takes you upwards. The same ladder! The mind is a door: unguarded it takes you outward, guarded it takes

you inward. The same mind unguarded becomes anger, hatred, jealousy; guarded it becomes compassion, love, light.
Be watchful, be awake, be alert, be nonjudgmental. Don't be a moralist: create a religious consciousness. And by "religious consciousness" is meant a choiceless awareness. Let this phrase sink deep in your heart: choiceless awareness. This is the very essence of Buddha's teaching -- AES DHAMMO SANANTANO.
Enough for today.
The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 2
Chapter #2
Chapter title: Drink to the full and dance
2 July 1979 am in Buddha Hall

The first question:
Question 1
BELOVED MASTER,
WOULD YOU PLEASE SPEAK MORE ABOUT THE NEW PHASE OF YOUR WORK? SRI RAMAKRISHNA, SRI RAMAN, AND EVEN J. KRISHNAMURTI, APPEAR ONE-DIMENSIONAL. DID GURDJIEFF ATTEMPT A MULTIDIMENSIONAL APPROACH? WAS IT THE CAUSE OF HIS BEING SO GREATLY MISUNDERSTOOD?

Ajit Saraswati, it is but natural to be misunderstood if you really want to help people. If you don't want to help them, you will never be misunderstood -- they will worship you, they will praise you. If you only talk, if you only

philosophize, then they are not afraid of you. Then you don't touch their lives.

And it is beautiful to know complex theories, systems of thought. It helps their egos, it nourishes their egos -- they become more knowledgeable. And everybody likes to be more knowledgeable. It is the subtlest nourishment for the ego.

But if you REALLY want to help them, then the problem arises. Then you start changing their lives, then you start trespassing on their egos; then you start interfering with their centuries and centuries old habits and mechanisms. Then you create antagonism: they are afraid of you, they are inimical towards you. And they will try in every possible way to misunderstand you, to misrepresent you. One-dimensional people are beautiful flowers, but not of much use. Krishnamurti has been talking for forty or more years, and people listen. The same people have been listening to him for forty years...and not an iota of change in their consciousness. Certainly they have become very knowledgeable, argumentative, logical. If you discuss with them -- they are the best people to discuss anything with -- they go into the most subtle, delicate worlds of thought. They can analyze everything: awareness, meditation, consciousness.... They have become very efficient, very clever, but they remain as mediocre as ever, as stupid as ever, with only one difference: now their stupidity is garbed behind their so-called knowledge that they have gathered from J. Krishnamurti. Krishnamurti has remained just an intellectual phenomenon, because he never took the trouble to enter into people's lives. It is dangerous to enter into people's lives -- you are playing with fire.

Sri Raman is perfectly okay: sitting silently in his temple, people can come, offer flowers, worship, and he will simply watch. And of course he has a beauty and a grace, but it is one-dimensional, it does not affect life in its totality. At the most, people can be moved by it emotionally. Just as J. Krishnamurti moves people intellectually, Sri Raman moves people emotionally.

And the same was the case with Ramakrishna. Many people's emotions were touched, and they would cry tears of joy. But it is not going to transform you. Those tears of joy are momentary; back home you will be the same.

Gurdjieff certainly is a pioneer. With Gurdjieff begins a totally new concept of spiritual life. He has actually called his way "the fourth way" -- just as I call my way "the fourth way" he also calls his way "the fourth way." He was immensely misunderstood, because he was not interested in imparting knowledge to you, he was not interested in consoling you. He was not interested in giving you beautiful theories, visions, hallucinations. He was not interested in your tears, in your emotions and sentiments. He was not interested in being worshipped by you, he was interested in transforming you.

And to transform a person means you have to take a hammer in your hands, because many chunks of that person's being have to be cut. The person is so topsy-turvy that everything is wrong as it is, and it has to be put right. And he has invested so much in his wrong way of life that anybody who wants to change his style of life -- not only the circumference but the center too -- he becomes afraid of, he is scared of. Only a few courageous people can enter

into the world of a man like Gurdjieff. Tremendous courage is needed, a courage to die, because only then is one reborn. Gurdjieff was a midwife. He was not a teacher, he was a master. Krishnamurti remained a teacher. Raman remained a beautiful individual -- enlightened, but just a faraway, distant star. You could watch and you could appreciate and you could write poetry about it, but that's all. It remained a distant phenomenon. You could never hope to reach him, the distance was vast. And there was no effort from his side to bridge it. And what could you do? How could YOU bridge it? If you had been capable of bridging yourself with a man like Raman, there would have been no need to make the bridge. A man of that capacity would be able to transform himself on his own; he would not need a master. Unless Raman tried to make the bridge, the bridge was not possible.

And he was aloof, distant, cool. He was not involved. He knew all misery is false. And, certainly, it is so -- but not for those who are in misery. The man who is awake knows that the person who is crying and weeping in his sleep is seeing a dream, true. As far as the man who is awake is concerned, it's perfectly true. But even though it is a dream, a nightmare, for the person who is fast asleep it is a truth. And the man who is fast asleep cannot make any effort to connect himself with the awakened man. Obviously, it is impossible. He cannot even be aware that somebody is awake; he is so much engrossed in his nightmare. Only the awakened can make the effort. But to disturb somebody's sleep, even though he is in a nightmare, is dangerous. Nobody wants to be disturbed, nobody wants to be interfered with.

People have strange ideas -- sleepy people, idiotic people, but they have strange ideas of freedom. They have no freedom; they can't have. They can't afford it in their sleep. How can a sleepy man have any freedom? But they have ideas, great ideas of freedom, and a man like Gurdjieff interferes. His compassion is far greater than the compassion of J. Krishnamurti, Raman, and Ramakrishna. Ramakrishna is beautiful -- singing the praise of God, praying, worshipping, dancing. He is something of the beyond. He reminds you that much more is possible in life than is happening to you -- but that's all. Through him just a little remembrance can reach you. But your life is such that that remembrance is not going to create any mutation; it will be forgotten. You will enjoy it. Again and again you would like to go to the man and see him dancing and singing and praying...and you will feel good.

This is what Buddha calls "counting the sheep of others." He is a beautiful flower, but by looking at a rose you cannot become the rose; neither can you become a Ramakrishna by looking at Ramakrishna. Great effort is needed. You have to climb the mountain against all hazards.

Unless a master tries to approach you in your deep sleep, unless he stirs your being, holds you hard and takes you out of your ignorance, it is impossible, it is almost impossible. But you will be angry at this man -- who wants to be disturbed? One has become accustomed to a certain way of life; mind always likes the old, the known, the familiar. Even though it is miserable, still the mind is afraid of the new, because with the new you have to learn again how to behave, how to be. And who wants to learn? You are so

efficient with the old, your ego is so satisfied with the old -- why bother?

And when you come across a man like Gurdjieff, he shatters all the nonsense that you have gathered. He shatters mercilessly! Sometimes he has to say things which are not really true, but just to shatter your ideas he has to say them.

A friend has asked, "How was it possible that a man like Gurdjieff, a man of such great understanding, did not understand the idea of kundalini energy?"

He called it kundabuffer. He was very much against the idea of kundalini. He used to say that the worst thing that could happen to a person in life is the arousal of kundalini. The questioner, naturally, is bewildered.

But you don't understand the real meaning of Gurdjieff. He called it kundabuffer because of the nonsense that theosophists have created in the world. They talked so much about kundalini, the serpent power, and it was all gibberish; they knew nothing about it. They were just fabricating, they were just inventing theories and ideas. It was all guesswork.

In fact, out of a hundred books that are written about kundalini, ninety-nine are absolute nonsense. And the people who had gathered around Gurdjieff had come through theosophical philosophy, hypotheses, doctrines. He was shattering their knowledge; he was not saying anything against kundalini. How could he say that? He knew far better than Blavatsky, Annie Besant, Alcott, Leadbeater -- he knew far better than these people. These people were only experts in creating doctrines, and really they were great experts. They had created almost a world movement -- about auras and colors and kundalini...new words from

the ancient spiritual lore. And they created worlds, imaginary worlds, around those words.

Gurdjieff is right to call it kundabuffer. And Gurdjieff is right in saying that the worst thing that can happen to a man is the arousal of kundalini. But remember always that he was talking to his disciples, in a particular context. He was shattering the knowledge of his disciples about kundalini power -- because the first step of a master is to destroy your knowledge, because your knowledge is basically false, borrowed.

Before you can be made familiar with the truth, the untrue has to be taken away. Sometimes the master has to be very merciless, and sometimes the master has to say things which are not really so. Kundalini is not a wrong idea, but for ninety-nine percent of people, Gurdjieff is right.

Now there are again people like Gopi Krishna, who are writing books on kundalini and the serpent power, and the great genius that comes through it. It has not even happened to Gopi Krishna! What kind of genius has he? At the most, the only proof that he has given of his genius is some absolutely worthless poetry, just like the poetry schoolchildren write. He has been a clerk his whole life. His poetry smells of his whole life's clerkship -- it stinks! It has no beauty, it has no grandeur -- it has nothing of the superb.

And now he is propounding around the world that when kundalini arises your latent power of genius becomes manifest. How many yogis have won the Nobel Prize? And how many yogis have contributed to the world's scientific knowledge, art, poetry, painting, sculpture? How many of

your people whose so-called kundalini has arisen have contributed in any way to the world's richness?

What Gopi Krishna is talking about is not kundalini but kundabuffer. Gurdjieff would have put him right with a single blow. But he attracts people. People are very much attracted by mystical nonsense, by occult stupidity, by esoteric gibberish. Just start talking with people about chakras, centers of energy, and kundalini passing through them, and they are all-attentive. You just try it! There is no need to know anything about it -- just invent...because Jaina mystics have not talked about kundalini, Buddhist mystics have not talked about kundalini, Christian mystics have never known anything about it, Sufis are absolutely unaware of this energy called kundalini. Only Hindu yoga talks about it.

There IS something in it, but not exactly the way it is told to people. The knowledge that is floating around about kundalini is all nonsense, and Gurdjieff was right to condemn it. He was condemning the whole theosophical movement. Theosophists were very much against Gurdjieff. They knew nothing, but they created a great movement. They were more or less political people, scholars, logic-choppers, but not in any way realized souls.

Gurdjieff shattered many beliefs. He shattered one of the most fundamental beliefs of the whole of humanity. He said, "There is no soul. You are not born with a soul -- the soul has to be created by great effort. And only very rare people have been able to create it. The millions of people walking on the earth are all soulless."

Now, can you create a greater shock? -- just telling people, "You are soulless. There is nothing inside you -- hollow,

nobody inside you. You are not yet born; you are just a body, a mechanism. Yes, you have a possibility, a potentiality to become a soul, but then you have to do much work for it, great work for it, and only then is it possible to have a soul. It is the ultimate luxury to have a soul."

Now, down the ages priests have been telling you that you are born with a soul. That has created a very wrong state of affairs. Because everybody has been told he is born with a soul, he thinks, "Then why bother? I am already a soul. I am immortal. The body will die but I am going to live."

Gurdjieff said, "You are nothing but the body, and when the body dies YOU will die. Only once in a while does a person survive -- one who has created soul in his life survives death -- not all. A Buddha survives, a Jesus survives, but not you! You will simply die, not even a trace will be left."

What was Gurdjieff trying to do? He was shocking you to the very roots; he was trying to take away all your consolations and foolish theories which go on helping you to postpone work upon yourself. Now, to tell people, "You don't have any souls, you are just vegetables, just a cabbage or maybe a cauliflower" -- a cauliflower is a cabbage with a college education -- "but nothing more than that." He was really a master par excellence. He was taking the very earth away from underneath your feet. He was giving you such a shock that you had to think over the whole situation: are you going to remain a cabbage? He was creating a situation around you in which you would have to seek and search for the soul, because who wants to die?

And the idea that the soul is immortal has helped people to console themselves that they are not going to die, that death

is just an appearance, just a long sleep, a restful sleep, and you will be born again. Gurdjieff says, "All nonsense. This is all nonsense! Dead, you are dead forever -- unless you have created the soul...."

Now see the difference: you have been told you are already a soul, and Gurdjieff changes it totally. He says, "You are not already a soul, but only an opportunity. You can use it, you can miss it."

And I would like to tell you that Gurdjieff was just using a device. It is not true. Everybody is born with a soul. But what to do with people who have been using truths as consolations? A great master sometimes has to lie -- and only a great master has the right to lie -- just to pull you out of your sleep.

For example, you are fast asleep and I shake you and shake you and you don't budge. And then I start shouting, "Fire! Fire!" and you start running out of the house. Outside we will settle the matter. I will say that there is no fire...but this was the only way to wake you up.

Once you have known the soul, Gurdjieff will whisper in your ear, "Now don't be worried. Forget all about what I was telling you. But it was needed. It was a device. I had to shout 'Fire!' otherwise you were not going to get out of your sleep."

But these people are bound to be misunderstood. To understand a man like Gurdjieff is an almost impossible job. You can understand him only if you go with him, if you go along with him. And the work that Gurdjieff did was a very secret work -- it can't be otherwise. Real work can be done only in a mystery school. It is hidden, it is underground. It is not public and it cannot be public.

In the Middle Ages the mystics disappeared behind the garb of alchemy; they had to disappear because of the Christians. The Christians were destroying all kinds of sources which were in any way in conflict with Christian ideology. They were not allowing anybody to practice anything else; even to talk about anything else was not permitted: "Christianity and only Christianity is the way." The mystics had to disappear. They created a beautiful deception, they created the idea of alchemy. They started saying, "We are alchemists; we have nothing to do with spirituality. All that is rot. We are seeking and searching for the secret of immortal life, of eternal youth. We are trying to find ways and means to transform base metals into gold." And just to deceive the public they made chemistry labs. If you had entered into an alchemist's world, you would have encountered jars and medicines and herbs and test-tubes...and you would have seen a kind of lab where much chemical work was going on. But this was only a facade; this was not the real work -- the real work was happening somewhere else deep down in the school.

The real work was to create integral, crystallized human beings, to create wakefulness. The real work was meditation. But Christianity does not allow meditation. It says prayer is enough. It does not allow inward search. It says worshipping God is enough, going every Sunday to the church is enough, reading the Bible is enough. It has given you toys -- and that's how it has happened in other countries too.

In India too the mystics have lived in disguise.

Just the other day I was reading a Sufi story -- and Gurdjieff is basically rooted in the Sufi tradition. He is a Sufi. He learned his secrets from the Sufis.

I was reading a Sufi story:
A disciple came to the master and said, "I am in trouble. The trouble is that the richest man of the town is going on a pilgrimage. He has a beautiful daughter, and I have a great reputation because of all the discipline that I have gone through and the character that I have cultivated. I have such a reputation in the town that he wants me to take care of his beautiful daughter while he is on his pilgrimage. And I am afraid -- I know my temptations. And the girl is really beautiful; in fact I have always been infatuated with her. I have been avoiding...! This is too much: for six months or nine months she will be living with me. I cannot trust myself. What should I do?"
The master said, "I know a man who knows the secret. You go to him."
And he told him to go to another village where a madman lived. He said, "But what can that madman do? I know about that madman, I have heard much about that madman. He is utterly mad! How can he help me?"
The master said, "You just go, but go very watchfully. Watch everything that is happening there."
He went to the madman. A very beautiful young boy was pouring wine and the madman was drinking.
Now, Mohammedan countries have been, down the ages, homosexual, very much -- so much so that it is only the Mohammedan paradise which is gay. It is far more advanced than any other paradise. In the Hindu paradise

there is no place for a gay person. In the Christian paradise, no, not at all. Even the Jewish God is very much against homosexuality, very angry. But the Mohammedan God is very lenient. Not only are beautiful women provided for the virtuous, but beautiful boys too.

This beautiful young boy pouring wine and the madman drinking -- this man felt great hatred, condemnation. But because the master had said, "Watch and go and ask him for advice..." he forgot all about his problem. First he asked, "Please tell me what is happening. What are you doing?"

The madman laughed and he said, "This boy is my son. And come close -- my glass contains only water. What he is pouring is not wine."

The man asked, "Then why are you pretending that you are drinking wine? Nobody sips water the way you are sipping. The flask from which he is pouring water is not used for keeping water -- then why?"

The madman laughed and said, "So that nobody entrusts his beautiful daughter to me when he goes on a pilgrimage. This is a device!"

He must have read the thought, he must have been telepathic. He must have seen this man through and through. "...So that nobody entrusts his beautiful daughter to me, so nobody bothers. So that I am left alone. But please don't tell my secret to anybody; otherwise I will have to move from this town to another town. My madness is a rumor created by me. My characterlessness is a rumor created by me. And if YOU really want to work on yourself," said the madman, "you should do likewise. Go

back. Start behaving foolishly, stupidly, madly, immorally -- at least pretend! -- and nobody will bother you."

Gurdjieff lived a life which was very mysterious; it was not public. His school was a hidden school. What was happening there, people were simply guessing.

And that's what is going to happen in the new phase of my work. My commune will become hidden, underground. It will have a facade on the outside: the weavers and the carpenters and the potters...that will be the facade. People who will come as visitors, we will have a beautiful showroom for them; they can purchase things. They can see the creativity of the sannyasins: paintings, books, woodwork.... They can be shown around -- a beautiful lake, swimming pools, a five-star hotel for them -- but they will not know what is really happening. That which will be happening will be almost all underground. It has to be underground, otherwise it cannot happen.

I have a few secrets to impart to you, and I would not like to die before I have imparted them to you -- because I don't know anybody else now alive in the world who can do that work. I have secrets from Taoism, secrets from tantra, secrets from yoga, secrets from Sufis, secrets from Zen people. I have lived in almost all the traditions of the world; I have been a wanderer in many lives. I have gathered much honey from many flowers.

And the time, sooner or later, will come when I will have to depart -- and I will not be able to enter again in the body. This is going to be my last life. All the honey that I have gathered I would like to share with you, so that you can

share it with others, so that it does not disappear from the earth.

This is going to be a very secret work; hence, Ajit Saraswati, I cannot speak about it. I think I have already spoken too much! I should not have said even this. The work will be only for those who are utterly devoted.

Right now, we have a big press office to make as many people as possible aware of the phenomenon that is happening here. But in the new commune the real work will simply disappear from the world's eyes. The press office will function -- it will function for other purposes. People will go on coming, because from the visitors we have to choose; we have to invite people who can be participants, who can dissolve in the commune. But the real work is going to be absolutely secret. It is going to be only between me and you.

And there will not be much talk between me and you either. More and more I will become silent, because the real communion is through energy, not through words. As you will be getting ready to receive the energy in silence, I will become more and more silent. But I am keeping a great treasure for you. Be receptive....

And as my work goes underground and becomes more secret and more mysterious, more and more rumors and gossip are bound to spread all over the world. People become very suspicious of anything secret, and because they cannot find any clue, they start inventing their own ideas about what is happening there. So be ready for that too.

But don't be worried about it. It is going to be a mystery school. Such schools existed when Zarathustra was alive;

he created such a school. Many such schools existed in Egypt, India, Tibet. When Pythagoras came and visited this country he noted the fact of the mystery schools. He was initiated into many mystery schools in Egypt and in India. Jesus was trained by the Essenes, a very secret mystery school.
All that is beautiful and all that is great in human history has happened only through a few people who put their energies together for the inner exploration. My commune is going to be a mystery school for inner exploration. It is the greatest adventure there is, and the greatest dance too.

The second question:
Question 2
BELOVED MASTER,
WHAT IS THE KEY TO THIS PUZZLE?
THE BUDDHA SAYS, SPEAK LESS: AND SILENCE FEELS BEAUTIFUL,
FOR WHAT HAVE I TO SAY?
TALES OF THE PAST, DREAMS OF THE FUTURE,
GIDDY GOSSIP OR REASONED ARGUMENT,
ALL TASTE PHONY TO THE TONGUE.
SILENCE IS BEAUTIFUL,
AND YET....
THE SOUND OF MERRY CHATTER OVER TEACUPS
ECHOES THE CAREFREE CHIRPING OF THE BIRDS --
ENERGY FLOWING IN A JOYOUS COSMOS.
BELOVED MASTER, TELL ME,
WHAT IS THE KEY TO THIS PUZZLE?

Nirgun, don't take Gautama the Buddha too seriously. Silence IS beautiful, certainly it is beautiful. But who has told you that gossiping is not beautiful? In fact, the more you enjoy gossiping, the deeper will be your silence.

These are polar opposites and they balance each other. If you work hard in the day, you will sleep a deep sleep in the night. Polar opposites: hard work brings a deep sleep. Illogical! The logical thing would have been that you rested the whole day, practiced rest the whole day, and then you sleep a deep, deep sleep in the night. That would have been logical -- but God is illogical.

That seems to be perfectly right: the whole day you practiced rest -- naturally you should have more rest in the night than anybody else who has not practiced it! And the man who has been doing just the opposite -- hard work, tilling the ground, digging in the earth, working in the garden, chopping wood, carrying water from the well -- the whole day he was perspiring, working hard, a tiring work, by the evening he is utterly tired. Logically he should not be able to sleep at all because he practiced the opposite. But this is not how life functions.

Life functions through the polar opposites. Life is not logical, life is dialectical. It is a dialectics: thesis, antithesis, and they both balance and become synthesis. Then synthesis functions again as a thesis and creates its antithesis...and so on and so forth. Life is not Aristotelian but Hegelian.

It is perfectly good to gossip. And when you gossip, gossip totally -- let it be a meditation! Knowing perfectly well that it is gossip, still it can be enjoyed. In fact, it can be enjoyed more because it is just gossip! And then fall silent.

The chirping of the birds is beautiful, but have you watched that when suddenly it stops there is a great silence? The silence is deepened by the songs of the birds. The silence that follows the storm is the deepest, the most profound.
Nirgun, don't take Buddha too seriously. He can be taken too seriously -- he is a one-dimensional man. What I am saying...if you had asked the same question of Buddha, he would not have said the same thing. He would have said, "Nirgun, you are coming to the right point. Stop gossiping and stop talking. Say only the minimum, the absolutely necessary." He would have suggested being very telegraphic. If it can be done in ten words, then don't do it in eleven words. If you can cut words more and more, so much the better.
But my own experience is that if you cut all your gossiping, all your talking, your silence will be superficial, your silence will be just a kind of sadness. It will not have depth. From where will it get depth? It can get depth only from its polar opposite.
If you really want to rest, first dance -- dance to abandon. Let every fiber of your body and being dance, and then follows a relaxation, a rest, which is total. You need not do it, it happens on its own.
I am not saying that gossiping should be done to harm somebody. Then it is no longer gossip, it is violence; then it is no longer gossip, it is something else camouflaged as gossip. Gossip should be a pure art, with no motivation -- joking for joking's sake, gossiping for gossiping's sake. And then it will keep you cheerful. And when it stops...and how long can you gossip? There is a natural limit to everything. "The sound of merry chatter over teacups"

cannot continue forever. Soon the teacups will be empty and the chatter will disappear...and then there is a profound silence.

It is good that the birds have not heard Buddha, that the trees have not heard Buddha.

Nirgun, I would not like you to become a Buddhist. I know Buddhist monks: they become very serious, too serious, so that their seriousness is a kind of disease. They cannot laugh, they cannot joke. In fact, if they read my discourses on Buddha and they come across juicy jokes, they will just close their eyes. They will not even be capable of reading them. Their whole being will withdraw, they will shrink away. They will not be able to forgive me.

Don't be too serious at all. My message is that of rejoicing. That's where I am different from Buddha. Buddha is a serious person; not a single statue exists in which he is shown laughing, or even smiling. Yes, there are Chinese and Japanese statues of Buddha in which he is shown smiling and laughing sometimes -- sometimes even a belly laughter, his belly shaking. But those are Chinese and Japanese buddhas.

In fact, if you see a Chinese statue of Buddha and an Indian statue of Buddha you will not be able to conceive of any relationship between the two; they are so totally different. The Indian Buddha is very serious. His body is athletic: he has a big chest and a very very shrunken belly -- no belly at all. And if you see the Chinese Buddha it is just the opposite. You will not find the big chest at all, it is completely lost because the belly is so big. And you can see even in marble statues that the belly is shaking with laughter. His face is totally different, it is round and gives

you the sense of a child. The Indian Buddha's face is very Roman -- it was made after Alexander had visited India -- it is Greek and Roman. The features are not Indian. Look again at an Indian statue of Buddha, the features are not Indian. Alexander and his beauty impressed people so much that they imposed Alexander's face on Buddha's body.

And he is very serious, utterly serious. You cannot conceive of him ever laughing. But when Buddhism reached China it met a very profound philosophy -- the polar opposite. The dialectics happened there. Buddhism became the thesis and Taoism became the antithesis: the meeting of Buddha and Lao Tzu. The Chinese statue of Buddha is a cross, it is half Gautam Buddha and half Lao Tzu -- they are mingled into each other. That belly belongs to Lao Tzu, that laughter belongs to Lao Tzu, and the silence belongs to Buddha. It has been the greatest meeting that has ever happened in the world. Out of it is born the most profound, the most significant phenomenon in all history: Zen.

Zen is neither Buddhist nor Taoist, or it is both together. It is a strange meeting. In fact, Lao Tzu and Buddha, if they had met physically, would not have agreed on ANY point. Lao Tzu was a man of laughter. He used to move from one village to another sitting on his buffalo -- must have looked like a clown. And he was almost always laughing, rolling on the ground -- at the whole ridiculousness of existence, at the absurdity of life.

Buddha and Lao Tzu are polar opposites. Maybe that's why both these philosophies became attracted to each other. Both were incomplete -- the meeting made them more

complete. Neither will Lao Tzu agree with Zen nor will Buddha agree with Zen.

I have heard a story:
In heaven, in a cafe, Buddha, Confucius and Lao Tzu, all the three are sitting, chitchatting. And the woman, the owner of the cafe, a beautiful woman, comes. She brings the juice of life. Buddha immediately closes his eyes. He says, "I cannot look at it! It is not worth looking at -- life is misery. Birth is misery, life is misery, death is misery. Remove it from my sight; otherwise I cannot open my eyes!"
Confucius opens his eyes half-way -- he believes in the golden mean, the middle way, just the half -- looks with half open eyes and says, "I cannot deny it without tasting it." He is a man of more scientific leanings. "How can you say anything unless you experiment? You should not declare such things offhand. So," he says, "just give me a sip." He tastes it and he says, "Buddha is right: it is bitter, it is miserable, and I completely agree and I am a witness to Buddha. But I will again say that Buddha is wrong -- without tasting it, nothing should be said. Although he is right -- I can approve him, on MY witnessing he is right -- but on his own he is not right."
Lao Tzu takes the whole flask and before the owner woman can say anything, he takes it down in a gulp. He drinks the whole flask and he becomes so drunk that he starts dancing. He does not say a word -- bitter or sweet, misery or bliss. When he comes a little bit to his senses, Buddha and Confucius ask him, "What do you say?"

He says, "There is nothing to say. Life should be drunk to its totality, then only does one know. And when one knows, there is nothing to say. It cannot be put in any category. Misery or bliss are categories -- life is beyond all categories. But one should know it in its wholeness, and only I know it in its wholeness. You have not even tasted it. Confucius has only tasted it, but one should not decide by the part about the whole. Only I can say what it is, but I am not going to say because it is not sayable. If you really want to know, I can order another flask. Drink it to the full and dance -- that is the only way!"

That is the only way to know anything.

The meeting of Buddhism and Taoism is the strangest phenomenon in the world. But it was bound to happen; there is a certain inevitability in it because such polar opposites attract each other, just as negative and positive poles of magnetism or negative and positive electricity attract each other.

Buddhism traveled from India to China. Taoism never traveled to India, because Taoism was so utterly drunk with ecstasy, with joy -- who cares? Buddhism traveled, had to travel. The seriousness became very very heavy. Once Buddha was gone, once the light was gone, then it was just like a rock on the chest of the followers -- it became too heavy. They had to move to find something nonserious to balance it.

Nirgun, don't be serious about it. Enjoy your gossiping, enjoy the small things of life, the small joys of life. They all contribute to the enrichment of your being. And always

remember: nonseriousness is one of the most fundamental qualities of a really religious person.

A sincere young man went to an understanding old rabbi for advice. "The problem is my sexual appetite. When I shake hands with a woman it is aroused -- even when I pass a pretty woman on the street it is aroused. It disturbs me because I love my wife very much."
"Don't worry, son," said the rabbi. "It doesn't matter where you work up an appetite as long as you dine at home."

This rabbi is a wise man, nonserious, taking life playfully. My sannyasins have to take life very playfully -- then you can have both the worlds together. You can have the cake and eat it too. And that is a real art. This world and that, sound and silence, love and meditation, being with people, relating, and being alone. All these things have to be lived together in a kind of simultaneity; only then will you know the uttermost depth of your being and the uttermost height of your being.

The third question:
Question 3
BELOVED MASTER,
WHAT DO YOU SAY ABOUT THE FAMOUS STATEMENT OF FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE THAT GOD IS DEAD?

Neeraj, Friedrich Nietzsche says God is dead -- that means he was alive before. As far as I know, he has never been alive. How can God be dead if he has never been alive?

God is not a person, so he cannot be alive and he cannot be dead. To me, God is life itself! God is synonymous with existence; hence you cannot say God is alive or God is dead. God is life! And life is forever...it is a continuum, it is eternal, no beginning, no end.

Nietzsche was really saying that the God that people had worshipped up to then had become irrelevant. But he was very much accustomed to making dramatic statements. Rather than saying: "The God that people have worshipped up to now is no longer relevant," he said: "God is dead." And in a way, dramatic statements penetrate people's consciousness more. If he had said it in a philosophical way it may have missed the target, but it became the most important statement made in these hundred years. No other statement has had such significance, or has had such an impact on human thinking, behavior, life.

The Christian God is dead, the Jewish God is dead -- that's what Nietzsche was saying. But there have been so many gods and all have gone down the drain. If you make a list you will be surprised how many gods have been worshipped. One man has made a list. I was reading the list -- not even a single name that he mentions is known. Nearabout fifty gods he mentions. The Egyptian gods are no longer there -- not even in Egypt does anybody know about them. There was a time when for those gods even human beings were sacrificed, wars were fought, crusades, murders, rapes; villages were burned in the name of those gods. Now even the names are not known. I read the whole list; out of the fifty not a single name is known. There have been many gods invented by people, and when those people

become tired of those gods, they invent new toys and they throw the old ones.
These gods go on being born and dying, but these are not the true God. 'True God' simply means life -- AES DHAMMO SANANTANO -- the inexhaustible law of existence. How can it die? There is no way. Forms change....

It seems God visited the New York subways recently. Someone had scrawled on the wall: "God is dead -- signed Nietzsche," and underneath it was written: "Nietzsche is dead -- signed God."

That seems to be far truer. But an even better message for you:

A London subway has this cheerful message: "God is dead, but don't worry -- Mary is pregnant again!"

The last question:
Question 4
BELOVED MASTER,
CAN YOU SAY SOMETHING ABOUT GUILT AND FEAR?

Latifa, fear is natural, guilt is a creation of the priests. Guilt is man-made. Fear is in-built, and it is very essential. Without fear you will not be able to survive at all. Fear is normal. It is because of fear that you will not put your hand in the fire. It is because of fear that you will walk to the right or to the left, whatsoever is the law of the country. It

is because of fear that you will avoid poison. It is because of fear that when the truck driver sounds his horn, you run out of the way.

If the child has no fear there is no possibility that he will ever survive. His fear is a life-protective measure. But because of this natural tendency to protect oneself...and nothing is wrong in it -- you have the right to protect yourself. You have such a precious life to protect, and fear simply helps you. Fear is intelligence. Only idiots don't have fear, imbeciles don't have fear; hence you have to protect the idiots, otherwise they will burn themselves or they will jump out of a building, or they will go into the sea without knowing how to swim or they can eat a snake...or anything they can do!

Fear is intelligence -- so when you see a snake crossing the path, you jump out of the way. It is not cowardly, it is simply intelligent. But there are two possibilities....

Fear can become abnormal, it can become pathological. Then you are afraid of things of which there is no need to be afraid -- although you can find arguments even for your abnormal fear. For example, somebody is afraid of going inside a house. Logically you cannot prove that he is wrong. He says, "What is the guarantee that the house will not fall?" Now, houses are known to fall so this house can also fall. People have been crushed by houses falling. Nobody can give an absolute guarantee that this house is not going to fall -- an earthquake can happen...anything is possible! Another man is afraid -- he cannot travel because there are train accidents. Somebody else is afraid -- he cannot go into a car, there are car accidents. And somebody else is afraid of an airplane....

If you become afraid in this way, this is not intelligent. Then you should be afraid of your bed too, because almost ninety-seven percent of people die in their beds -- so that is the MOST dangerous place to be in. Logically you should remain as far away from the bed as possible, never go close to it. But then you will make your life impossible.
Fear can become abnormal, then it is pathology. And because of this possibility, priests have used it, politicians have used it. All kinds of oppressors have used it. They make it pathological, and then it becomes very simple to exploit you. The priest makes you afraid of hell. Just look in the scriptures -- with what joy they depict all the tortures, with really great relish. Scriptures describe in detail, in great detail, each and every torture.
Adolf Hitler must have been reading these scriptures; he must have found great ideas from these scriptures describing hell. He himself was not such a creative genius as to invent the concentration camps and all kinds of tortures. He must have found them in religious scriptures -- they are already there, priests have already done the work. He only practiced what priests have been preaching. He was really a religious man!
Priests have only been talking about a hell that is waiting for you after death. He said, "Why wait so long? I will create a hell here and now. You can have a taste of it."

I have heard that once a man died, reached hell, knocked on the door. The Devil looked at him -- he looked German -- he asked him, "From where are you coming?"
The man said, "From Germany."

He said, "Then there is no need to come here -- you have already lived it! Now you can go to heaven. And you will find our place very boring because you had a far more improved edition of hell. We are still living in the bullock-cart age -- old tortures. You know far more sophisticated instruments, ways, means."

Gas chambers are still not known in hell. In a single gas chamber, ten thousand people, within seconds, can become smoke. And you will be surprised to know that although we are living in the twentieth century, man is still an animal. Thousands of people used to go to see. Glass was fitted, fixed in, one-way. You could see what was happening inside, but the insiders could not see who was looking in from the outside.

Thousands of people would stand outside watching through the glass: people disappearing in smoke -- simply disappearing in smoke -- thousands of people dying within seconds. And the people who were enjoying outside, can you call them human beings? But remember, it has nothing to do with Germany, this is so all over the world. Man is exactly the same everywhere.

The priests became aware very early that the fear instinct in man can be exploited. He can be made so much afraid that he will fall at the feet of the priests and will tell them, "Save us! Only you can save us." And the priest will concede to save them if they follow the priest; if they follow the rituals prescribed by the priest, the priest will save them. And out of fear people have been following the priests, and all kinds of stupidities, superstitions.

The politician also became aware soon that people can be made very much afraid. And if you make them afraid, you can dominate them. It is out of fear that nations exist. The fear of America keeps Russians slaves to the communists, and the fear of Russia keeps Americans slaves to the government. Fear of each other...the Indians are afraid of the Pakistanis, and the Pakistanis are afraid of the Indians. It is such a stupid world! We are afraid of each other, and because of our fear the politician becomes important. He says, "We will save you here, in this world," and the priest says, "We will save you in the other world." And they conspire together.

It is fear that creates guilt -- but not fear itself. Fear creates guilt via the priests and politicians. The priests and the politicians create in you a pathology, a trembling. And, naturally, man is so delicate and so fragile, he becomes afraid. And then you can tell him to do anything and he will do it -- knowing perfectly well that it is stupid, knowing perfectly well deep down that it is all nonsense, but who knows...? Out of fear, man can be forced to do anything.

A young woman who can't prevent herself from coughing and sneezing at the theater asks a doctor for a remedy before going to a first night. "Here, drink this," he says, offering her a glass. She drinks it, mouth awry, and asks what it was, imagining some type of bad-tasting cough medicine.

"That's a double dose of Pluto water," he answers. "Now you won't dare sneeze or cough."

...You don't get it. You have never tasted Pluto water -- try, and neither you will dare to sneeze or cough. Do an experiment: you can ask Ajit Saraswati for Pluto water, only then will you understand the joke. It is very existential. Because you didn't get it I will have to tell another:

One morning, a big she-bear raided Joe's cabin, scattered everything, ate everything, tore up everything, and ambled away.
Joe trailed her, shot her, and then noticing how much she resembled a woman, he satisfied his passion with her carcass. Just then he noticed another hunter cowering in the branches of a nearby tree. Realizing his deed had been observed, Joe pointed his gun at the man, made him climb down and said, "Have you ever made love to a bear?"
And the hunter said, "No, but I am getting ready to try."

Man can be forced to do anything -- just to save himself. And because the pathology that the priests have created in you is unnatural, your nature rebels against it, and once in a while you do something which goes against it -- you do something natural -- then guilt arises.
Latifa, guilt means you have an unnatural idea in your mind about how life should be, what should be done, and then one day you find yourself following nature and you do the natural thing. You go against the ideology. Because you go against the ideology, guilt arises, you are ashamed. You feel yourself very inferior, unworthy.
But by giving people unnatural ideas you cannot transform them. Hence, priests have been able to exploit people, but

they have not been able to transform them. They are not interested in transforming you either; their whole idea is to keep you always enslaved. They create a conscience in you. Your conscience is not really YOUR conscience -- it is created by the priests. They say, "This is wrong." You may know from the deepest core of your being that there seems to be nothing wrong in it, but they say it is wrong. And they go on hypnotizing you from your very childhood. The hypnosis goes deep, seeps deep in you, sinks deep in you, becomes almost part of your being. It holds you back.

They have told you sex is wrong -- but sex is such a natural phenomenon that you are attracted towards it. And nothing is wrong in being attracted towards a woman or a man. It is just part of nature. But your conscience says, "This is wrong." So you hold yourself back. Half of you goes towards the woman, half of you is pulling you back. You can't make any decision; you are always divided, split. If you decide to go with the woman, your conscience will torture you: "You have committed a sin." If you don't go with the woman, your nature will torture you: "You are starving me."

Now you are in a double bind. Whatsoever you do you will suffer. And that's what the priest has always wanted -- for you to suffer, because the more you suffer, the more you go to him for his advice. The more you suffer, the more you seek salvation.

Bertrand Russell is absolutely right that if a man is given total, natural freedom -- freedom from this so-called conscience and morality -- and if man is helped to become an integrated, natural being -- intelligent, understanding, living his life according to his own light, not according to

somebody else's advice -- the so-called religions will disappear from the world.

I perfectly agree with him. The so-called religions will certainly disappear from the world if people are not in suffering; they won't seek salvation. But Bertrand Russell goes on and he says religion itself will disappear from the earth. There I don't agree with him. The so-called religions WILL disappear, and because the so-called religions will disappear there will be, for the first time in the world, an opportunity for religion to exist. Christians will not be there, Hindus will not be there, Mohammedans will not be there -- only then will a new kind of religiousness spread over the earth. People will be living according to their own consciousness. There will be no guilt, no repentance, because these things never change people. People remain the same; they just go on changing their outer garb, their form. Substantially, nothing changes through guilt, through fear, through heaven, through hell. All these ideas have utterly failed.

Now it is time to recognize that all the old religions have failed. Yes, they have created a few beautiful people -- a Buddha here and a Jesus there -- but out of millions and millions of human beings, once in a while somebody has bloomed. It is an exception, it cannot be counted. It should not be taken into account. Buddhas can be counted on the fingers.

If a gardener plants ten thousand trees and only one tree blooms in the spring, will you call him a gardener? What about the other nine thousand nine hundred and ninety-nine trees? If this tree has bloomed, it must have bloomed in

spite of the gardener. The credit cannot go to him -- he must have somehow missed it.
We have lived in a very wrong kind of world; we have created a wrong kind of situation. People only go on changing superficially -- the Hindu becomes a Christian, the Christian becomes a Hindu, and nothing ever changes. All remains the same.

The reformed prostitute is giving testimony with the Salvation Army on a street-corner on a Saturday night, punctuating her discourse by beating on a big brass drum. "I used to be a sinner!" she shouts (boom!) "Used to be a bad woman (boom!) I used to drink! (boom!) Gamble! (boom!) Whore! (boom! boom!) Used to go out Saturday nights and raise hell! (boom! boom! boom!) Now what do I do Saturday nights? I stand on this street corner, beating on this mother-fucking drum!"

Enough for today.

The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 2
Chapter #3
Chapter title: And travel on
3 July 1979 am in Buddha Hall

WHO SHALL CONQUER THIS WORLD
AND THE WORLD OF DEATH WITH ALL ITS GODS?
WHO SHALL DISCOVER
THE SHINING WAY OF THE LAW?

YOU SHALL, EVEN AS THE MAN
WHO SEEKS FLOWERS
FINDS THE MOST BEAUTIFUL,
THE RAREST.

UNDERSTAND THAT THE BODY
IS MERELY THE FOAM OF A WAVE,
THE SHADOW OF A SHADOW.
SNAP THE FLOWER ARROWS OF DESIRE
AND THEN, UNSEEN,
ESCAPE THE KING OF DEATH.

AND TRAVEL ON.

DEATH OVERTAKES THE MAN
WHO GATHERS FLOWERS
WHEN WITH DISTRACTED MIND AND THIRSTY SENSES
HE SEARCHES VAINLY FOR HAPPINESS
IN THE PLEASURES OF THE WORLD.
DEATH FETCHES HIM AWAY
AS A FLOOD CARRIES OFF A SLEEPING VILLAGE.
DEATH OVERCOMES HIM
WHEN WITH DISTRACTED MIND AND THIRSTY SENSES
HE GATHERS FLOWERS.
HE WILL NEVER HAVE HIS FILL
OF THE PLEASURES OF THE WORLD.

THE BEE GATHERS NECTAR FROM THE FLOWER
WITHOUT MARRING ITS BEAUTY OR PERFUME.

SO LET THE MASTER SETTLE, AND WANDER.

LOOK TO YOUR OWN FAULTS,
WHAT YOU HAVE DONE OR LEFT UNDONE.
OVERLOOK THE FAULTS OF OTHERS.

LIKE A LOVELY FLOWER,
BRIGHT BUT SCENTLESS,
ARE THE FINE BUT EMPTY WORDS
OF THE MAN WHO DOES NOT MEAN WHAT HE SAYS.

LIKE A LOVELY FLOWER,
BRIGHT AND FRAGRANT,
ARE THE FINE AND TRUTHFUL WORDS
OF THE MAN WHO MEANS WHAT HE SAYS.

LIKE GARLANDS WOVEN FROM A HEAP OF FLOWERS,
FASHION FROM YOUR LIFE AS MANY GOOD DEEDS.

God is not really the center of religious inquiry -- death is. Without death there would have been no religion at all. It is death that makes man seek and search for the beyond, the deathless.
Death surrounds us like an ocean surrounding a small island. The island can be flooded any moment. The next moment may never come, tomorrow may never arrive. Animals are not religious for the simple reason that they are not aware of death. They cannot conceive of themselves

dying, although they see other animals dying. It is a quantum leap from seeing somebody else dying to concluding that "I am also going to die." Animals are not so alert, aware, to come to such a conclusion.

And the majority of human beings are also subhuman. A man is really a mature man when he has come to this conclusion: "If death is happening to everybody else, then I cannot be an exception." Once this conclusion sinks deep into your heart, your life can never be the same again. You cannot remain attached to life in the old way. If it is going to be taken away, what is the point of being so possessive? If it is going to disappear one day, why cling and suffer? If it is not going to remain forever, then why be in such misery, anguish, worry? If it is going to go, it is going to go -- it does not matter when it goes. The time is not that important -- today, tomorrow, the day after tomorrow. But life is going to slip out of your hands.

The day you become aware that you are going to die, that your death is an absolute certainty...in fact the only certainty in life is death. Nothing else is so absolutely certain. But somehow we go on avoiding this question, this question of death. We go on keeping ourselves occupied in other matters. Sometimes we talk about great things -- God, heaven and hell -- just to avoid the REAL question. The real question is not God, cannot be, because what acquaintance have you got with God? What do you know about God? How can you inquire about something which is absolutely unknown to you? It will be an empty inquiry. It will be at the most curiosity, it will be juvenile, childish, stupid.

Stupid people ask about God, the intelligent person asks about death. The people who go on asking about God never find God, and the person who asks about death is bound to find God -- because it is death that transforms you, your vision. Your consciousness is sharpened because you have raised a real question, an authentic question, the most important question of life. You have created such a great challenge that you can't remain asleep for long; you will have to be awake, you will have to be alert enough to encounter the reality of death.

That's how Buddha's inquiry began:
The day Buddha was born...he was the son of a great king, and the only son, and he was born when the king was getting old, very old; hence there was great rejoicing in the kingdom. The people had waited long. The king was very much loved by the people; he had served them, he had been kind and compassionate, he had been very loving and very sharing. He had made his kingdom one of the richest, loveliest kingdoms of those days.
People were praying that their king should have a son because there was nobody to inherit. And then Buddha was born in the king's very old age -- unexpected was his birth. Great celebration, great rejoicing! All the astrologers of the kingdom gathered to predict about Buddha. His name was Siddhartha -- he was given this name, Siddhartha, because it means fulfillment. The king was fulfilled, his desire was fulfilled, his deepest longing was fulfilled -- he wanted a son, he had wanted a son his whole life; hence the name Siddhartha. It simply means fulfillment of the deepest desire.

This son made the king's life meaningful, significant. The astrologers, great astrologers, predicted -- they were all agreeing except one young astrologer. His name was Kodanna. The king asked, "What is going to happen in the life of my son?" And all the astrologers raised two fingers, except Kodanna who raised only one finger.

The king asked, "Please don't talk in symbols -- I am a simple man, I don't know anything about astrology. Tell me, what do you mean by two fingers?"

And they all said, "Either he is going to become a CHAKRAVARTIN -- a world ruler -- or he will renounce the world and will become a buddha, an enlightened person. These two alternatives are there, hence we raise two fingers."

The king was worried about the second alternative, that he will renounce the world. "So again the problem: who will inherit my kingdom if he renounces the world?" And then he asked Kodanna, "Why do you raise only one finger?"

Kodanna said, "I am absolutely certain that he will renounce the world -- he will become a buddha, an enlightened one, an awakened one."

The king was not happy with Kodanna. Truth is very difficult to accept. He ignored Kodanna; Kodanna was not rewarded at all -- truth is not rewarded in this world. On the contrary, truth is punished in a thousand and one ways. In fact, Kodanna's prestige fell after that day. Because he was not rewarded by the king, the rumor spread that he was a fool. When all the astrologers were agreeing, he was the only one who was not agreeing.

The king asked the other astrologers, "What do you suggest? What should I do so that he does not renounce the

world? I would not want him to be a beggar, I would not like to see him a sannyasin. I would like him to become a chakravartin -- a ruler of all the six continents." The ambition of all the parents. Who would like his son or daughter to renounce the world and to move into the mountains, to go into one's own interiority, to seek and search for the self?

Our desires are extrovert. The king was an ordinary man, just like everybody else -- with the same desires and the same ambitions. The astrologers said, "It can be arranged: give him as much pleasure as possible, keep him in as much comfort and luxury as is humanly possible. Don't allow him to know about illness, old age, and particularly death. Don't let him come to know about death and he will never renounce."

They were right in a way, because death is the central question. Once it arises in your heart, your life-style is bound to change. You cannot go on living in the old foolish way. If this life is going to end in death, then this life cannot be real life, then this life must be an illusion. Truth has to be eternal if it is true -- only lies are momentary. If life is momentary, then it must be an illusion, a lie, a misconception, a misunderstanding; then life must be rooted somewhere in ignorance. We must be living it in such a way that it comes to an end.

We can live in a different way so that we can become part of the eternal flow of existence. Only death can give you that radical shift.

So the astrologers said, "Please don't let him know anything about death." And the king made all the arrangements. He made three palaces for Siddhartha for different seasons in

different places, so that he never came to know the discomfort of the season. When it was hot he had a palace in a certain place in the hills where it was always cool. When it was too cold he had another palace by the side of a river where it was always warm. He made all the arrangements so he never felt any discomfort.

No old man or woman was allowed to enter the palaces where he lived -- only young people. He gathered all the beautiful young women of the kingdom around him so he would remain allured, fascinated, so he would remain in dreams, desires. A sweet dreamworld was created for him. The gardeners were told that dead leaves had to be removed in the night; fading, withering flowers had to be removed in the night -- because who knows? -- seeing a dead leaf he might start asking about what has happened to this leaf, and the question of death may arise. Seeing a withering rose, petals falling, he might ask, "What has happened to this rose?" and he might start brooding, meditating, about death. He was kept absolutely unaware of death for twenty-nine years. But how long can you avoid? Death is such an important phenomenon -- how long can you deceive? Sooner or later he had to enter into the world. Now the king was getting very old and the son had to know the ways of the world, so slowly slowly he was allowed, but whenever he would pass through any street of the capital, old men, old women, would be removed, beggars would be removed. No sannyasin was allowed to cross while he was passing, because seeing a sannyasin he might ask "What type of man is this? Why is he in orange? What has happened to him? Why does he look different, detached, distant? His eyes are different, his flavor is different, his presence has a

different quality to it. What has happened to this man?" And then the question of renunciation, and fundamentally the question of death.... But one day, it had to happen. It can't be avoided.

We are also doing the same. If somebody dies and the death procession is passing by, the mother pulls the child inside the house and closes the door.

The story is very significant, symbolic, typical. No parents want the children to know about death, because they will immediately start asking uncomfortable questions. That's why we build the cemeteries outside the town, so that nobody need go there. Death is a central fact; the cemetery should be exactly in the middle of the city so everybody has to pass it many times in the day -- going to the office, coming to the home, going to the school, college, coming to the home, going to the factory...so that one is reminded again and again about death. But we make the cemetery outside the town, and we make the cemetery very beautiful: flowers, trees. We try to hide death -- particularly in the West, death is a taboo! Just as once sex was a taboo, now death is the taboo. Death is the last taboo.

Someone like Sigmund Freud is needed -- a Sigmund Freud who can bring death back into the world, who can expose people to the phenomenon of death. When a person dies in the West, his body is decorated, bathed, perfumed, painted. Now there are experts who do this whole job. And if you see a dead man or a dead woman, you will be surprised -- he looks far more alive than he ever looked when he was alive! Painted, his cheeks are red, his face bright; he seems to be fast asleep in a calm and quiet space.

We are deceiving ourselves! We are not deceiving him, he is no longer there. There is nobody, just a dead body, a corpse. But we are deceiving ourselves by painting his face, by garlanding his body, putting beautiful clothes on him, carrying his body in a costly car, and a great procession and much appreciation for the person who has died. He was never appreciated when he was alive, but now nobody criticizes him, everybody praises him.

We are trying to deceive ourselves; we are making death as beautiful as we can so that the question does not arise. And we go on living in the illusion that it is always the other who dies -- obviously, you will not see your own death, you will always see others dying. A logical conclusion -- that it is always the other who dies, so why be bothered? You seem to be the exceptional one, God has made a different rule for you.

Remember, nobody is an exception. AES DHAMMO SANANTANO -- only one law rules all, one eternal law. Whatsoever happens to the ant is going to happen to the elephant too, and whatsoever happens to the beggar is going to happen to the emperor too. Poor or rich, ignorant or knowledgeable, sinner or saint, the law makes no distinction -- the law is very just.

And death is very communist -- it equalizes people. It takes no notice of who you are. It never looks in the pages of the books published, like WHO'S WHO. It simply never bothers whether you are a pauper or Alexander the Great.

One day Siddhartha HAD to become aware, and he became aware. He was going to participate in a youth festival; he was going to inaugurate it. The prince, of course, was

supposed to inaugurate the yearly youth festival. It was a beautiful evening; the youth of the kingdom had gathered to dance and sing and rejoice the whole night. The first day of the year -- a night-long celebration. And Siddhartha was going to open it.

On the way he met what his father had been afraid of him ever seeing -- he came across those things. First he saw an ill man, his first experience of illness. He asked, "What has happened?"

The story is very beautiful. It says the charioteer was going to lie, but a disembodied soul took possession of the charioteer, forced him to speak the truth. He had to say, in spite of himself, "This man is ill."

And Buddha immediately asked the intelligent question, "Then can I also be ill?"

The charioteer was again going to lie, but the soul of a god, an enlightened soul, a disembodied soul, forced him to say, "Yes." The charioteer was puzzled that he wanted to say no, but what came out of his mouth was, "Yes, you are also going to be ill."

Then they came across an old man -- and the same questioning. Then they came across a dead body being carried to the burning GHAT, and the same question...and when Buddha saw the dead body and he asked, "Am I also going to die one day?" the charioteer said, "Yes, sir. Nobody is an exception. Sorry to say so, but nobody is an exception -- even you are going to die."

Buddha said, "Then turn the chariot back. Then there is no point in going to a youth festival. I have already become ill, I have already become old, I am already on the verge of death. If one day I am going to die, then what is the point of

all this nonsense? -- living and waiting for death. Before it comes, I would like to know something which never dies. Now I will devote my whole life to the search for something deathless. If there is something deathless, then the only significant thing in life can be the search for it."
And while he was saying this, they saw the fourth sight -- a sannyasin, a monk, in orange, walking very meditatively. And Buddha said, "What has happened to this man?" And the charioteer said, "Sir, this is what you are thinking to do. This man has seen death happening and he has gone in search of the deathless."
The same night, Buddha renounced the world; he left his home in search of the deathless, in search of truth.
Death is the most important question in life. And those who accept the challenge of death, they are immensely rewarded.

The sutras. Buddha says:

WHO SHALL CONQUER THIS WORLD
AND THE WORLD OF DEATH WITH ALL ITS GODS?
WHO SHALL DISCOVER
THE SHINING WAY OF THE LAW?

He is throwing a challenge to you. He is raising a question in your heart. He is asking: WHO SHALL CONQUER THIS WORLD AND THE WORLD OF DEATH WITH ALL ITS GODS?
This world is the world of death, and the gods that you have created out of your imagination are part of this world -- they are going to die. You, your world, your gods, they

are all going to die, because this world is created by your desire, and the gods are also created by your desire and imagination.

You don't know who you are -- how can you know the real God? And how can you know the real world? Whatsoever you know is a projection, is a kind of dream. Yes, when a dream is there, it appears real. Every night you dream, and you know that while in the dream you never suspect it, you never doubt it, you never raise a question.

Gurdjieff used to say to his disciples, "Every night when you are going to sleep, when you are just on the verge and the curtain of sleep is falling on you, a little bit you remember still, not yet drowned in the darkness of sleep, a little bit of awareness, and sleep is coming...those moments, those intervals between waking and sleep," Gurdjieff used to say, "those moments are very significant. Raise a question in your mind and go on repeating it while you are falling asleep. A simple question: Is it real? Is it for real? Go on repeating the question while you are falling asleep, so that one day in dream you can ask: Is it real?" That day brings a great benediction.

If you can ask in a dream, "Is it real?" the dream immediately disappears. Here you ask, and there the dream is no more. Suddenly a great awakening happens inside. In sleep you become alert. The sleep continues; hence the tremendous beauty of its experience. The sleep continues; the body remains asleep, the mind remains asleep, but something beyond body and mind becomes alert; a witness arises in you. "Is it real?" -- if you ask it in your dream...very difficult to remember because when you are dreaming you have completely forgotten yourself. Hence

the device -- while falling asleep, go on repeating this question: Is it real? Is it real? Fall asleep repeating this question.

Somewhere between three and nine months, one day it happens -- in dream suddenly the question arises: Is it real? And you have one of the most profound experiences of your life. The moment the question is raised, the dream immediately disappears, and there is utter emptiness and silence. Sleep is there and yet a small light of awareness has happened.

And then only will you be aware of this life and its illusoriness; then you will be able to see that the world of desires, jealousies, ambitions, is just a dream seen with open eyes. And if you can see that this world is also a dream, you are on the verge of enlightenment.

But remember, belief won't help. You can believe this world is illusory -- in India millions of people believe and repeat continuously, parrotlike: "This world is MAYA, illusion" -- this and that. And what they are saying is all rubbish, nonsense, because it is not their authentic experience. They have heard people say it, and they are repeating. They don't KNOW on their own, they are not witnesses to it; hence it never changes their lives. They go on repeating, "This world is unreal," and they go on living in this world as much as those who think it is real -- there is no difference, no qualitative difference.

What is the difference between the materialist and the so-called religious person? What difference? Because he goes to the church every Sunday? or because he goes to the temple once in a while? That is the only difference; otherwise, in actual life, you will find them exactly the

same. Sometimes the irreligious person may be more honest, more authentic, more sincere, more truthful, than the religious -- because the religious person is already dishonest in being religious without any experience of his own. His religiousness is based on dishonesty; he has committed the greatest dishonesty a man can commit: he believes in God and he knows nothing of God; he believes in eternal life and he has no taste of it. He has not seen anything, and yet he goes on pretending. His religiousness is basically dishonest; hence it is not a wonder, not a surprise that in so-called religious countries like India, you will find the people more dishonest than in the so-called materialist countries of the West.

The Western materialist is more sincere. The Indian religious person is very mean, dishonest, deceptive, because if you can even deceive God, whom are you going to leave out? If your religion is pseudo, your whole life is going to be pseudo. The person who has the guts to say, "Unless I know God I am not going to believe," is tacitly sincere, honest. This is my observation: that atheists have more possibility of knowing God than the so-called theists.

WHO SHALL CONQUER THIS WORLD AND THE WORLD OF DEATH WITH ALL ITS GODS? WHO SHALL DISCOVER THE SHINING WAY OF THE LAW?

AES DHAMMO SANANTANO -- who is going to discover the eternal, inexhaustible law? AES MAGGO VISUDDHYA -- who is going to find the path of eternal purity, of eternal innocence? Who? Buddha throws you a challenge and then says:

YOU SHALL, EVEN AS THE MAN
WHO SEEKS FLOWERS
FINDS THE MOST BEAUTIFUL,
THE RAREST.

Yes, you can conquer this world of death -- because at the deepest core of your being you are part of eternity, you are not part of time. You exist in time, but you belong to eternity. You are a penetration of eternity into the world of time. You are deathless, living in a body of death. Your consciousness knows no death, no birth. It is only your body that is born and dies. But you are not aware of your consciousness; you are not conscious of your consciousness.

And that is the whole art of meditation: becoming conscious of consciousness itself. The moment you know who is residing in the body, who you are, in that very revelation you have transcended death and the world of death. You have transcended all that is momentary.

YOU SHALL, just AS THE MAN WHO SEEKS FLOWERS FINDS THE MOST BEAUTIFUL, THE RAREST.

Jesus says: Seek and ye shall find, ask and it shall be given to you, knock and the door shall be opened unto you.

A great inquiry is needed, a great seeking is needed. Just as science inquires into the objective world, religion is an inquiry into the subjective. Science inquires into that which you see, and religion inquires into the seer itself. Religion, of course, is the science of the sciences.

Science can never be more important than religion; it is impossible that science can be more important than

religion, because science after all is a human endeavor. It is what you do -- but who is the doer inside you? The doer can never be less than his doing. The painter can never be less than his painting, and the poet can never be less than his poetry. The scientist knows about the world but knows nothing about the scientist himself.

Albert Einstein in his last days used to say, "Sometimes I suspect my life has been a wastage. I inquired into the farthest of stars and forgot completely to inquire into myself -- and I was the closest star!"

Just because we are conscious, we take it for granted -- the meditator never takes it for granted. He goes in, he knocks at the door of his own inner being, he seeks and searches inside, he leaves not a single stone unturned. He enters into his own being. And great is his fulfillment, the greatest, because he finds the rarest. Yes, there are many flowers, but there is no flower like the flower of your consciousness. It is the rarest -- it is the one-thousand-petaled lotus, it is a golden lotus. Unless one knows it, one knows nothing. Unless one finds it, all riches are useless, all power is futile.

UNDERSTAND THAT THE BODY
IS MERELY THE FOAM OF A WAVE,
THE SHADOW OF A SHADOW.
SNAP THE FLOWER ARROWS OF DESIRE
AND THEN, UNSEEN,
ESCAPE THE KING OF DEATH.

The body is a momentary phenomenon. One day it was not, one day it will not be again. It exists only for the time being -- it is like foam; looks so beautiful from the shore, the

foam, the white foam of a wave. And if the sun has risen, around the foam can be created a rainbow; looks so beautiful, looks like diamonds, looks so white and so pure. But if you take it in your hands, it starts disappearing. Only your hands are left wet, that's all.

So is the case with the body. It looks beautiful, but death is growing in it, death is hiding in it, old age is waiting there. It is only a question of time.

It is not that at a certain date you die. In fact, the reality is that the day you are born, you start dying. The child who is one day old has died a little bit, he has died one day. He will go on dying day by day. What you call your birthday is not really your birthday -- you should call it your deathday. The man who is celebrating his fiftieth birthday is really celebrating his fiftieth deathday. Death has come closer. Now, if he is going to live seventy years, only twenty years are left. Fifty years he has already died!

We are continuously dying as far as the body is concerned...it is foam disappearing. Don't be deceived by seventy years because seventy years mean nothing in the expanse of eternity -- what is the meaning of seventy years? It is foam, it is momentary.

UNDERSTAND THAT THE BODY IS MERELY THE FOAM OF A WAVE, THE SHADOW OF A SHADOW. It is not even the shadow, but the shadow of the shadow. Buddha wants to emphasize the unreality of it. It is the echo of the echo, very very far removed from reality. God is the real -- call it truth. Buddha would like to call it dhamma -- the law. God is the ultimate reality; then the soul is his shadow and the body is the shadow of the shadow. Move

from the body to the soul and from the soul to dhamma -- to God, to the eternal law.
Unless you achieve the eternal law, don't rest, because nobody knows -- today you are here, tomorrow you may not be. Don't waste these precious days hankering, longing for futile things. People go on collecting junk, and then one day they are gone. And then all the junk that they collected their whole lives is left behind. They cannot take a single thing with them.

It is said that when Alexander the Great died, he asked his ministers that when his casket was being carried to the grave, his hands should be left hanging outside the casket. "Why?" the ministers asked. "Nobody has ever heard of such a thing! It is never done! It is not traditional. Why this strange, eccentric idea? Why should your hands be left hanging outside the casket?"
Alexander said, "I would like to let people know that even I, Alexander the Great, am going empty-handed. I am not taking anything with me. My whole life has been a sheer wastage. I worked hard" -- and he really worked hard, he struggled hard, he was a really ambitious person, mad after power, wanted to become the ruler of the world, and had more or less succeeded, had more or less become the ruler of the then known world.... But even he says, "I am dying and I cannot take anything with me; hence the whole effort has been just an exercise in futility. Let the people know, let them become aware, let them understand my foolishness, my idiocy. It may help them to understand their own life patterns, their life-styles."

SNAP THE FLOWER ARROWS OF DESIRE AND THEN, UNSEEN, ESCAPE THE KING OF DEATH.

If you can become desireless, then death cannot have any sway over you. It is the desiring mind that is caught in the net of death, and we are all full of desires: desire for money, for power, for prestige, respectability -- a thousand and one desires. Desires create greed, and greed creates competition, and competition creates jealousy. One thing leads to another, and we go on falling into the mess, into the turmoil of the world. It is a mad mad world, but the root cause of madness is desire.

Once you sow the seeds of desire...desire means to have more. You have a certain quantity of money, you would like to have double that. Desire means the longing for more. And nobody thinks twice that any quantitative change is not going to satisfy you. If you cannot be satisfied by ten thousand rupees, how can you be satisfied by twenty thousand rupees? The rupees will be doubled. But if ten thousand rupees cannot give you any satisfaction, your satisfaction cannot be doubled; there has been no satisfaction in the first place. In fact, when you have ten thousand rupees you have a certain quantity of anxiety, fear -- those anxieties will be doubled when you have twenty thousand rupees, trebled when you have thirty thousand rupees, and so on and so forth. You can go on multiplying....

And whatsoever you have, somebody will always be having more than that -- it is a big world. Hence jealousy, and jealousy is the fever of the soul. Except meditation, there is no medicine for it. The physician can help you if your body is suffering from a fever, but only a master can

help you, a buddha can help you, if you are suffering from the fever of the soul. Very few people are suffering from the physical fever, and almost everybody is suffering from the spiritual fever -- jealousy.
Jealousy means somebody else has more than you have. And it is impossible to be the first in everything. You may have the largest amount of money in the world, but you may not have a beautiful face. And a beggar may make you jealous -- his body, his face, his eyes, and you are jealous. A beggar can make an emperor jealous.

Napoleon was not very tall -- he was only five feet five inches. I don't see anything wrong in it; it's perfectly alright -- I am five feet five inches and I have never suffered because of it, because whether you are six feet or five feet your feet reach to the earth all the same! So where is the problem? If the five-foot person was hanging one foot above the earth, then there would have been a problem! But Napoleon suffered very much. He was continuously conscious of the fact that he was not tall. And, of course, he was amongst very tall people. The soldiers, the generals, they were all tall people and he was very short.
He used to stand on something higher.... Exactly the same was the case with the first prime minister of India, Jawaharlal Nehru. He was also five-five -- this five-five is something! And the last viceroy of India, Lord Mountbatten, was very tall -- Lady Mountbatten even taller. Now, when Lord Mountbatten gave him the oath of the first prime minister...you can see in the picture, those pictures are available everywhere: Nehru is standing on a step and Mountbatten is standing on the floor, just to look at least

equal, if not taller than Mountbatten. Then too, he is not taller than Mountbatten, even standing on a step...a deep sense of inferiority.

Napoleon was continuously self-conscious. One day he was fixing a clock and his hand could not reach it. The clock was high on the wall. His bodyguard -- and bodyguards are bound to be taller people, strong people -- his bodyguard said, "Wait, I am higher than you, I will fix it."

Napoleon was very angry and he said, "Stupid! Apologize! You are not higher than me, you are simply taller. Change your word. Higher? What do you mean?" He was very much offended. And the poor bodyguard was not meaning anything insulting to him -- he was not even aware that saying "higher" is offensive. Now, Napoleon had everything, but the height was the problem.

It is very difficult to have everything of the world and be the first in everything. It is impossible! Then the jealousy persists, it continues. Somebody has more money than you, somebody has more health than you, somebody has more beauty than you, somebody has more intelligence than you...and you are constantly comparing. The desiring mind continues to compare.

Goldstein and Weinberg were in business together and having a bad time. One day Goldstein, while taking a stroll through the woods, was all of a sudden surprised by a real fairy godmother who said to him, "I will grant you three wishes, but remember, whatever you wish for, Weinberg will get double."

On his way back Goldstein pondered, "I would not mind a spacious mansion." And before he realized what was

happening, there it was -- his mansion. But at the same time he saw Weinberg across the road proudly viewing his two villas. Goldstein repressed his jealousy and went in to see his new home. As he walked into the bedroom, a second desire struck him: "I would not mind a woman like Sophia Loren." And sure enough, there she was -- a gorgeous piece looking just like Sophia Loren. But as he looked out of the bedroom window, he saw Weinberg on his balcony with two gorgeous women.
"Well," he sighed as he thought of the fairy godmother, "you can cut off one of my balls!"

Jealousy is jealousy.... If you cannot have all, at least you can stop anybody else having it. Jealousy becomes destructive, jealousy becomes violence. And jealousy is the shadow of desire. Desire always compares and, because of comparison there is suffering. People waste their lives in desiring, in being jealous, in comparing, and the precious time is simply lost. Even if God gives you three wishes, you will do the same as Goldstein -- because the Jew exists in everybody. Only a buddha is not a Jew; otherwise everybody else is.
The nature of desire is Jewish. It wants more, it is mad for more. And those who live in desire are bound to be victims of death. Only the person who understands the foolishness of desiring, of greed, of constantly longing for more, of jealousy, of comparison, one who becomes aware of all this nonsense and drops it, goes beyond death. He becomes unseen. Buddha uses a beautiful word. He says: AND THEN, UNSEEN, ESCAPE THE KING OF DEATH.

Death can only see a person who lives in the garments of desire. Death can only see desire. If desire is dropped, you become invisible to death; death cannot touch you, because without desire you are simply pure consciousness and nothing else. You are no longer identified with the body or the mind. You simply know one thing, that you are a witness. Death cannot see you -- you can see death. Ordinarily, death can see you, you cannot see death -- because desire is gross, can be seen by death. Consciousness is invisible, it is not matter -- it is pure energy, it is light. YOU can see death, but death cannot see you. And to see death is again a great experience, a hilarious experience. One starts laughing when one sees death -- death is so impotent. Its power is not its own, its power is in your desiring mind. YOU give power to it. The more you desire, the more you are afraid of death. The more greedy you are, the more afraid you are. The more you have, naturally the more anxious you are -- death will be coming and everything will be taken away.
SNAP THE FLOWER ARROWS OF DESIRE AND THEN, UNSEEN, ESCAPE THE KING OF DEATH.

AND TRAVEL ON.

Remember this sentence: AND TRAVEL ON.
Then the real journey, the pilgrimage, begins. Before that you were just moving in circles -- the same desires: more money, more money, more power, more power...vicious circles, not going anywhere. Once you have dropped all desiring, your consciousness is freed from the grossness of desire. Now TRAVEL ON -- now you can go into the

infinite existence, you can move into the eternity of existence. Now, mysteries upon mysteries go on opening in front of you. Now the whole existence is available to you, in its totality it is yours...now TRAVEL ON.

DEATH OVERTAKES THE MAN
WHO GATHERS FLOWERS
WHEN WITH DISTRACTED MIND AND THIRSTY SENSES
HE SEARCHES VAINLY FOR HAPPINESS
IN THE PLEASURES OF THE WORLD.
DEATH FETCHES HIM AWAY
AS A FLOOD CARRIES OFF A SLEEPING VILLAGE.

If you are too much distracted by desires, pleasures, gratifications, and if you are too thirsty in your senses for titillation, if you are searching foolishly for happiness in the outer world, then death comes and fetches you away like a flood which carries off a sleeping village.
The man who is searching for happiness in the outside world is a man fast asleep. He is not aware of what he is doing, because happiness has never been found in the outside. And whatsoever appears as happiness proves ultimately to be the source of unhappiness and nothing else. The outer world promises only, but never delivers the goods. When you are far away, things appear very beautiful. The closer you come, the more they start disappearing. When you have got them after long and arduous effort, you are simply at a loss. You can't believe what happened -- it was a mirage.

Things are beautiful only from the distance. When you have them, they have nothing in them. Money is significant only for those who don't have it. Those who have it, they know the futility of it. Fame is significant only for those who don't have it. Those who have it...ask them: they are tired of being famous, they are utterly tired of being famous. They want to be anonymous. They want to be nobodies.

Voltaire has written in his memoirs that when he was not famous his only desire was to be famous; he was ready to sacrifice everything for fame. And if you go on searching for a certain thing, you are bound to get it, remember. One day he became famous, and then he wrote, "I was so tired of my fame, because all privacy in my life disappeared, all intimate relationships disappeared -- I was so famous that I always was crowded by people, everywhere, wherever I would go. If I went for a stroll in the garden, then a crowd would follow. I was almost like a showpiece, a kind of walking circus."

His fame reached such peaks that it became dangerous for his life. Once when he was coming from the station to his house after a journey, he reached home almost naked, scratched all over the body, blood oozing from many places -- because in France in those days this was the superstition, that if you can get a piece of the clothes of a famous man you can also become famous. So people tore his clothes, and in tearing his clothes, they scratched his body.

He cried and wept that day, and said, "How foolish I was that I wanted to be famous. How beautiful it was when

nobody knew me and I was a free man. Now I am no longer a free man."
Then he wanted to be a nobody. And it happened too that the fame disappeared. In this life nothing is permanent -- one day you are famous, another day you are nobody. The day he died, only four people followed him to his grave; and out of those four one was his dog -- so only three really. People had completely forgotten about him, they had forgotten that he was alive. They came to know only when the newspapers published the report that Voltaire had died. Then people became aware and started asking each other, "Was he still alive?"

If you have fame, you get tired of it. If you have money, you will not know what to do with it. If you are respected by people, you become a slave, because then you have to go on fulfilling their expectations; otherwise your respectability will disappear. Only when you are not famous do you think it is something significant. When you are not respected, you long for it. When you are respected, you have to pay for respectability. The more people respect you, the more closely they watch you -- whether you are fulfilling their expectations or not. All your freedom is gone. But this is how people are living.
Buddha says it is like a sleeping village -- the flood comes and takes over the whole village, the flood of death comes.

DEATH OVERCOMES HIM
WHEN WITH DISTRACTED MIND AND THIRSTY SENSES
HE GATHERS FLOWERS.

HE WILL NEVER HAVE HIS FILL OF THE PLEASURES OF THE WORLD.

And nobody can ever be contented in the world -- that's impossible. You can become more and more discontented, that's all, because contentment happens only when you go inwards. Contentment is your innermost nature. Contentment does not belong to things. You can be comfortable with things -- a beautiful house, a beautiful garden, no worries about money -- yes, you can be comfortable, but you remain the same: comfortably discontented. In fact, when you have all the comforts and you have nothing to do to earn money, twenty-four hours a day you are aware of your discontent, because no other occupation is left.

That's why rich people are more discontented than the poor people. It should not be so -- logically it should not be so -- but that's how life is. Life does not follow Aristotle and his logic. Rich people coming from the West become very puzzled when they see poor Indian people with faces of contentment. They cannot believe their eyes. These people don't have anything -- why do they look contented? And the Indian so-called saints and mahatmas and political leaders, they go on bragging to the world that "Our country is spiritual -- look! people are so contented even though they are poor, because they are inwardly rich."

This is all nonsense. They are not inwardly rich. The contentment that you see on poor Indian faces is not that of inward realization. It is simply because they are so preoccupied with money, bread and butter, that they can't afford any time to be discontented. They can't afford to sit

and brood about their miseries. They are so miserable that they have no time to feel miserable! They are so miserable and they have never known any pleasure, so they cannot have any comparison.

When a society becomes rich, it has time to think, "Now what next...?" And there seems to be nothing left. When all outward things are available you start thinking, "What am I doing here? All things are there, but I am as empty as ever." One starts turning inwards.

Beggars look contented because they don't have any taste of richness. But a rich person becomes very discontented. Because of his richness he becomes aware of the futility of all riches. DEATH OVERCOMES HIM WHEN WITH DISTRACTED MIND AND THIRSTY SENSES HE GATHERS FLOWERS. HE WILL NEVER HAVE HIS FILL OF THE PLEASURES OF THE WORLD.

You cannot have your fill. It is impossible. You cannot be satisfied with things; the mind will go on asking for more. The more you have, the more troubles you will create for yourself -- because you can afford troubles, you have time. In fact, you have so much time on your hands you don't know what to do with it. You will start fooling around. You will create more miseries, more anxieties for yourself. And finding no satisfaction outside, you can become so dissatisfied that you may start thinking of committing suicide.

Many more people commit suicide in rich countries than in poor countries. Or you may become so dissatisfied that you may go mad, you may go nuts. Many more people go mad in rich countries than in poor countries.

To be rich is in a way very dangerous: it can drive you towards suicide, it can drive you towards some kind of madness -- but it is also very significant because it can drive you towards religion, towards your inwardness, interiority, it can become an inward revolution. It depends on you -- alternatives are open. A rich person either has to become neurotic, suicidal, or he has to become a meditator; there is no third alternative available for him.
The poor man cannot be suicidal, cannot be neurotic; he has not even enough bread, what to say of the mind? He is so tired by the evening, he cannot think, no energy to think...falls asleep. In the morning again the old rut of earning bread. Every day he has to earn, somehow to remain alive, to survive. He cannot afford the luxuries of neuroses, he cannot afford the luxuries of psychoanalysis -- these are luxuries only rich people can afford! And he cannot be really a meditator either. He will go to the temple, but he will ask for something worldly. His wife is ill, his children are not getting admission into school, he is unemployed. He goes to the temple to ask these things. The quality of the religion of the poor is very poor.
There are two kinds of religiousness in the world: the religiousness of the poor -- it is very worldly, it is very materialistic -- and the religiousness of the rich -- it is very spiritual, very nonmaterialistic. When a rich man prays, his prayer cannot be for money. If he is still praying for money, he is not yet rich enough.

There was a Sufi saint, Farid. Once the villagers asked him, "Farid, the great king, Akbar, comes to you so many times -

- why don't you ask him to open a school for poor people in our village? We don't have a school."
Farid said, "Good, so why should I wait for him to come? I will go."
He went to Delhi, he was received -- everybody knew that Akbar respected him tremendously. Akbar was praying in his private mosque; Farid was allowed in. He went in, he saw Akbar praying. He was standing behind Akbar -- he could hear what he was saying. With hands spread, Akbar was just finishing his prayer, his NAMAZ, and he was saying to God, "Almighty Compassionate One, shower more riches on me! Give me a greater kingdom!"
Farid immediately turned away. It was just the end of the prayer, so Akbar became aware that somebody had been and had gone away. He looked back, saw Farid going down the steps, ran, touched the feet of Farid and asked, "Why have you come?" -- because for the first time he had come -- "and why are you going away?"
Farid said, "I had come with the idea that you are rich, but listening to your prayer I realized that you are still poor. And if you are still asking for money, for more power, then it is not good for me to ask for money, because I had come to ask for a little money to open a school in my village. No, I cannot ask from a poor man. You yourself need more. I will collect some from the village and give it to you! And as far as the school is concerned, if you are asking from God, I can ask from God directly -- why should I use you as a mediator?"
The story is reported by Akbar himself in his autobiography. He says, "For the first time I became aware that, yes, I am not yet rich enough, I am not yet dissatisfied

with all this money. It has not given me anything and I go on asking for more, almost completely unconsciously! It is time for me to be finished with it. Life has flown and I am still asking for rubbish. And I have accumulated much -- it has not given me anything."

But almost mechanically one goes on asking. Remember, the religion that arises when you have lived in the world and known the world and the futility of it, has a totally different flavor to it from the religion which arises in you because your physical needs are not fulfilled.
The poor man's religion is poor, the rich man's religion is rich. And I would like a rich religion in the world; hence I am not against technology, against industrialization. I am not against creating an affluent society, I am all for it, because this is my observation: that religion reaches its climax only when people are utterly frustrated with the worldly riches, and the only way to make them utterly frustrated is to let them experience them.

THE BEE GATHERS NECTAR FROM THE FLOWER WITHOUT MARRING ITS BEAUTY OR PERFUME. SO LET THE MASTER SETTLE, AND WANDER.

Buddha has called his monks "begging," MADHUKARI. Madhukari means collecting honey like a bee. The BHIKKHU, the Buddhist sannyasin, goes from house to house; he never asks from just one house because that may be too much of a burden. So he asks from many houses, just a little bit from one house, a little bit from another, so he is not a burden on anybody. And he never goes to the

same house again. This is called madhukari -- like a honey bee. The bee goes from one flower to another, and goes on moving from flower to flower -- it is nonpossessive.
THE BEE GATHERS NECTAR FROM THE FLOWER WITHOUT MARRING ITS BEAUTY OR PERFUME. It only takes so little from one flower that the beauty is not marred, the perfume is not destroyed. The flower simply never becomes aware of the bee; it comes so silently and goes so silently.
Buddha says: The man of awareness lives in this world like a bee. He never mars the beauty of this world, he never destroys the perfume of this world. He lives silently, moves silently. He asks only that much which is needed. His life is simple, it is not complex. He does not gather for tomorrow. The bee never gathers for tomorrow, the today is enough unto itself.
SO LET THE MASTER SETTLE, AND WANDER. A very strange statement: ...SETTLE, AND WANDER. Settle inside, be centered inside, and outside be a wanderer:inside utterly rooted, and outside not staying long in any one place, not staying with one person for a long time, because attachments arise, possessiveness arises. So be just like a bee.
Just the other night I was reading a poet's memoirs. He says, "I have found one thing very strange: when I fall in love with a really beautiful person, I cannot possess him or her. And if I possess, I immediately see that I am destroying the beauty of the person. If I become attached, in some way I am wounding the other person, his freedom." Poets are sensitive people; they can become aware of many things ordinary people never become aware of. But it is a

beautiful insight, of profound depth: if you are really in love with a beautiful person you would not like to possess, because to possess is to destroy. You will be like a bee; you will enjoy the company, you will enjoy the friendship, you will share the love, but you will not possess. To possess is to reduce the person to a thing. It is to destroy his spirit, it is to make him a commodity -- and this can be done only if you don't love. This can be done only if your love is nothing but hate masquerading as love.
Buddha says: Just like a bee, move in life -- enjoying, celebrating, dancing, singing, but like a bee -- from one flower to another flower. Have all the experiences, because it is only through experiences that you become mature. But don't be possessive, don't get stuck anywhere. Remain flowing like a river -- don't become stagnant. Settle inside, certainly, become crystallized inside, but on the outside remain a wanderer.

LOOK TO YOUR OWN FAULTS,
WHAT YOU HAVE DONE OR LEFT UNDONE.
OVERLOOK THE FAULTS OF OTHERS.

The ordinary way of human beings is to overlook one's own faults and to emphasize, magnify, others' faults. This is the way of the ego. The ego feels very good when it sees, "Everybody has so many faults and I have none." And the trick is: overlook your faults, magnify others' faults, so certainly everybody looks like a monster and you look like a saint.
Buddha says: Reverse the process. If you really want to be transformed, overlook others' faults -- that is none of your

business. You are nobody, you are not asked to interfere, you have no right, so why bother? But don't overlook your own faults, because they have to be changed, overcome. When Buddha says, LOOK TO YOUR OWN FAULTS, WHAT YOU HAVE DONE OR LEFT UNDONE, he does not mean repent if you have done something wrong; he does not mean brag, pat your own back if you have done something good. No. He simply means to look so that you can remember in the future that no wrong should be repeated, so that you can remember in the future that the good should be enlarged, enhanced, and the evil should be reduced -- not for repentance but for remembrance.
That is the difference between the Christian attitude and the Buddhist attitude. The Christian remembers them to repent; hence Christianity creates great guilt. Buddhism never creates any guilt, it is not for repentance, it is for remembrance. The past is past; it is gone and gone forever -- no need to worry about it. Just remember not to repeat the same mistakes again. Be more mindful.

LIKE A LOVELY FLOWER,
BRIGHT BUT SCENTLESS,
ARE THE FINE BUT EMPTY WORDS
OF THE MAN WHO DOES NOT MEAN WHAT HE SAYS.

Those who go on repeating scriptures mechanically, their words are fine but empty. They are like flowers, lovely, bright, but with no perfume. They are like paper flowers or plastic flowers -- they can't have perfume, they can't have aliveness. The aliveness, the perfume is possible only when

you speak on your own, not on the authority of the scriptures; when you speak on your own authority, when you speak as a witness to truth, not as a learned scholar, not as a pundit, but when you speak as one who is awakened.

LIKE A LOVELY FLOWER,
BRIGHT AND FRAGRANT,
ARE THE FINE AND TRUTHFUL WORDS
OF THE MAN WHO MEANS WHAT HE SAYS.

Remember not to repeat others' words. Experience, and only say that which you have experienced, and your words will have substance, weight; and your words will have a radiance, your words will have perfume. Your words will attract people; not only attract -- influence. Your words will be pregnant with great meaning, and those who are ready to hear them will be transformed through them. Your words will be breathing, alive; there will be a heartbeat in them.

LIKE GARLANDS WOVEN FROM A HEAP OF FLOWERS,
FASHION FROM YOUR LIFE AS MANY GOOD DEEDS.

Let your life become a garland -- a garland of good deeds. But good deeds, according to Buddha, arise only if you become more mindful, more alert, more aware. Good deeds are not to be cultivated as character; good deeds have to be by-products of your being more conscious.

Buddhism does not emphasize character but consciousness -- that's its greatest contribution to humanity and humanity's evolution.
Enough for today.

The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 2
Chapter #4
Chapter title: Spread the rumor!
4 July 1979 am in Buddha Hall

The first question:
Question 1
BELOVED MASTER,
EVERYTHING APPEARS TO BE VERY PARADOXICAL: HAVING TO BE TOTAL AND YET HAVING TO REMAIN A WITNESS, A WATCHER; HAVING TO BE DROWNED IN LOVE AND YET TO BE ALONE. IT SOUNDS VERY MYSTERIOUS, AND I FEEL UTTERLY LOST AND CONFUSED. AM I GETTING CONNED?

Prem Urja, life is beautiful because it is paradoxical. It has salt because it is paradoxical -- it is not just sweet, it has salt in it too. If it was just sweet, it would become too sugary, saccharin.
Life has tremendous mystery in it because it is based on paradox. You are feeling confused because you have a certain fixed idea about how life should be -- you don't allow life to be as it is. You want to impose a certain

concept on it, a certain logic on it. The confusion is of your own creation.

Try to impose some logical pattern on life and you will become very much confused, because life has no obligation to fulfill your logic. Life is as it is. You have to listen to it. It has all the colors, the whole spectrum -- it is a rainbow. But you have a certain idea that it should be only blue or it should be only green or it should be only red -- but it is all the seven colors. Then what are you going to do about the six other colors which are not part of your conception? Either you have to ignore them, block them, so that you don't become aware of them; repress them, simply deny them.... But whatsoever you do, life is not going to drop its colors; they will be there -- denied, rejected, repressed, they will be there, waiting for the right moment to explode into your consciousness.

And whenever they explode you will be confused. The confusion is your responsibility. Life is not confusing at all. Life is mysterious but never confusing. Because you don't want it to be mysterious, you want it to be mathematical, you want it very clear-cut so that you can calculate and measure -- hence the difficulty. It is not created by life. Drop your conceptions and then look.... Then you will find the storm that comes brings a silence with it -- which is illogical! The silence that is felt after the storm is the deepest, the profoundest. If there is no storm, the silence remains superficial, the silence remains dull, it has no depth. After the storm...the greater the storm, the deeper the silence. Now, it is paradoxical.

It is paradoxical only because you want to impose a certain logic. The storm, and creating silence? It does not fit with

your idea -- that is true -- then you become confused. But why should it fit with your idea? Life has to be perceived -- not conceived. See what is the case, don't have ready-made answers. Don't go through life with prejudices, with a prejudiced mind, don't have any a priori conceptions. Go innocent, naked, go ignorant. Function from the state of not knowing. And then...then life is not confusing. It is a tremendous joy, it is ecstasy. Then what appears today as confusing, you will feel thankful for it, grateful for it, that it is so, that it is not logical.

Life would have been utterly boring if God had followed Aristotle. It is a great relief that he is not an Aristotelian; it is a great relief that God knows nothing of Aristotle, that he has not read his books, that he does not believe in logic, that he believes in dialectics. Hence these paradoxes.

One can be in deep love and yet be alone. In fact, one can be alone only when one is in deep love. The depth of love creates an ocean around you, a deep ocean, and you become an island, utterly alone. Yes, the ocean goes on throwing its waves on your shore, but the more the ocean crashes with its waves on your shore, the more integrated you are, the more rooted, the more centered you are.

Love has value only because it gives you aloneness. It gives you space enough to be on your own.

But you have an idea of love; that idea is creating trouble -- not love itself, but the idea. The idea is that, in love, lovers disappear into each other, dissolve into each other. Yes, there are moments of dissolution -- but this is the beauty of life and all that is existential: that when lovers dissolve into each other, the same are the moments when they become very conscious, very alert. That dissolution is not a kind of

drunkenness, that dissolution is not unconscious. It brings great consciousness, it releases great awareness. On the one hand they are dissolved -- on the other hand for the first time they see their utter beauty in being alone. The other defines them, their aloneness; they define the other. And they are grateful to each other. It is because of the other that they have been able to see their own selves; the other has become a mirror in which they are reflected. Lovers are mirrors to each other. Love makes you aware of your original face.

Hence, it looks very contradictory, paradoxical, when stated in such a way: "Love brings aloneness." You were thinking all along that love brings togetherness. I am not saying that it does not bring togetherness, but unless you are alone you cannot be together. Who is going to be together? Two persons are needed to be together, two independent persons are needed to be together. A togetherness will be rich, infinitely rich, if both the persons are utterly independent. If they are dependent on each other, it is not a togetherness -- it is a slavery, it is a bondage.

If they are dependent on each other, clinging, possessive, if they don't allow each other to be alone, if they don't allow each other space enough to grow, they are enemies, not lovers; they are destructive to each other, they are not helping each other to find their souls, their beings. What kind of love is this? It may be just fear of being alone; hence they are clinging to each other. But real love knows no fear. Real love is capable of being alone, utterly alone, and out of that aloneness grows a togetherness.

Kahlil Gibran says: Two lovers are like two pillars of a temple -- they support the same roof, but they stand separate; together as far as supporting the same roof is concerned, but utterly separate as far as their own being is concerned. Be pillars of a temple, supporting the same temple of love, the same roof of love, yet rooted in your own being, not distracted from there. And then you will know both the beauty, the purity, the cleanliness, the health, the wholeness of aloneness, and you will also know the joy, the dance, the music of being together.

There is a beauty when somebody is playing a solo instrument -- a solo flute player -- there is tremendous beauty in that. And there is also beauty in an orchestra. And love knows both together: it knows how to be a solo flute player and it also knows how to be in rhythm, harmony with the other.

There is no contradiction in reality -- the contradiction appears only because you have a certain idea. Drop the idea and then where is confusion? Confusion comes only out of conclusions. If you have a conclusion already and then life appears as something else, you are confused. Rather than trying to fix life, drop your conclusions.

Never function out of conclusions! -- that's what I go on repeating every day to you: don't function from the state of knowledge. Knowledge means conclusions, and all conclusions are borrowed. Life is so vast that it cannot be condensed into a conclusion. All conclusions are partial. And whenever the part claims to be the whole, it creates a kind of fanaticism, orthodoxy; it creates a dull and stupid mind.

Urja, you say, "Having to be total and yet having to remain a witness, a watcher...seems to be very paradoxical."
It only seems, the paradox is only apparent; otherwise, to be total is to be a watcher. Whenever you are totally into something, a great awareness is released in you -- you become a witness. Suddenly! Not that you practice witnessing. If you are totally in it...one day, dance totally and see what I am saying.
These are not logical conclusions that I am giving to you: these are existential indications, hints. Dance totally! -- and then you will be surprised. Something new will be felt. When the dance becomes total, and the dancer is almost completely dissolved in the dancing, there will be a new kind of awareness arising in you. You will be totally lost into the dance: the dancer gone, only dance remains. And yet you are not unconscious, not at all -- just the opposite. You are very conscious, more conscious than you have ever been before.
But if you start thinking about it, then the paradox will come. Then you will not be able to manage, and you will become very confused.
Experience it. Whatsoever is being said here is to help you to experience. I am not handing over to you any knowledge, any information -- just a few hints to taste the multidimensional qualities of life.
You say, "It seems paradoxical...having to be drowned in love and yet be alone." It is not -- it only appears. But you seem to be too much attached to your conclusions; hence the idea arises: "Am I getting conned?"
In a way, yes, you are being conned out of all your prejudices, out of all your conclusions, out of all your

knowledge. I am trying to take you into the world of innocence again. I am trying to give you a new birth, so that you can become a child again -- full of awe and wonder.

The child never sees any paradox anywhere -- and that is the beauty of the child. The child can be in tremendous love with you and can say, "I cannot live without you even for a single moment," and the next moment he is angry and says, "I will never see your face again." He is total in both his statements, and after a few moments he is again sitting in your lap with great joy -- and that too is total.

The child is total each moment, and the child never sees any contradiction. When he is angry, he is really anger; and when he is loving, he is really love. He moves from one moment to another moment without creating any confusion for himself. He is never confused. He never brings this paradox, because he has not yet arrived at conclusions. He does not know how one should be. He simply allows himself to be whatsoever is the case -- he flows with life.

Urja, you have become stagnant somewhere. You have too much knowledge, and that is functioning as a barrier. It won't allow you to flow with me, and it won't allow you to flow with my people. It won't allow you to flow with life, it won't allow you to flow with God.

God is both day and night, summer and winter, birth and death...and you have to be capable of absorbing all these so-called paradoxes. If you can absorb all these so-called paradoxes, without becoming confused, enlightenment is not far away.

Enlightenment is the state when all paradoxes have disappeared. One simply takes note of life as it is. One has

no conclusions to compare with, no ideas to judge with. Then how can you be confused? You cannot confuse me -- it is impossible -- because I have no conclusions. Without conclusions, without knowledge, just taste life as it is. It is a mystery, not a paradox.

The second question:
Question 2
BELOVED MASTER,
I DON'T BELIEVE A WORD ABOUT THIS MYSTERY. NOTHING LIKE THAT EXISTS! MY GUESS IS THAT YOU ARE ADVERTISING YOUR NEW COMMUNE BECAUSE THE PRESS OFFICE IS TOO LAZY, AND NOT AS CLEVER AS YOU CAN BE.

Sarjano, it is not a question of believing or not believing -- it is so. The question of belief arises only because you are not aware of it. Belief is significant, and disbelief too -- when you are not aware of the reality. Then either you believe or you disbelieve.
I am not saying believe in the mystery I am talking about. I am not saying disbelieve either -- I am saying: Come with me! It is so! Let me wake you up...it is so.
You say, "I don't believe a word about this mystery." It is very good. Please, don't believe a word, because if you start believing you will not be able to experience. I am not interested in believers, I am interested in inquirers. But please don't start guessing either, because a guess is a guess. A guess is not going to help. It will become a belief -- if you go on guessing for a long time, and if you go on repeating the same guess again and again, it becomes a

belief. You create your own belief then, and that will become a barrier.
And beliefs are such subtle barriers, and disbeliefs too. Remember, whenever I say belief I always include disbelief in it -- because that is the other side of the coin. Belief and disbelief, both are barriers. Once you have created a belief system around yourself -- either borrowed from others or guessed by yourself; either borrowed from the Bible, MEIN KAMPF, DAS KAPITAL, BHAGAVADGITA, or guessed by yourself, home-made, it does not matter -- a belief becomes a barrier, an invisible barrier. And once it settles, it won't allow you to see anything else that goes against it.

Just the other day I was reading about an experiment. Sarjano, meditate over it.
A certain naturalist made the following experiment: a glass jar was divided into two halves by a perfectly transparent glass partition. On one side of the partition he placed a pike; on the other a number of small fishes such as form the prey of the pike.

The pike did not notice the partition, and hurled itself on its prey with, of course, the result of only a bruised nose. The same happened many times, and always the same result. At last, seeing all its efforts ended so painfully, the pike abandoned the hunt; so that in a few days, when the partition had been removed, it continued to swim about among the small fry without daring to attack them.... Does not the same happen with us?
Now the partition is no longer there -- it has been removed -- but a belief system has arisen in the pike's mind. Now he

believes that there is a transparent partition. Now the belief is enough; he never goes beyond that partition which is no longer there. Now he can go! Now there is nothing to debar him but his belief...he has created a belief. And, of course, out of his experience, Sarjano -- not even guesswork -- it was his experience, a repeated experience. He tried again and again and again, and each time a bruised nose and pain -- of course, a belief has arisen.
You have to forgive him -- a poor pike has come to conclude that it is futile: "There is a barrier, transparent, so I cannot go..." and he never tries again. He will never try again his whole life. Now he can go and eat the fishes, they are available, but he will go only up to a certain line, and from that line he will come back.

This is the situation of human beings too. A Hindu has a barrier around himself, a Mohammedan another, a Jaina still another -- all people live hidden behind transparent barriers, and because of those barriers they cannot see beyond.
Life is a mystery, Sarjano. And my commune is going to be just an experiment in total living, an experiment in moving into life beyond all barriers -- barriers of belief, barriers of ideologies, barriers of Catholicism, and communism...going beyond words.

Man is not what he appears to be: he is far more. Neither are flowers only what they appear to be -- it depends on you. When a scientist goes to a flower, he only sees a part of it, the scientific part of it; he has a barrier, a transparent barrier. He never goes beyond that. He will see the

scientific part, the material part of the flower. The rose is no longer beautiful, because beauty is not his concept. He will weigh, measure; he will look into the constituents of the flower, how much color, how much water, how much earth etcetera...but he will never think of the beauty.

When the poet goes, he never bothers about the weight, measurement, earth, water, and other elements that constitute the rose. For him, the rose is constituted of pure beauty; it is something from the beyond which has descended to the earth. He has a different kind of vision, far bigger than the scientist's, far more significant than the scientist's.

But when a mystic goes to the same flower, he dances -- he dances in tremendous joy, because a rose is nothing but God. A rose contains the whole universe for him -- all the stars and all the suns and all the moons, all the possible worlds and impossible worlds are contained in the small roseflower. It is equivalent to God -- neither less nor more -- exactly equivalent to God. He may pray, he may bow down.

The scientist will laugh, the poet will feel a little puzzled....

The scientist will laugh at the stupidity of the mystic: "What is he doing? -- praying to a rose, praying to a tree or praying to a river or praying to a mountain? All nonsense, superstition!" He rejects it. He simply denies the world of the mystic.

The poet will feel a little puzzled. Enjoying the beauty of the rose he can understand, but praying to the rose, bowing down to the rose, shouting "Alleluia!" to the rose? That he cannot understand. That is beyond his perspective. He will feel puzzled. He will think this mystic a little mad.

The scientist will think him superstitious, ignorant. The poet will think him a little eccentric, a little mad -- because he is going beyond his barrier, the mystic is going beyond the barrier of the poet. The mystic is going beyond all barriers -- that's why he is called the mystic, because he lives in the mysterious.

Sarjano, what I am saying about the new commune is absolutely true. And I am not saying much about it, because it is dangerous to say much about it. I don't want to attract the wrong kind of people to it. So just a few hints only for those who will be able to understand the hints. I am speaking in a special code which can be understood only by those who are searching for the mysterious and the miraculous. Others will be debarred -- not by me, by their own prejudice, by their own transparent barrier.

You can see it happening here! People are coming from all over the world -- who is debarring the Poonaites? They are welcome, but they won't come on their own -- their transparent barriers are enough. And it is good that they are not coming, because they will be only a nuisance here. Only a few people from amongst them are coming who are capable of understanding the beyond, the incomprehensible, who are capable of comprehending something of the incomprehensible.

But whether you believe in it or not, listen to this anecdote:

Two homosexuals are talking. First homosexual: "Have you heard of the latest scientific discovery? Normal intercourse causes cancer."

Second homosexual: "Is that so?"

First homosexual: "No, of course not! But spread the rumor."

Sarjano, whether you believe in it or not, please spread the rumor. The rumor has to reach to the farthest corners of the earth. Let it be a rumor! Don't be worried. It is up to me to make it a truth or not. If I find the right people -- and I am finding them -- it is going to materialize.
This mystery that I am talking about is going to materialize. But it will be materialized only for those who are ready to risk all their prejudices, who are ready to sacrifice all their conclusions. Sarjano is one of those people. I trust in him. He has not asked this question for himself, he has asked it for others -- because I know he is perfectly mad. He is not only a poet, but just on the verge of becoming a mystic. He has asked this question for others, it is not his own heart's question. His heart agrees totally with me.
You cannot hide your hearts from me. The moment you come close to me, the only thing that I am interested in is your heart. I talk to your head and I go on looking into your heart. Even in the first encounter with me, I know what is possible with you and what is impossible with you.
I have loved Sarjano from the very first moment. In his head he may have many theories and much knowledge and information -- that is not my concern at all. My concern is that he has a beautiful heart -- the heart that can be transformed into the heart of a mystic.

The third question:
Question 3
BELOVED MASTER,

MY UNDERSTANDING ABOUT MYSELF IS THAT ALL MY DOING ARISES OUT OF A DESIRE TO COMMUNICATE. EVEN THE SUBTLEST THOUGHT IS A CONVERSATION, AN ATTEMPT TO HAVE OTHERS EXPERIENCE AND VERIFY MY EXISTENCE.
WITH THE REALIZATION THAT I AM THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN EXPERIENCE MY EXPERIENCES AND GIVE THEM VALIDITY, ALL OF THIS UNNECESSARY DOING SHOULD DISAPPEAR. IT IS SO SIMPLE AND OBVIOUS. WHY DOES NOT THIS REALIZATION REACH TO MY INNERMOST CORE?

Prem Steven, it is not yet a realization -- it is still information, it is still guesswork, it is still thinking; on the right track, certainly, in the right direction, true, but it is not a realization yet. 'Realization' is a great word. One should use that word very cautiously. You can think great thoughts, but they don't become your realization by thinking. You can think about God and you can come to the conclusion that God is, and you can feel that now there is no doubt in your mind about God's existence -- still it is not a realization.
Realization means precisely realization -- it should become a reality to you, not just an idea! Even if a good idea is there, it is still an idea. The idea can't transform you, and the idea can't reach to the very core of your being. It remains on the circumference.
All ideas are peripheral -- just as all waves remain on the surface. The wave cannot go deep into the ocean; there is no way for it to go. At the deepest core there are no waves.

On the surface a storm may be raging, but at the deepest core, the ocean is calm and quiet -- and always so. Only the surface can get disturbed.

All thinking is a disturbance on the circumference of your being. Bad ideas, good ideas, all are peripheral. People have this belief that bad ideas are peripheral and good ideas are central -- that's not so. Good or bad, it makes no difference. An idea is an idea, and the idea remains peripheral.

Only witnessing can be at the center.

So the first thing is to realize that you have not realized yet. Once something is realized, it is bound to transform you -- instantly it transforms you. Then the question cannot arise: "It is so simple and obvious. Why does not this realization reach to my innermost core?" This "why?" is not possible then. If you realize something, your character immediately changes. Your character is a shadow of your consciousness. Once the consciousness is new, the whole character becomes new.

If you ask why, if you ask how to change, then the realization is only an idea -- and don't trust in ideas. They deceive you, they are great deceivers, they are false coins. You can go on accumulating them believing that you are becoming rich, but one day you will be shattered. The repentance will be great and the misery will be great, because all that time you were accumulating those false coins is simply wasted. And it cannot be reclaimed -- it is gone forever.

The second thing...you say, Steven, "My understanding about myself is that all my doing arises out of a desire to communicate. Even the subtlest thought is a conversation,

an attempt to have others experience and verify my existence."

Why? Why should you want others to verify your existence, to give validity to your existence? Because you are suspicious about it, you are doubtful about your existence. You really don't know that you are; you know you are only when others say you are. You depend on others' opinions.

If they say you are beautiful, you think you are beautiful. If they say you are intelligent, you think you are intelligent. Hence, you want to impress people -- with your intelligence, with your beauty, with all kinds of things you want to impress people, because if you can see something in their eyes, that becomes a validity for you.

That's why it is so enraging when somebody insults you, so damaging to the image when somebody calls you an idiot; otherwise, why should you be bothered? It is none of your business. If he calls you an idiot, that is HIS problem. Just by his calling you an idiot, you don't become an idiot. But you become, because you depend on others' opinions.

That's how we live in the society. We are continuously trying to impress each other. That's why we live as slaves, because if you want to impress other people you have to follow their ideas; only then are they impressed. You have to be good the way they want you to be good. If they are vegetarians, you have to be vegetarian, then they will be impressed -- they will say you are a saint. If they are living a certain kind of life-style, you have to live that; then only will they recognize you.

You can gain respectability only if you follow people's ideas. It is a mutual understanding that you support their

ideas so they feel good that their ideas are right; hence they are right. And then they support you and they give you respect because you are following right ideas, you are a right person. They appreciate you, they shower you with honors, they call you a saint, a sage...it feels very gratifying to you. It is gratifying to them because you pay respect to their ideology, and they pay respect to your personality. This is a mutual arrangement. And you are both in illusion. You are supporting their illusion, they are supporting your illusion. You are partners in the same business of hallucination.
Why should one want to be verified, validated by others? If you know on your own, if you have experienced your being and its beauty and its joy and its grandeur and its glory, who cares what others say?

Buddha was passing through a village, and the people of that village were very much against Buddha. Why were they against Buddha? -- because Buddha was born in that village, he had lived in that village for many years, and the villagers could not believe that a man who was born amongst them had become enlightened. It was offensive to their egos!
That's why Jesus says: A prophet is not respected, is not loved, by his own people. Jesus himself was thrown out of his birthplace. He went only once -- after he became enlightened, he went only once. And the people were so enraged by his assertion, "I have become realized, I am the Son of God," that they took him to the hills to throw him from the mountains. They wanted to kill him. He had to

escape somehow from their clutches, from their hands. And he never went back there.

Buddha was passing through the village in which he was born, just somewhere on the border of India and Nepal, and the people gathered and started insulting him, abusing him, calling him names. And he listened silently for half an hour, and then he said, "It is getting hot and I have to reach the other village, and the people will be waiting for me. More time I cannot give you this time. If you have any more things to say to me, please wait. When I am coming back, then I will have a little more time. You can gather, and you can communicate whatsoever you want to communicate. But this time, excuse me. I have to go."

So cool, so calm, and they were really calling him dirty names. They could not believe their eyes. They said, "We are not saying something to you -- we are insulting you, we are abusing you! Can't you understand what we are saying?"

Buddha said, "I can hear, I can understand everything that you are saying -- but that is not my problem! If you are angry, that is your problem. It is none of my business to interfere in your life. If you want to be angry, if you are enjoying it, enjoy! But I am not going to take any nonsense from you.

"In fact, you have come a little late. If you really wanted me to be disturbed, you should have come ten years ago. Then I would have been really angry with you. I would have reacted, I would have hit you! But now, a great realization has happened that my being does not depend on other people's opinions. What you think about me only shows something about you, not about me! I know myself;

hence I don't depend on anybody's opinions about me. People who are ignorant of their own selves, they have to depend on others."

Steven, this whole mind of communicating with people in an attempt to be verified by them simply shows a deep darkness inside; otherwise, there is no need. And I am not saying that when a man becomes full of light he stops communication -- no. Only he can communicate, because he has something to communicate. What have you got to communicate? What is there that you can share with people? You are a beggar, you are begging. When you want to be verified, validated, certified, you are begging. You are telling them, "Please say something good to me, something nice, so I can feel nice about myself. I am feeling very down, I am feeling very worthless -- give me some worth! Make me feel significant." You are begging, it is not communication.

Communication is possible only when a song has burst forth in your being, when a joy has arisen, when a bliss has been experienced -- then you can share. Then not only communication, not only verbal communication, but on a far deeper level, communion also starts happening. But then you are not a beggar, you are an emperor.

Only buddhas can commune and communicate. Others have nothing to say, nothing to give. In fact, what you are doing while you are talking with people...and people are continuously talking, chattering, if not actually, then in their minds -- just as you say that deep in your mind you are also always talking with somebody, some imaginary person.... You are saying something from your side, and

you are also answering from the other side; a continuous chattering, a dialogue inside you.
This is a state of UNsanity. I will not call it a state of insanity but unsanity. The whole of humanity exists in the state of unsanity. The insane person has gone beyond the normal boundary. The unsane person is also insane but within boundaries. He remains insane inside, but on the outside he goes on behaving in a sane way. So for him I have this word 'unsanity'.
Sanity happens only when you become so totally silent that all inner chattering disappears. When the mind is no more, you are sane. Mind is either unsane -- that is normally insane, or insane -- that means abnormally insane. No-mind is sanity. And in no-mind you understand, you realize, not only your own being but the being -- the very being -- of existence. Then you have something to share, to communicate, to commune, to dance, to celebrate.
Before that, it is a desperate effort to somehow collect an image of yourself from others' opinions. And your image will remain a mess because you will be collecting opinions from so many sources -- they will remain contradictory. One person thinks you are ugly, hates you, dislikes you; another person thinks you are so beautiful, so graceful, that there is nobody who can be compared to you -- you are incomparable. Now what are you going to do with these two opinions? You don't know who you are; now these two opinions are there -- how can you judge which is right? You would like the opinion to be right which says you are beautiful; you don't like the opinion which says that you are ugly. But it is not a question of liking or disliking. You

cannot be deaf to the other opinion, that too is there. You can repress it in the unconscious, but it will remain there. You will be collecting opinions from your parents, from your family, from your neighborhood, from the people you work with, from the teachers, from the priests...thousands of opinions clamoring inside you. And this is how you are going to create an image of yourself. It will be a mess. It will not have any face, any form, it will be a chaos. That's how everybody is, a chaos. No order is possible, because the very center is missing which can create the order.

That center I call awareness, meditation -- AES DHAMMO SANANTANO. This is the inexhaustible law, the ultimate law, that only those who become aware know who they are. And when they know, then nobody can shake their knowing. Nobody can! The whole world may say one thing, but if you know, if you have realized yourself, it doesn't matter.

The whole world was saying that Jesus was mad. The day he was crucified, there was not a single person...thousands had gathered -- not a single person who was in favor of him. All were thinking he was mad.

It was the custom in those days that on particular holidays one criminal could be forgiven. That day was a holiday and three persons were being crucified: two thieves and Jesus. Pontius Pilate asked the people, "We can forgive one person out of the three. Which one would you like to be forgiven?" He was thinking that they would ask for Jesus to be forgiven, but they didn't ask for Jesus. They asked for a thief to be forgiven -- not Jesus but a thief, a well-known thief -- the whole city knew about him. But they could not forgive the innocent man Jesus. Why?

But Jesus is not shaken. The whole world may be against him; he knows God is with him. He dies with a calm and quiet mind, undistracted, with a prayer on his lips -- a prayer which is unique. The last words of Jesus are: "Father, forgive them, because they know not what they are doing. Amen...." Forgive them, for they know not what they are doing! They are crucifying him, but his heart is full of compassion for all those people.
When you know, you know so absolutely. When realization happens, it is so ultimate that even if the whole world is against it, it makes no difference at all. You don't need any validity from anybody else.

The last question:
Question 4
BELOVED MASTER,
WHY DO I ALWAYS FEEL THAT SEX AND MONEY ARE SOMEHOW DEEPLY CONNECTED WITH EACH OTHER?

Nirmal, they are connected. Money is power; hence it can be used in many ways. It can purchase sex, and down the ages that has been the case. Kings have been keeping thousands of wives. Just in this century, the twentieth century, just thirty years ago, forty years ago, the nizam of Hyderabad had five hundred wives!
It is said that Krishna had sixteen thousand wives. I used to think that this was too much, but when I came to know that the nizam of Hyderabad had five hundred wives just forty years ago, then it doesn't seem too much -- only thirty-two

times more! It seems humanly possible. If you can manage five hundred, why not sixteen thousand?
All the kings of the world were doing that. Women were used like cattle. In the great kings' palaces the women were numbered. It was difficult to remember names, so the king could say to his servants, "Bring number four hundred and one" -- because how to remember five hundred names? Numbers...just as soldiers are numbered; they don't have names but only numbers. And it makes a lot of difference. Numbers are absolutely mathematical. Numbers don't breathe, they don't have any heart. Numbers don't have any soul. When a soldier dies in the war, on the notice board you simply read, "Number 15 died." Now, "Number 15 died" is one thing; if you say exactly the name of the person, that is totally different. Then he was a husband and the wife will be a widow now; he was a father and the children will be orphans now; he was the only support of his old parents, now there will be no support. A family is deserted, the light of a family has disappeared. But when number fifteen dies, number fifteen has no wife, remember; number fifteen doesn't have any children, number fifteen doesn't have any old parents. Number fifteen is just number fifteen! And number fifteen is replaceable -- another person will come and will become number fifteen. But no individual human being is replaceable. It is a trick, a psychological trick, to give numbers to soldiers. It helps...nobody takes any note of numbers disappearing; new numbers go on coming and replacing the old numbers. Wives were numbered, and it depended on how much money you had. In fact, in the old days, that was the only

way to know how rich a man was; it was a kind of measurement. How many wives has he?

Now, Hindus, particularly ARYA SAMAJIS, criticize Hazrat Mohammed very much for having nine wives -- and they don't think of Krishna who had sixteen thousand wives. And he is not an exception, he is the rule. In this country, as in other countries, down the ages, the woman has been exploited -- and the way to exploit is money! The whole world has suffered through prostitution, it degrades human beings. And what is a prostitute? She has been reduced to a mechanism, and you can purchase her with money.

But remember perfectly well that your wives are not very different either. A prostitute is like a taxi, and your wife is like your own car, it is a permanent arrangement. Poor people cannot make permanent arrangements, they have to use taxis. Rich people can make permanent arrangements -- they can have their own cars. And the richer they are, the more cars they can have.

I know one person who had three hundred and sixty-five cars -- one car for every day. And he had one car made in solid gold....

Money is power, and power can purchase anything. So, Nirmal, you are not wrong that there is some connection between sex and money.

One thing more has to be understood. The person who represses sex becomes more money-minded, because money becomes a substitute for sex. Money becomes his love. See the greedy person, the money maniac: the way he touches hundred-rupee notes -- he touches them as if he is caressing his beloved; the way he looks at gold, look at his

eyes -- so romantic. Even great poets will feel inferior. Money has become his love, his goddess. In India, people even worship money. There is a particular day to worship money -- actual money -- notes and coins, rupees, they worship. Intelligent people doing such stupid things!

Sex can be diverted in many ways. It can become anger if repressed. Hence the soldier has to be deprived of sex, so that the sex energy becomes his anger, his irritation, his destructiveness so he can be more violent than he ever was. Sex can be diverted into ambition. Repress sex: once sex is repressed, you have energy available, you can channel it into any direction. It can become a search for political power, it can become a search for more money, it can become a search for fame, name, respectability, asceticism, etcetera.

Man has only one energy -- that energy is sex. There are not many energies within you. And only the one energy has been used for all kinds of drives. It is a tremendously potential energy.

People are after money in the hope that when they have more money, they can have more sex. They can have far more beautiful women or men, they can have far more variety. Money gives them freedom of choice.

The person who is free of sexuality, whose sexuality has become a transformed phenomenon, is also free of money, is also free of ambition, is also free of the desire to be famous. Immediately all these things disappear from his life. The moment sex energy starts rising upwards, the moment sex energy starts becoming love, prayer, meditation, then all lower manifestations disappear.

But sex and money are deeply associated. Your idea, Nirmal, has some truth in it.

A wizened little client in a fancy whorehouse is heard shouting from the upper floor: "No! Not that way! I want it my way, the way we do it in Brooklyn. So quit it! Do it my way or forget it!"
The madam climbs the stairs and erupts into the girl's room. "What is the matter with you, Zelda?" she says. "Give it to him his way."
She leaves, the girl lies down, and the man makes love to her in perfectly routine fashion. She sits up, puts on her dressing gown, lights a cigarette and says, "That's your way, Hymie, huh?"
"That's it," he says proudly from the bed.
"That's how you do it in Brooklyn?"
"Right you are!"
"So what is so different about it?"
"In Brooklyn I get it for nothing."

People can be so obsessed with money, as much as they are obsessed with sex. The obsession can be shifted towards money. But money gives you purchasing power and you can purchase anything. You cannot purchase love, of course, but you can purchase sex. Sex is a commodity, love is not.
You cannot purchase prayer, but you can purchase priests. Priests are commodities -- prayer is not a commodity. And that which can be purchased is ordinary, mundane. That which cannot be purchased is sacred. Remember it: the

sacred is beyond money, the mundane is always within money's power.
And sex is the most mundane thing in the world.

A man enters a modern Chicago whorehouse-nightclub run by the gangland syndicate which is now planning to streamline its image. The whorehouse takes up various floors of a skyscraper hotel, and he is received by a lovely young receptionist in a sexy uniform, who sits him at a teakwood interview desk and asks how much money he wants to spend. She explains that prices range from five dollars up to one thousand dollars, depending on the quality and number of girls wanted. Everything is shown on the television intercom. The higher prices are for the lower floors, which have higher ceilings, mirrors over the beds, three and four girls in bed with you at one time, etcetera. Lower prices are for lesser delights, ending with five dollars for a "coal-black nigger mammy with big nostrils," as the lovely young receptionist explains.
The client thinks it over. "Haven't you anything cheaper than five?" he asks at last.
"Of course," says the receptionist. "Seventh floor -- roof garden. One dollar a shot. Self-service."

Money is certainly associated with sex, because sex can be purchased. And anything that can be purchased is part of the world of money.
Remember one thing: your life will remain empty if you know only things which can be purchased, if you know only things which can be sold. Your life will remain utterly futile if your acquaintance is only with commodities.

Become acquainted with things which cannot be purchased and cannot be sold -- then for the first time you start growing wings, for the first time you start soaring high.

One great king, Bimbisara, reached Mahavira. He had heard that Mahavira had attained DHYANA -- meditation, samadhi. In Jaina terminology it is called SAMAYIK -- the ultimate state of prayer or meditation. Bimbisara had everything of this world. He became worried: "What is this samayik? What is this samadhi?" He could not rest at ease, because now for the first time he was aware that there was one thing he had not got -- and he was not a man to remain contented without getting anything that took his fancy.
He traveled to the mountains, found Mahavira, and said, "How much do you want for your samayik? I have come to purchase it. I can give you anything you desire, but give me this samayik, this samadhi, this meditation -- what is this? Where is it? First let me look at it!"
Mahavira was surprised at the whole stupidity of the king, but he was a very polite man, soft, graceful. He said, "You need not have traveled so far. In your own capital I have a follower who has attained to the same state, and he is so poor that he may be willing to sell it. I am not willing, because I don't need any money. You can see I am naked, I don't need any clothes, I am utterly satisfied -- I don't have any needs, so what will I do with your money? Even if you give me your whole kingdom I am not going to accept it. I had my own kingdom -- that I have renounced. I had all that you have got!"
And Bimbisara knew it, that Mahavira had had all and had renounced, so it was difficult to persuade this man to sell.

Certainly, money meant nothing to him. So he said, "Okay, who is this man? Give me his address."
And Mahavira told him, "He is very poor, lives in the poorest part of your city. You may never have visited that part. This is the address...you go and ask him. He is your subject, he can sell it to you, and he is in much need. He has a wife and children and a big family and is really poor."
It was a joke. Bimbisara returned happy, went directly to the poor parts of his capital where he had never been. People could not believe their eyes -- his golden chariot and thousands of soldiers following him.
They stopped in front of the poor man's hut. The poor man came, touched the feet of the king, and said, "What can I do? Just order me."
The king said, "I have come to purchase the thing called samadhi, meditation, and I am ready to pay any price you ask."
The poor man started crying, tears rolled down his cheeks, and he said, "I am sorry. I can give you my life, I can die for you right now, I can cut off my head -- but how can I give you my samadhi? It is not sellable, it is not purchasable -- it is not a commodity at all. It is a state of consciousness. Mahavira must have played a joke on you."

Unless you know something which cannot be sold and cannot be purchased, unless you know something which is beyond money, you have not known real life. Sex is not beyond money -- love is. Transform your sex into love, and transform your love into prayer -- so one day even kings like Bimbisara may feel jealous of you. Become a Mahavira, a Buddha, become a Christ, a Zarathustra, a Lao

Tzu. Only then have you lived, only then have you known the mysteries of life!

Money and sex are the lowest, and people are living only in the world of money and sex -- and they think they are living. They are not living, they are only vegetating, they are only dying. This is not life. Life has many more kingdoms to be revealed, an infinite treasure which is not of this world. Neither sex can give it to you, nor money. But you can attain to it.

You can use your sex energy to attain it, and you can use your money power to attain it. Of course, it cannot be attained by money or by sex, but you can use your sex energy, your money power, in such an artful way that you can create a space in which the beyond can descend.

I am not against sex, and I am not against money, remember it. Always remember! But I am certainly for helping you go beyond them -- I am certainly for going beyond.

Use everything as a step. Don't deny anything. If you have money, you can meditate more easily than the poor person. You can have more time to yourself. You can have a small temple in your house; you can have a garden, rosebushes, where meditation will be easier. You can allow yourself a few holidays in the mountains, you can go into isolation and live without worry. If you have money, use it for something which money cannot purchase, but for which money can create a space.

Sexual energy is a wastage if it only remains confined to sex, but it becomes a great blessing if it starts transforming its quality: sex not for sex' sake -- use sex as a communion of love. Use sex as a meeting of two souls, not only of two

bodies. Use sex as a meditative dance of two persons' energies. And the dance is far richer when man and woman are dancing together -- and sex is the ultimate in dance: two energies meeting, merging, dancing, rejoicing.

But use it as a stepping-stone, as a jumping-board. And when you reach the climax of your sex orgasm, become aware of what is happening, and you will be surprised -- time has disappeared, mind has disappeared, ego has disappeared. For a moment there is utter silence. This silence is the real thing!

This silence can be attained through other means, too, and with less wastage of energy. This silence, this mindlessness, this timelessness, can be attained through meditation. In fact, if a person consciously goes into his sex experience, he is bound to become a meditator sooner or later. His consciousness of the sex experience is bound to make him aware that the same can happen without any sexuality involved in it. The same can happen just sitting silently by yourself, doing nothing. The mind can be dropped, time can be dropped, and the moment you drop mind and time and the ego, you are orgasmic.

The sexual orgasm is very momentary, and whatsoever is momentary brings frustration in its wake, brings misery and unhappiness and sadness and repentance. But the quality of being orgasmic can become a continuity in you, a continuum -- it can become your very flavor. But it is possible only through meditation, not through sex alone.

Use sex, use money, use the body, use the world, but we have to reach God. Let God remain always the goal.

Enough for today.

The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 2

Chapter #5

Chapter title: In the litter of the wayside
5 July 1979 am in Buddha Hall

THE PERFUME OF SANDALWOOD,
ROSEBAY, OR JASMINE,
CANNOT TRAVEL AGAINST THE WIND.

BUT THE FRAGRANCE OF VIRTUE
TRAVELS EVEN AGAINST THE WIND,
AS FAR AS THE ENDS OF THE WORLD.

HOW MUCH FINER
IS THE FRAGRANCE OF VIRTUE
THAN OF SANDALWOOD, ROSEBAY,
OF THE BLUE LOTUS, OR JASMINE!

THE FRAGRANCE OF SANDALWOOD OR ROSEBAY
DOES NOT TRAVEL FAR.
BUT THE FRAGRANCE OF VIRTUE
RISES TO THE HEAVENS.

DESIRE NEVER CROSSES THE PATH
OF VIRTUOUS AND WAKEFUL MEN.
THEIR BRIGHTNESS SETS THEM FREE.

HOW SWEETLY THE LOTUS GROWS
IN THE LITTER OF THE WAYSIDE.
ITS PURE FRAGRANCE DELIGHTS THE HEART.

FOLLOW THE AWAKENED
AND FROM AMONG THE BLIND
THE LIGHT OF YOUR WISDOM
WILL SHINE OUT PURELY.

Man is not a being but only a becoming. Man is a process, a growth, a possibility, a potentiality. Man is not yet actual. Man has to be, he has yet to arrive. Man is born not as an essence but only as an existence...a great space where much can happen, or nothing may happen -- it all depends on you.

Man has to create himself. He is not ready-made, he is not given. And the creation has to be a self-creation -- nobody else can make you. You are not a thing, a commodity; you cannot be produced or manufactured. You have to self-create yourself, you have to become awakened on your own, nobody can wake you up.

This is man's grandeur, his glory, that he is the only being on the earth who is not a being but a freedom to be. All other beings are already fixed, patterned. They bring a blueprint, and they simply follow the blueprint. The parrot will become a parrot, the dog will become a dog, the lion a lion; there is no question of the lion being somebody else. But with man it is relevant to ask whether he is really a man.

Each lion is really a lion, and each elephant is an elephant too, but man is a question mark. A man may be a man, may not be. A man can fall below the animals, and a man can rise above the gods. That ultimate state above the gods is buddhahood -- the awakening, the ultimate awakening, the realization of your potential in its totality.

The buddha is above gods. This was one of the reasons Hindus could not forgive Gautama the Buddha, because he said the buddha is above the gods. Gods are also asleep; of course, their dreams are nice, their dreams are not nightmares, they live in heaven. Their lives are only of pleasure. Heaven is nothing but pure hedonism, the very idea is hedonistic. Hell is just the opposite. Hell is pain, heaven is pleasure; hell is a nightmare, heaven a sweet dream. But dreams ARE dreams; sweet or bitter, it does not matter.

The gods are also asleep and dreaming beautiful dreams. The buddha is awakened, he is no longer dreaming. The Buddhist scriptures say: The day Siddhartha Gautam became a buddha gods came from the sky to worship him, to wash his feet. Hindus could not forgive this idea, because for them the gods in heaven -- Indra and other gods -- are the supremost. And look at the arrogance of the Buddhists who say gods came from heaven to wash the feet of a human being.

Buddhism raised humanity to its highest pinnacle. No other religion has done that. Man becomes the center of existence. God is not the center of existence, according to Buddha, but the man who has become awakened. The periphery consists of those who are asleep and blind, and the center consists of those who have eyes, who are awakened. Gods are simply dropped; they are no longer relevant. What Nietzsche did after two thousand years, Buddha had done already.

A great poet, Chandidas, was very much impressed by Gautam Buddha -- and who will not be impressed by this man? He has said: SABAR UPAR MANUS SATYA,

TAHAR UPAR NAHIN -- the truth of man is the highest truth, there is no other truth higher than that. But let me remind you again: when Buddha talks about man, he talks about the realized man, not about you -- you are only on the way, you are only in the process. You are a seed.

The seed can have four possibilities. The seed may remain a seed forever, closed, windowless, not in communion with existence, dead, because life means communion with existence. The seed IS dead, it has not yet communicated with the earth, with the sky, with the air, with the wind, with the sun, with the stars. It has not yet made any attempt to have a dialogue with all that exists. It is utterly lonely, enclosed, encapsulated into itself, surrounded by a China Wall. The seed lives in its own grave.

The first possibility is that the seed may remain a seed. That is very unfortunate -- a man may remain simply a seed. With all the potential at your disposal, with all the blessings ready to shower on you, you may never open your doors.

The second possibility is that the seed may be courageous enough, may dive deep into the soil, may die as an ego, may drop its armor, may start a communion with existence, may become one with the earth. Great courage is needed, because who knows? -- this death may be ultimate, there may be no birth following it. What is the guarantee? There is no guarantee; it is a gamble. Only a few men gather courage enough to gamble, to risk.

To be a sannyasin is the beginning of the gamble. You are risking your life, you are risking your ego. You are risking because you are dropping all your securities, all your safety arrangements. You are opening windows...who knows who

is going to come in -- the friend or the enemy? Who knows? You are becoming vulnerable. That's what sannyas is all about. That's what Buddha was teaching his whole life. Forty-two years continuously, transforming seeds into plants -- that was his work -- transforming ordinary human beings into sannyasins.

A sannyasin is a plant, a sprout -- soft, delicate. The seed is never in danger, remember. What danger can there be for the seed? It is absolutely protected. But the plant is always in danger, the plant is very soft. The seed is like a stone, hard, hidden behind a hard crust. But the plant has to pass through a thousand and one hazards. That is the second stage: the seed dissolving into the soil, the man disappearing as an ego, disappearing as a personality, becoming a plant.

The third possibility, which is even more rare, because not all plants are going to attain to that height where they can bloom into flowers, a thousand and one flowers.... Very few human beings attain to the second stage, and very few of those who attain the second stage attain the third, the stage of the flower. Why can't they attain the third stage, the stage of the flower? Because of greed, because of miserliness, they are not ready to share...because of a state of unlovingness.

Courage is needed to become a plant, and love is needed to become a flower. A flower means the tree is opening up its heart, releasing its perfume, giving its soul, pouring its being into existence. The seed CAN become a plant although it is difficult to drop the armor, but in one way it is simple. The seed will only be gathering more and more, accumulating more and more; the seed only takes from the

soil. The tree only takes from the water, from the air, from the sun; its greed is not disturbed, on the contrary, its ambition is fulfilled. It goes on becoming bigger and bigger. But a moment comes when you have taken so much that now you have to share. You have been benefited so much, now you have to serve. God has given you so much, now you have to thank, be grateful -- and the only way to be grateful is to shower your treasures, give them back to existence, be as unmiserly as existence has been with you. Then the tree grows into flowers, it blossoms.

And the fourth stage is that of fragrance. The flower is still gross, it is still material, but the fragrance is subtle, it is almost something nonmaterial. You cannot see it, it is invisible. You can only smell it, you cannot grab it, you cannot grasp it. A very sensitive understanding is needed to have a dialogue with the fragrance. And beyond fragrance there is nothing. The fragrance disappears into the universe, becomes one with it.

These are the four stages of the seed, and these are the four stages of man too. Don't remain a seed. Gather courage -- courage to drop the ego, courage to drop the securities, courage to drop the safeties, courage to be vulnerable. But then don't remain a tree, because a tree without flowers is poor. A tree without flowers is empty, a tree without flowers is missing something very essential. It has no beauty -- without love there is no beauty. And it is only through flowers that the tree shows its love. It has taken so much from the sun and the moon and from the earth; now it is time to give!

Life has to attain a balance always. You have taken so much, now give it. Become a flower! Only when you

become a flower is there a possibility of disappearing as a fragrance. But then too, remember, don't remain a closed flower, don't remain a bud; otherwise your fragrance will not be released. And unless your fragrance is released, you are not free, you are in a bondage.

This bondage Buddha calls SANSARA -- the world. And he calls the freedom, the freedom of the fragrance, nirvana: total cessation, disappearance, dissolution. The part disappears into the whole, the dewdrop slips into the ocean and becomes the ocean. The day you disappear and become the ocean is the day when in one sense you are no more, and in another sense you are for the first time -- you have attained beinghood.

This beinghood is real godhood. This beinghood, this crystallized, oceanic experience, is liberation, salvation, MOKSHA, KAIVALYA, nirvana. You can use any word that you want to use but they all mean the same: absolute freedom of the soul, with no boundaries, with no limitations.

The sutras:

THE PERFUME OF SANDALWOOD,
ROSEBAY, OR JASMINE,
CANNOT TRAVEL AGAINST THE WIND.

Obviously! The fragrance of sandalwood, rosebay or jasmine is part of the material world. It can travel only with the wind, not against the wind. It has to follow the laws of matter. It IS matter. Because it has to follow the laws of matter it is not really free -- free only in a relative sense.

The fragrance is more free than the flower, the flower is more free than the tree, the tree is more free than the seed. But these freedoms are only relative, not absolute.

And Buddha says, remember: the target is absolute freedom, transcendence of all laws. It is only in transcending all laws that you will become part of the ultimate law: AES DHAMMO SANANTANO. It is only by transcending all limitations of gross matter that you will be able to become as infinite as the sky.

Unless you become universal you have not attained to your potential. You are meant to become universal, and you have become small persons, confined, almost as if you are living in a prison cell, dark and dismal, no door, no window, an ugly existence, surrounded by all kinds of pathologies -- ego, greed, anger, lust, jealousy, possessiveness. These are your companions. What fragrance have you experienced in life?

You have not yet known love without lust. You have not known yet any state where no limitation exists. You are bound to certain very gross laws. You are part of the gravitation, you have not yet known anything of grace. You go on and on downwards, because those laws of gravitation go on pulling you downwards. You don't know how to rise, soar upwards. You don't know anything about levitation. In science, they don't talk about levitation, they only talk about gravitation, the downward pull. But this is such a simple phenomenon to understand, that in nature everything is balanced by its polar opposite. If there is a downward pull, gravitation, then there must be an upward pull to balance it -- that is levitation. In a more poetic language it is called grace.

There are two laws: the law of gravitation, the earthly law, gross, material; and the law of grace, the divine law, what Buddha calls the divine law -- AES DHAMMO SANANTANO -- the eternal, inexhaustible law, the divine law, which pulls you upwards.

THE PERFUME OF SANDALWOOD, ROSEBAY, OR JASMINE, CANNOT TRAVEL AGAINST THE WIND. It has certain absolute limitations, it can only ride on the wind. It cannot have its own will, it is not really free. Unless you can exist in total freedom, something is missing. If you have to follow the laws, then you are a prisoner. The laws may give you enough rope, but still you are a prisoner.

That's how things are: if enough rope is given to you, you forget about the prison. For example, these so-called nations -- India, Pakistan, Japan, Germany -- these are all great prisons, but they are so great that you cannot see the boundaries of your prison. Cross the boundaries of your nation and you will see that you were a prisoner. But the prison is big enough; you can move in the prison anywhere you want. But move out of the prison, try to enter another prison, and then you will see the limitation.

These are man-made prisons; big enough so they can give you a false feeling of freedom, but there is no freedom. Unless all nations disappear from the world, the earth will remain a slave, humanity will remain in prisons, small and big. But it makes no difference whether the prison is very big and you cannot see the wall surrounding it.... The walls may be very subtle -- of passports and visas -- the walls may be VERY subtle, you may not see them, but they are there. You are not free to move.

Almost all the constitutions of the world say that the freedom of movement is the birthright of every human being, but it is only written in the books, it is not true. You cannot move freely. If you want to go to Russia, impossible; if you want to enter into China, impossible. Nations have become such great prisons, and your presidents and your so-called prime ministers are all nothing but jailors. Those who talk about freedom are nothing but policemen. They say they are guarding you for your own safety, but in fact they are prison wardens watching so that you cannot escape.

I have heard:
An old Russian was dying, and he heard a knock on the door. He asked, "Who is there?"
And some very ghostly voice said, "Death."
The old Russian said, "Thank God! I was thinking it is the secret police."

And there are prisons within prisons like Chinese boxes -- boxes within boxes.... India is a big prison; then there are Hindus and Mohammedans and Christians and Sikhs and Jainas and Buddhists -- now these are small prisons. The Christian can go to the church, he cannot go to the temple; the Hindu can go to the temple, he cannot go to the church. He has been taught and conditioned that the church is not a religious place; the Christian has been told that the church is the only right place to go -- all other religions are false, and all other religions lead you astray. Unless you are a Christian you cannot be saved. And then within Christianity there are Catholics and Protestants, and then

among Protestants and Catholics there are smaller and smaller subsects. And prisons become smaller and smaller. Then there are political prisons: somebody is a communist and somebody is a socialist, and somebody is a capitalist...and so on and so forth. And you are not satisfied even with these: then you make Rotary Clubs and Lions Clubs.... Your thirst to be a prisoner is such that you can't simply be a human being. You have to be a Rotarian and you proudly declare, "I am a Rotarian," "I am a Lion." You are not satisfied with being simply a human being, you have to be a Lion. And then there are smaller and smaller confinements.

Rather than getting out of these prison cells, we go on decorating them, we go on making them more and more comfortable. We are living under the law of gravitation, we are living as prisoners. We cannot go against the wind -- our life is gross. Buddha says: Be aware of it: what are you doing with your life? Reconsider, meditate over it, what you have made of yourself.

BUT THE FRAGRANCE OF VIRTUE
TRAVELS EVEN AGAINST THE WIND,
AS FAR AS THE ENDS OF THE WORLD.

Buddha says: But there is a flowering of your inner being, which is far more beautiful than sandalwood, rosebay or jasmine. Its beauty is its absolute freedom. It can go against the wind. The really virtuous man lives in freedom; he follows no commandments, he follows no scriptures, he follows nobody else but his own inner light. He lives according to his heart -- he is a rebel.

But Buddha is talking about the fragrance of real virtue. He is not talking about the so-called righteous, he is not talking about the so-called "people of character," your so-called saints and mahatmas -- he is not talking about them. They are not free people. In fact, the fragrance of sandalwood, rosebay and jasmine is far more free than your so-called saints. They live according to man-made laws. The fragrance of rosewood, the fragrance of sandalwood, the fragrance of other flowers, at least follow the laws of nature. But your saints, your so-called virtuous people, they follow laws which are man-made -- laws made by blind people, laws made by ignorant people, laws made by people who are not yet awakened, who know nothing of awareness.

Who makes your laws? Who makes your Constitutions? Who is responsible for running the society and arranging and managing the society? Just people as blind as you, maybe more learned, maybe more informed. But it makes no difference whether a blind man is more informed about light or less informed about light -- a blind man is a blind man. Just watch your saints, and you will be surprised! -- they live in far deeper bondage than ordinary people.

A Jaina monk wanted to come to see me. He sent a message that he had been longing to see me for many years, and now he was in the town and he wanted to see me. But his followers didn't allow him, the Jainas don't allow him to come to this commune. Now what kind of saint is this man whose followers decide where he should go and where he should not go? But there is a mutual arrangement: the followers call him a saint, they worship him, now he has to concede, compromise. He has to follow the followers.

Your so-called saints and leaders are followers of their own followers. It is such a stupid world, so ridiculous, the whole situation. On the surface it seems the saint is the decisive factor; he gives people advice to follow him. But if you look deep down, you will be surprised -- the saint is following his own followers. In fact, they decide. And they have decisive power because they can worship you and they can insult you. They can worship you if you follow them, if you go according to the ideas, prejudices, that they carry in their minds; otherwise you are no longer a saint. They can degrade you -- they have the power to raise you to sainthood or to degrade you to being a sinner. If you want to be a saint you have to follow all kinds of stupidities. You may know deep down that this is stupid.

I sent him a message saying, "This is stupid, ridiculous! Why should you ask your followers? Who is the follower, you or they? Why should you ask them?"

He said, "You are right, but I have to depend on them. At my age I cannot leave them because I have never worked in my life. I depend for my food, for my clothes, for everything on them."

Now you see the arrangement. This is called spirituality, and the arrangement is financial!

A really virtuous man is certainly free, and is so free that he can go against the wind, he can go against the whole society, he can go against the whole past, he can go against all conventions. In fact, he does -- because in going against all the conventions and the dead past he asserts his freedom.

It is because of this that I am being condemned all over this country and now, slowly slowly, all over the world. The

only reason is that they wanted me to go with the wind, they wanted me to be conventional, orthodox. They were ready to worship me, they had come many times to me saying that if I could simply follow the traditional religion they would worship me as a saint. I said, "I am not interested in being worshipped or in being a saint. I want just simply to be myself. And I am not going to compromise with anybody, whoever he is. Compromise is not my way."
Because I am going against the wind they are very much offended. But if you are virtuous...and what is virtue? It is not some character cultivated from the outside. Virtue is the fragrance of meditativeness, virtue is the fragrance of the flower of meditation; hence, I say it is not righteousness, it is not moralistic.

I have heard:
The town whore in Jerusalem is being stoned. When Jesus says, "Let whoever is without sin among you cast the first stone," an old lady struggles over with an enormous rock, drops it on the town whore's head and polishes the bitch off.
Jesus looks down and says, "You know, mother, sometimes you really piss me off."

The righteous, the moralistic, the puritan, is always ready...in fact his whole joy is how to condemn, how to send more and more people to hell, how to crucify people, how to kill and destroy. He is ready to suffer, he is ready to be a masochist, he is ready to go through all kinds of foolish austerities, just to enjoy the feeling of superiority,

the feeling of holier-than-thou, the feeling that "You are all sinners and I am a saint."
The real saint has a totally different quality. He is not moralistic; he knows how to forgive, because he knows God has forgiven him so much. He knows human limitations, because he himself has suffered through those human limitations. He can forgive. He is understanding. The moralist is never understanding, he is never forgiving; he cannot forgive because he has been so hard with himself. He has attained to his so-called character with such difficulty that the only joy, the only pleasure that he can get is that of holier-than-thou. How can he forgive? If he forgives then he cannot enjoy the egoistic trip that he has been on.
The ascetic is the most egoistic person in the world. The virtuous person is not an ascetic.

The story is told about Buddha himself:
For six years when he left his palace he lived through great austerities -- that was the traditional way of seeking and searching for the truth. He tortured his body, he fasted, he fasted so much that it is said that he became absolutely thin, just bones; you could have counted his ribs. He became so thin that his stomach was touching his back -- there was nothing left between the stomach and the back. He became so weak that he could not cross a small river, the Niranjana. I had been to the place just to see. The Niranjana is such a small river, and it was not the rainy season, but he could not cross, he could not swim the river. He must have been utterly weak.

That day, a great revelation happened to him: "I have been doing unnecessary violence to myself." He had five followers; they were all ascetics and they had become followers of Buddha because he was far ahead of them. They could only do so much, but he was doing many times more; hence they were followers. That evening Buddha decided, "It is stupid to torture the body, and how can you attain to the soul by torturing the body? There seems to be no logical relationship." And he saw, "If I cannot even cross the river, the poor river Niranjana, how am I going to cross this huge ocean of the world? The body needs food, the body needs nourishment, the body needs strength, so that I can meditate, so that I can contemplate, so that I can inquire, with zest, enthusiasm, energy."

He decided to drop all austerities. His five disciples immediately left him. They said, "Gautam has fallen from his holy state, he is no longer a saint." They left him immediately; they were not with HIM. They were only with him because of his masochistic life-style -- they must have been masochists themselves.

And Gautam Buddha became enlightened the next day. Dropping all austerities, dropping all that unnecessary inner conflict, that civil war, he became so quiet, so silent, that the next morning he could see, he became perceptive. In his silence, all turmoil, all chattering was dissolved. In the early morning as the sun was rising, he started rising within his being. He was awakened, he became a buddha.

Virtue came out of silence, out of meditativeness, out of relaxation -- not out of effort, not out of tension, not out of struggle. He went in search of his five old followers to give them the message: "Don't torture yourselves anymore. This

has nothing to do with holiness. This has nothing to do with religion."
Meditation has to happen first, then character comes as a shadow to it. And if meditation does not happen, then your character is just a hypocrisy and nothing else. Your saints are great hypocrites; they say one thing, they think another, maybe just the opposite. They do one thing, but they want to do something exactly the opposite. On the surface they show one thing, but deep down they are just its contrary.

A girl confesses that she let her boyfriend put his hand on her knee. "And is that ALL he did?" asks the priest.
"No. He slid his finger under the elastic of my panties too."
"And then what?"
"And then he spread open my fuzz and began to tickle my doo-funny."
"And then? And then?"
"And then my mother walked in."
"Oh shit!" says the priest.

These priests, these saints, they are far more ugly than you are, far more ugly than you ever can be, because they are far more split, divided. They are so much repressed that their conscious and unconscious have fallen apart. They preach one thing, they practice another. At their front door you will find one person, at the back door you will find a totally different person. You will not even be able to recognize them -- they wear masks.
These are not virtuous people. Buddha is not talking about such virtue, he is talking about the virtue that arises out of the flowering of meditation. Buddha is insistent on

DHYANA -- meditation. That is his basic contribution to the world. His most fundamental approach is that first you have to become awakened at the center, then your circumference will be full of light -- of its own accord, not vice versa.

You have been told by the priest to first practice character, and then your center will change. That is nonsense. The center can never follow the circumference, because the center is far more important, far more basic -- it is the center, it CANNOT follow the circumference. But the circumference always follows the center. Transform the center first, and don't be worried about the circumference. That's my insistence too, there I absolutely agree with Buddha. Meditation first, and then all else shall follow of its own accord.

Jesus says: Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and all else shall be added unto you.

What Jesus says with "kingdom of God" Buddha says with "meditation." Buddha's words are far more scientific than Jesus'. Jesus is more a poet than Buddha; Jesus talks more in parables than Buddha. Buddha talks in a clear-cut, logical, mathematical way. He is a man who does not want to say anything in any way which can be interpreted in many ways. He does not want to use poetry, because poetry is vague, can have many interpretations. He talks as a mathematician, he talks as a logician, so that each word has a fixed meaning and a fixed connotation.

...THE FRAGRANCE OF VIRTUE TRAVELS EVEN AGAINST THE WIND, AS FAR AS THE ENDS OF THE WORLD.

HOW MUCH FINER IS THE FRAGRANCE OF VIRTUE THAN OF SANDALWOOD, ROSEBAY, OF THE BLUE LOTUS, OR JASMINE!

The fragrance of a blue lotus or jasmine or sandalwood is fine, subtle, but compared to the fragrance of virtue it is very gross. Virtue really has a fragrance, and it travels to the farthest corners of the world.

How have you come here to me? From different corners of the world you have traveled, sometimes not even exactly clear as to why; but something has been pulling you, some unknown force has moved your heart, something has been felt by the deepest core of your being. Sometimes you have come even against yourself. Your mind was saying, "Don't go! There is no need to go anywhere." Still you have come. You must have smelled a perfume -- a perfume which has nothing to do with the visible. It is an invisible phenomenon.

Many, many more people will be coming soon. The fragrance is reaching them, is bound to reach. Anybody anywhere who is really in search of truth is bound to come. It is irresistible, it HAS to happen. That's how it has been happening all along, down the ages. Thousands of people traveled to Buddha, thousands of people traveled to Mahavira, to Lao Tzu, to Zarathustra -- for no reason at all, because whatsoever they were saying was available in the scriptures.

What I am saying here you can read in the Bhagavadgita, in the Bible, in the Koran, in THE DHAMMAPADA, what I am saying you can find easily in the Upanishads, in the

TAO TEH CHING -- but you will not find the fragrance. Those are flowers -- old, dead, dried up. You can keep a roseflower in your Bible; soon it will be dry, the fragrance will be gone, it will be only a corpse, a remembrance of the real flower. So are the scriptures. They have to be made alive again by another buddha; otherwise they cannot breathe.

That's why I am speaking on THE DHAMMAPADA, on the Gita, on the Bible -- to let them breathe again. I can breathe life into them. I can share my fragrance with them, I can pour my fragrance into them. Hence, the Christian who is really a Christian, not just by social conditioning but because of a great love for Christ, he will find Christ alive again in my words. Or if somebody is a Buddhist he will find in my words Buddha speaking again -- in twentieth-century language, with twentieth-century people.

HOW MUCH FINER IS THE FRAGRANCE OF VIRTUE THAN OF SANDALWOOD, ROSEBAY, OF THE BLUE LOTUS OR JASMINE! It is so fine it can travel against the wind, it can travel against all the laws. It can go against gravitation, it can rise upwards, it can reach the highest skies.

THE FRAGRANCE OF SANDALWOOD OR ROSEBAY
DOES NOT TRAVEL FAR.
BUT THE FRAGRANCE OF VIRTUE
RISES TO THE HEAVENS.

The fragrance of the flowers cannot travel far. It is momentary, it is finite; it can go only so far and then it disappears. But the fragrance of buddhahood can travel to

the very ends of the world because it is infinite, AND it is something beyond time, beyond space. In fact, even when the body of a buddha is gone, the fragrance continues to travel.

Those who are really perceptive, sensitive, can catch hold of it even when a buddha has been gone for centuries. It is possible to be a contemporary of Buddha even now, to have a communion with Jesus even now. The flower is no more, but the fragrance has become part of the universe -- the trees have it, the winds have it, the clouds have it. Now Jesus is not in the physical body, but Jesus has become universal. If you know how to drink out of the universal, if you know how to contact the universal, you will be surprised: all the buddhas become alive because they are all contemporary, time makes no difference.

That's my whole effort here: to make you contemporaries of Jesus, of Buddha, of Zarathustra, of Lao Tzu. If you can be contemporaries of these awakened souls, what is the point of remaining contemporaries to your ordinary world and its ordinary citizens, the so-called human beings, who have nothing of humanity in them, who have not yet become beings, who are just hollow, empty, meaningless? What is the point of living in the neighborhood of empty cells when you can be a neighbor of Gautama the Buddha? Yes, that is possible -- it is possible by transcending time and space. And in meditation you transcend both. In meditation you don't know where you are, you don't know the time, you don't know the space. In meditation, time and space both disappear -- you simply are.

That moment, when you simply are, Buddha is just by your side; you are surrounded by buddhas of all the ages. You

will be living for the first time a life worth living, a life of significance: when you can hold hands with buddhas and krishnas, when you can dance with Krishna and sing with Meera and sit with Kabir. It is possible -- because only the flowers have disappeared, but the fragrance is eternal. It cannot disappear.
And then all the scriptures become alive for you. Then reading the Bible, you are not just reading a book -- then Moses speaks to you, Abraham speaks to you, Jesus speaks to you, face-to-face!

DESIRE NEVER CROSSES THE PATH
OF VIRTUOUS AND WAKEFUL MEN.
THEIR BRIGHTNESS SETS THEM FREE.

Desire means greed for more and more. Desire means discontent, discontent with what is, discontent with the present; hence you seek contentment in your hopes for the future. Today is empty; you can live only by the hope of tomorrow. The tomorrow will bring something...although many tomorrows have come and gone and that something never happens, but you go on hoping against hope. Only death will come.
Desires are never fulfilled. In the very nature of things they cannot be fulfilled. The wakeful person looks into the desiring mind and laughs. The desiring mind is the most stupid mind, because it is desiring something which cannot be fulfilled in the very nature of things. Just as you cannot get oil through sand -- you can go on and on working on the sand, but you will not get oil out of it, it does not exist

in the sand, it is impossible -- exactly like that, desire is just a deception.

It keeps you occupied -- obviously, that's its whole purpose -- it keeps you occupied, it keeps you hoping, it keeps promising you. Desire is a politician: it goes on promising you, "Just wait -- five years more and everything is going to be absolutely right. Just five years more and the world is going to become a paradise." And the politicians have been saying that for thousands of years. And look at the unintelligent humanity: it still goes on believing in the politicians. It changes politicians; when it becomes tired of one, it starts listening to another. But that is not a change at all. One politician is replaced by another; hence democracies live as two-party systems.

One party remains in power for five years; according to the promises you go on hoping, then you are frustrated -- nothing happens. Things get worse than they were before. But by this time, the other party that is not in power starts promising you. And the stupidity is such that you start believing the other party. You bring the other party into power; for five years it will deceive you. By that time the first party that has deceived you before has again become creditable; again it has attained credit, again it has criticized the ruling party and again it has gained respect in your eyes. And AGAIN it has stirred your hoping mind. And people's memories are very short; hence politicians go on deceiving.

Desire is a politician. One desire keeps you occupied for many years; then, frustration in your hands, you are tired of it, weary of it, you drop out of it -- but immediately you enter into another desire. Another politician is waiting for

you. You were after money; then tired, you forget all about it and you start rushing for power or for fame.

Desire is so cunning that it can even take the form of religion, it can become religious. It is ready to have any mask. It can start thinking of heaven and heavenly pleasures. It can give you the idea that this life it is not possible, but next life you are going to be in paradise, and in paradise all kinds of fulfillments...wish-fulfilling trees. You just sit underneath the tree, you wish, and it is fulfilled. What are you going to wish for? Your wishes will be stupid because they will come out of your mind. What pleasures are you going to seek in heaven? Just one day think that you have reached heaven: now what do you want? You will start asking for a hotel, for a moviehouse, for a woman, for a man...what else? The same things! And the same frustrations will follow.

DESIRE NEVER CROSSES THE PATH OF VIRTUOUS AND WAKEFUL MEN. Buddha says: I call that man virtuous who has become utterly aware of the deceptiveness of desire and hence desire never crosses his mind. His mind remains desireless. The only way to be desireless is to be wakeful, watchful. Watchfulness creates a light in you, and in that light the darkness of desire cannot enter.

THEIR BRIGHTNESS SETS THEM FREE. And when you are watchful there is a luminosity in your being; a great intelligence arises in you. Ordinary man lives in stupidity; the ordinary man lives in a very foolish way. The moment you become attuned to your inner music, you become attuned to meditativeness, great intelligence is released. In that intelligence it is impossible for you to be deceived by

desire. In that intelligence for the first time you start understanding things as they are, you stop MISunderstanding. Ordinarily all your understanding is nothing but misunderstanding. You may think that you are very intelligent, but only stupid people think that they are intelligent. Intelligence itself is very unselfconscious. It functions, functions perfectly, but it creates no self-consciousness, it brings no idea of the ego, no superiority. It is very humble, it is very simple.

But as ordinary man exists, he goes on misunderstanding. You read the Bible and you misunderstand. Even those closest disciples of Jesus never understood him. I say again and again that Jesus is one of the most unfortunate masters who has ever walked on the earth -- not only because he was crucified and had only three years time to work, but because he had a very stupid lot of followers.

The day Jesus is going to be caught, and it has become absolutely certain that he has been betrayed by one of his disciples, Judas, he asks his other eleven apostles, "Have you something to ask me?" And do you know what they asked? They asked such foolish things. Jesus must have cried. He may have prayed deep down in his heart, as he did later on again on the cross: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they are asking."

What were they asking? They were asking, "Master, now that you are leaving, a few things have to be made clear. In the world of God, in the kingdom of God, that you have talked about so much again and again, you will certainly be on the right hand of God; then who will be on your right hand? Amongst us who is going to be second to you and

who is going to be third and the fourth? What will the hierarchy be?"
See the question! The master is going to be crucified tomorrow, and these foolish people are worried about hierarchy, who will be the highest. They are ready to concede to Jesus, "Okay, that much we accept, that you will be second to God, but who will be third and the fourth and the fifth? Let it be decided clearly, because now you are leaving and we may not meet again soon, so everything has to be certain!"
The desirous mind, the ambitious mind -- they have not understood Jesus at all. And it is said Jesus fell on his knees and prayed and tears rolled down his cheeks. Nobody knows what he prayed, but he must have been praying: "Forgive these people, they know not what they are asking." And he must have been crying because this was his whole life's work, these people. And he has been telling them not to desire, not to be ambitious. He has been telling them, "Those who are the first in this world will be the last in my kingdom of God, and those who are the last will be the first." But they have not understood that he is telling them not to be ambitious.

Just the other day, Premgeet sent me a small anecdote on misinterpretation:
The frantic nurse ran after a screaming patient down the corridor of the ward, carrying a bowl. She was stopped by the surgeon who said, "Nurse! Nurse! I told you to prick his boil!"

You get it? She was boiling his prick! But this is exactly what goes on happening -- the mob mind cannot understand. Misunderstanding is inevitable, because the mass mind is deaf. While you are talking to people they are not really listening, they are only pretending to listen. A thousand and one thoughts are crossing through their minds; they are not really there, they are never present to any situation, they are always absent. They are not where they are, they are always somewhere else. When they are in Poona, they are in Beijing; when they are in Beijing, they are in Poona. Strange people! Wherever they are you can be certain that there at least they are not; anywhere else in the world they can be. How can they understand?

And they listen only to words, they never listen to the meaning -- because the meaning can be listened to only by the heart. The words can be listened to by the head. Now, they don't know how to listen through the heart. Listening through the heart is the meaning of being a disciple; listening through the heart means listening in love, in trust, in deep sympathy, and finally in deep empathy. Listening through the heart means listening as if you have become one with what is being told to you -- when the disciple becomes so attuned to the master that even before the words are uttered he hears them, and not only the words but the meaning, the fragrance that is carried by the words. But it is very invisible. The head is gross.

The invisible can be caught only in the net of the heart. People even follow, but then too they follow out of misunderstanding. Just by becoming a follower it does not change anything in your life. It is not a question of following somebody: it is a question of understanding

somebody who is awakened. Hence, I don't call you my followers but only my friends. If you can be my friends, if you can be in deep love and trust here in my presence, if you can be present to my presence, if we can face each other and mirror each other, tremendously important things will start happening of their own accord -- because your heart will understand, and when the heart understands, IMMEDIATELY transformations happen.

When the head understands, then it asks, "How? Yes it IS right; now, how can it be done?" Remember this difference: in the head, knowledge and action are two different things; in the heart, knowledge IS action.

Socrates says: Knowledge is virtue -- and he has not been understood down the ages. Not even his own disciples, Plato and Aristotle, have understood him rightly. When he says knowledge is virtue, he means there is a way of listening and understanding in which the moment you understand a thing you can't do otherwise. When you see that this is the door, then you cannot try to get out through the wall, you will get out through the door. Seeing means acting, seeing brings action.

If when I tell you, "This is the door. Whenever you want to get out, please get out through this door, because enough you have hurt your head by trying to get out through the wall," you say, "Yes, sir, I understand perfectly well, but how to get out through the door?" your question will show that the heart has not listened, only the head. The head always asks "How?"

The head always asks questions which seem to be very pertinent on the surface but are absolutely ridiculous. The heart never asks -- it listens and acts. Listening and action

are one in the heart; love knows and acts accordingly. It never asks "How?" The heart has an intelligence of its own. The head is intellectual, the heart is intelligence.

HOW SWEETLY THE LOTUS GROWS
IN THE LITTER OF THE WAYSIDE.
ITS PURE FRAGRANCE DELIGHTS THE HEART.

Remember it again and again because you will forget again and again that it is a question of the heart. If the heart delights in something, then you can be certain your life is growing, expanding; your consciousness is becoming clearer, your intelligence is being released from its bondage.

HOW SWEETLY THE LOTUS GROWS IN THE LITTER OF THE WAYSIDE. The word for lotus that Buddha uses is PANKAJ; it is one of the most beautiful words. Pankaj means that which is born out of the mud, out of dirty mud. The lotus is one of the most miraculous phenomena in existence; hence in the East it has become the symbol of spiritual transformation. Buddha is seated on a lotus, Vishnu is standing on a lotus. Why a lotus? -- because the lotus has one very symbolic significance: it grows out of dirty mud. It is a transformation symbol, it is a metamorphosis. The mud is dirty, maybe stinking; the lotus is fragrant, and it has come out of the stinking mud. Buddha is saying: Exactly in the same way, life ordinarily is just stinking mud -- but the possibility of becoming a lotus is hidden there. The mud can be transformed, you can become a lotus. Sex can be transformed and it can become samadhi. Anger can be transformed and it can become

compassion. Hate can be transformed and it can become love. Everything that you have that looks negative right now, mudlike, can be transformed. Your noisy mind can be emptied and transformed, and it becomes celestial music.

FOLLOW THE AWAKENED
AND FROM AMONG THE BLIND
THE LIGHT OF YOUR WISDOM
WILL SHINE OUT PURELY.

But the only possible way out of this mess is being in tune with somebody who is already awakened. You are asleep; only somebody who is awake can shake you out of your sleep, can help you to come out of it.
Gurdjieff used to say: If you are in a jail, only somebody who is out of jail can manage it, can arrange it so that you can escape from the jail; otherwise it is impossible. And you are not only in a jail -- you have been hypnotized and told that this is not a jail, this is your home. You are not only in a jail -- you have believed it to be your home and you are decorating it. Your whole life is nothing but decorating the jail, and you are competing with other prisoners who are decorating their dark cells.

Only somebody who is free, who has been in the jail once and is no longer in the jail, can manage to wake you, to make you aware of the reality. He can manage to dehypnotize you, he can help you to be unconditioned, and he can devise methods and means so that you can escape from the jail. He can bribe the warden, the jailor; he can bring a ladder close to the wall, he can throw a rope inside.

He can make a hole in the wall from the outside...a thousand and one possibilities.
But the only hope for you is to be in deep contact with somebody who is awakened. The awakened one is called the master -- SATGURU. If you can find a master, don't miss the opportunity -- surrender, relax into his being, imbibe his awareness, let his fragrance surround you. And the day is not far away when you will also be awakened, you will also be a buddha.
Keep on reminding yourself that unless you are a buddha, your life is a wastage. Only by being a buddha does one's life have grace, beauty, intelligence, significance, benediction.
Enough for today.
The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 2
Chapter #6
Chapter title: This is it
6 July 1979 am in Buddha Hall

The first question:
Question 1
BELOVED MASTER,
YOU HAVE ALWAYS POINTED OUT THAT MOST THINGS AND STATES ARE TWO EXTREMES OF ONE STATE, POLAR OPPOSITES. THEN HATE IS THE OTHER END OF LOVE. DOES THIS MEAN IT IS AS EASY TO HATE AS IT IS TO LOVE? LOVE IS SO BEAUTIFUL. HATE IS SO UGLY, AND YET IT HAPPENS TOO.

Zareen, love is a natural state of consciousness. It is neither easy nor difficult. Those words don't apply to it at all. It is not an effort; hence, it can't be easy and it can't be difficult either. It is like breathing! It is like your heartbeat, it is like blood circulating in your body.

Love is your very being...but that love has become almost impossible. The society does not allow it. The society conditions you in such a way that love becomes impossible and hate becomes the only possible thing. Then hate is easy, and love is not only difficult but impossible. Man has been distorted. Man cannot be reduced to slavery if he is not distorted first. The politician and the priest have been in a deep conspiracy down the ages. They have been reducing humanity to a crowd of slaves. They are destroying every possibility of rebellion in man -- and love IS rebellion, because love listens only to the heart and does not care a bit about anything else.

Love is dangerous because it makes you an individual, and the state and the church, they don't want individuals, not at all. They don't want human beings -- they want sheep. They want people who only look like human beings, but whose souls have been crushed so utterly, damaged so deeply, that it seems almost irreparable.

And the best way to destroy man is to destroy his spontaneity of love. If man has love, there can't be nations; nations exist on hate. The Indians hate the Pakistanis, and the Pakistanis hate the Indians -- only then can these two countries exist. If love appears, boundaries will disappear. If love appears, then who will be a Christian and then who will be a Jew? If love appears, religions will disappear.

If love appears, who is going to go to the temple? For what? It is because love is missing that you are searching for God. God is nothing but a substitute for your missing love. Because you are not blissful, because you are not peaceful, because you are not ecstatic, hence you are searching for God -- otherwise, who bothers? Who cares? If your life is a dance, God has been attained already. The loving heart is full of God. There is no need for any search, there is no need for any prayer, there is no need to go to any temple, to any priest.

Hence, the priest and the politician, these two are the enemies of humanity. And they are in a conspiracy, because the politician wants to rule your body and the priest wants to rule your soul. And the secret is the same: destroy love. Then a man is nothing but a hollowness, an emptiness, a meaningless existence. Then you can do whatsoever you want with humanity and nobody will rebel, nobody will have courage enough to rebel.

Love gives courage, love takes all fear away -- and the oppressors depend on your fear. They create fear in you, a thousand and one kinds of fear. You are surrounded by fears, your whole psychology is full of fears. Deep down you are trembling. Only on the surface do you keep a certain facade; otherwise, inside there are layers and layers of fear.

A man full of fear can only hate -- hate is a natural outcome of fear. A man full of fear is also full of anger, and a man full of fear is more against life than for life. Death seems to be a restful state to the fear-filled man. The fearful man is suicidal, he is life-negative. Life seems to be dangerous to him, because to live means you will have to love -- how

can you live? Just as the body needs breathing to live, the soul needs love to live. And love is utterly poisoned.
By poisoning your love energy they have created a split in you, they have made an enemy within you, they have divided you in two. They have created a civil war, and you are always in conflict. And in conflict your energy is dissipated; hence your life does not have zestfulness, cheerfulness. It is not overflowing with energy, it is dull, insipid, it is unintelligent.
Love sharpens intelligence, fear dulls it. Who wants you to be intelligent? Not those who are in power. How can they want you to be intelligent? -- because if you are intelligent, you will start seeing the whole strategy, their games. They want you to be stupid and mediocre. They certainly want you to be efficient as far as work is concerned, but not intelligent; hence humanity lives at the lowest, at the minimum of its potential.
The scientific researchers say that the ordinary man uses only five percent of his potential intelligence in his whole life. The ordinary man, only five percent -- what about the extraordinary? What about an Albert Einstein, a Mozart, a Beethoven? The researchers say that even those who are very talented, they don't use more than ten percent. And those whom we call geniuses, they use only fifteen percent. Think of a world where everybody is using one hundred percent of his potential...then the gods will be jealous of earth, then gods would like to be born on earth. Then the earth will be a paradise, a superparadise. Right now it is a hell.
Zareen, you say that it should be easier to love than to hate. If man is left alone, unpoisoned, then love will be simple,

very simple. There will be no problem. It will be just like water flowing downwards, or vapor rising upwards, trees blossoming, birds singing. It will be so natural and so spontaneous!

But man is not left alone. As the child is born, the oppressors are ready to jump on him, to crush his energies, to distort them to such an extent, to distort them so deeply, that the person will never become aware that he is living a false life, a pseudo life, that he is not living as he was meant to live, as he was born to live; that he is living something synthetic, plastic, that this is not his real soul. That's why millions of people are in such misery -- because they feel somewhere that they have been distracted, that they are not their own selves, that something has gone basically wrong....

Love is simple if the child is allowed to grow, helped to grow, in natural ways -- in the way of dhamma. If the child is helped to be in harmony with nature and in harmony with himself, if the child is in every way supported, nourished, encouraged to be natural and to be himself, a light unto himself, then love is simple. One will be simply loving! Hate will be almost impossible, because before you can hate somebody else, first you have to create the poison within yourself. You can give something to somebody only if you have it. You can hate only if you are full of hate. And to be full of hate is to suffer hell. To be full of hate is to be in fire. To be full of hate means you are wounding yourself first. Before you can wound somebody else, you have to wound yourself. The other may not be wounded, it will depend on the other. But one thing is absolutely certain: that before you can hate, you have to go through

long suffering and misery. The other may not accept your hatred, may reject it. The other may be a buddha -- he may simply laugh at it. He may forgive you, he may not react. You may not be able to wound him if he is not ready to react. If you cannot disturb him, what can you do? You will feel impotent before him.

So it is not necessarily so, that the other is going to be wounded. But one thing is absolutely certain, that if you hate somebody, first you have to wound your own soul in so many ways; you have to be so full of poison that you can throw poison on others.

Hate is unnatural. Love is a state of health; hate is a state of illness. Just like illness it is unnatural. It happens only when you lose track of nature, when you are no longer in harmony with existence, no longer in harmony with your being, with your innermost core; then you are ill, psychologically, spiritually ill. Hatred is only a symbol of illness, and love one of health and wholeness and holiness.

Zareen, love should be one of the most natural things, but it is not. On the contrary, it has become the most difficult thing -- almost the impossible thing. Hate has become easy; you are trained, you are prepared for hate. To be a Hindu is to be full of hate for Mohammedans, for Christians, for Jews; to be a Christian is to be full of hate for other religions. To be a nationalist is to be full of hate for other nations.

You know only one way of love: that is, hate others. You can show your love for your country only by hating other countries, and you can show your love for your church only by hating other churches. You are in a mess!

These so-called religions go on talking about love, and all that they do in the world is create more and more hate. Christians talk about love and they have been creating wars, crusades. Mohammedans talk about love and they have been creating JIHADS -- religious wars. Hindus talk about love, but you can look into their scriptures -- they are full of hate, hate for other religions. You can study Dayanand's so-called great book, SATYARTH PRAKASH, and you will find hate on each page, in each sentence. And these books are thought to be spiritual books.
And we accept all this nonsense! And we accept it without any resistance, because we have been conditioned to accept these things, we have been taught that this is how things are. And then you go on denying your own nature.

Just the other day I was reading a joke:
A woman was confessing -- she was a nun -- she was confessing to the mother superior, crying, tears rolling down her cheeks; she looked tremendously disturbed. And she was saying, "I have committed a sin -- something unforgivable. This man entered into my room last night, and I was alone. And at the point of a revolver he made love to me. He gave me only two alternatives: 'Either die or make love to me.' I am ruined!" she was saying. "My whole life is ruined!"
The mother superior said, "Don't get so disturbed, don't get so worried -- God's compassion is infinite. And it is said in the old scriptures that a man is allowed to do anything if it is a question of survival -- except spitting on the Bible. A man is allowed to do anything if it is a question of survival,

and it WAS a question of survival for you. So don't be worried -- you are forgiven!"
But the woman remained disturbed and started crying again and said, "No. It won't help!"
The mother superior said, "Why won't it help?"
And the nun looked up and she said, "Because I liked it."

You can deny nature but you cannot destroy it. It remains somewhere in the deepest recesses of your being, alive. And that's the only hope.
Love has been poisoned, but not destroyed. The poison can be thrown out, out of your system -- you can be cleansed. You can vomit all that the society has enforced upon you. You can drop all your beliefs and all your conditionings -- you can be free. The society cannot keep you a slave forever if you decide to be free.
That's what sannyas is all about.
Zareen, it is time -- now become a sannyasin. It is time to drop out of all old patterns and start a new way of life, a natural way of life, a nonrepressive way of life, a life not of renunciation but of rejoicing.
Ordinarily, if you look at human beings, love is impossible, only hate is possible. But the space that I am creating here is totally different: here love is the only possibility. Hate will become more and more impossible. Hate is the polar opposite of love -- in the sense that illness is the polar opposite of health. But you need not choose illness. Illness has a few advantages which health cannot have; don't become attached to those advantages. Hate also has a few advantages which love cannot have. And you have to be very watchful. The ill person gets sympathy from

everybody else; nobody hurts him, everybody remains careful what they say to him, he is so ill. He remains the focus, the center of everybody -- the family, the friends -- he becomes the central person. He becomes important. Now, if he becomes too much attached to this importance, to this ego-fulfillment, he will never want to be healthy again. He himself will cling to illness. And psychologists say there are many people who are clinging to illnesses because of the advantages illnesses have. And they have invested in their illnesses for so long that they have completely forgotten that they are clinging to those illnesses. They are afraid if they become healthy they will be nobody again.

You teach that too. When a small child becomes ill, the whole family is so attentive. This is absolutely unscientific. When the child is ill, take care of his body but don't pay too much attention. It is dangerous, because if illness and your attention become associated...which is bound to happen if it happens again and again. Whenever the child is ill he becomes the center of the whole family: daddy comes and sits by his side and inquires about his health, and the doctor comes, and the neighbors start coming, and friends inquire, and people bring presents for him.... Now he can become too much attached to all this; it can be so nourishing to his ego that he may not like to be well again.

And if this happens, then it is impossible to be healthy. No medicine can help now. The person has become decisively committed to illness. And that's what has happened to many people -- the majority.

When you hate, your ego is fulfilled. The ego can exist only if it hates, because in hating you feel superior, in

hating you become separate, in hating you become defined, in hating you attain a certain identity. In love the ego has to disappear. In love you are no longer separate -- love helps you to dissolve with others. It is a meeting and a merger.
If you are too much attached to the ego, then hate is easy and love is most difficult. Be alert, watchful: hate is the shadow of ego, and love needs great courage. It needs great courage because it needs the sacrifice of the ego. Only those who are ready to become nobodies are able to love. Only those who are ready to become nothing, utterly empty of themselves, are able to receive the gift of love from the beyond.
If you are watchful, Zareen, love will become very simple and hate will become impossible. And the day hate becomes impossible and love becomes natural, you have arrived home. Then there is nowhere to go -- God has been achieved.
To be absolutely natural is all that is meant by finding God.

The second question:
Question 2
BELOVED MASTER,
WHAT IS?

Prabhati, there are two kinds of things in existence: one, that which can be explained; and the other, that which can only be experienced. The things that can be explained are mundane, ordinary, have no intrinsic value in them. And the things that cannot be explained are really significant, have intrinsic value.

For example, sex can be explained, love cannot be explained. Hence, sex becomes a commodity -- it can be sold, it can be purchased. Love is not a commodity; you cannot sell it, you cannot purchase it -- there is no way. Sex can be explained because it is part of physiology. Love cannot be explained -- it is part of your inner mystery. Unless your sexuality rises and reaches to love it is mundane, it has nothing sacred about it. When your sex becomes love, then it is entering into a totally different dimension -- the dimension of the mysterious and the miraculous. Now it is becoming religious, sacred, it is no longer profane.

And there is an even higher stage of love -- I call it prayer -- which is absolutely unexplainable, which is absolutely ineffable. Nothing can be said about it.

When a disciple asked Jesus, "What is prayer?" Jesus fell on his knees and started praying. What else can you do? Prayer cannot be explained, nothing can be said about it, but it can be shown. What can you say about death, what can you say about life? Whatsoever you say will fall short; it cannot soar to the heights of life and death. Those are experiences.

What can you say about beauty? Even if the lake is full of beautiful lotuses and it is a full-moon night, and all is benediction, somebody can ask, "What is beauty?" What can you say? You can show! You can say, "This it it!" But he will say, "I am asking for a definition."

Rabindranath, one of the greatest poets of this country, was living on a small houseboat. He used to live for months together on that houseboat; he loved living on the

houseboat. It was a full-moon night and he was reading in his room, a small cabin, just by a small candlelight, and he was reading about aesthetics -- what is beauty? And the full moon outside, and the cuckoo calling from the distant shore, and the moon reflecting all over the lake, and the whole lake was silver...! It was a tremendously silent night, nobody around, except that cuckoo calling. Once in a while a bird would fly over the boat, or a fish would jump in the lake -- and those sounds would deepen the silence even more. And he pondered over great books on aesthetics in search of the definition of what beauty is.

Tired, exhausted, in the middle of the night, he blew out the candle...and he was shocked, surprised. As he blew out the candle, the moonrays entered through the window, through the door, inside the cabin. That pale light of the candle had been keeping the moon out. Suddenly, he heard the cuckoo calling from the distant shore. Suddenly, he became aware of the tremendous silence, the depth of the silence surrounding the boat. A fish jumped, and he came out.... He had never seen such a beautiful night. A few white clouds floating in the sky, and the moon and the lake and the cuckoo calling...he was transported into another world.

He wrote in his diary, "I am foolish! I have been searching in books for what beauty is, and beauty was standing outside my door, knocking on my door! I was looking for beauty, searching for beauty, with a small candle, and the small candlelight was keeping the moonlight outside." He wrote in his diary, "It seems my small ego is keeping God out -- the small ego, like a pale small candlelight, keeping the light of God outside. And he is waiting outside. All that

I need to do is to close the books, blow out the candle of the ego and go out -- AND SEE!"

Prabhati, you ask me, "What is?"
This...thisness...this moment you are surrounded by the is. It is within you and without you. The chirping of the birds...and this silence...and you ask me what is?
It is not a question that can be answered. It is a dangerous question too, dangerous in the sense that you may find some foolish person who answers it, and then you may cling to that answer. Somebody will say, "God is," and you will cling to that answer. And then another question will arise: "What is God?" And now you are ready to fall into an infinite regress.

A man who once did God a favor received as his reward the promise of an answer to one question, any question. But God warned him that some things can only be experienced and cannot be explained. As he pondered and then started to ask his one cosmic question, God warned him again about experience versus explanations.
The man could contain his question no longer, and demanded to know, "What is after death?" and God slew him where he stood.

What else could God do? He slew him where he stood, immediately he killed him, because if you want to know what is after death, you have to die! Be very careful. You can be given explanations about things which belong to the world, to the objective world. For that you should ask the scientist; he knows, it is his concern. Don't ask the mystic

about things which can be explained; that is not his concern. His concern is with things which can be experienced.
Don't ask me any question which cannot be explained. Be in my presence, feel my presence, be open and vulnerable. We are here to experience something. All explanations about the mysteries of life are nothing but explaining away those things.
The basic, root meaning of the word 'explanation' is 'to flatten a thing' -- but to flatten a thing is to destroy it. If anybody could answer, "What is God? What is love? What is prayer? What is?" he would have flattened a beautiful, tremendously beautiful, incredible experience, into ugly words. All words are inadequate.
Be and know! Be still and know! You are here not to learn more words; you are here to get deeper into silence. Use my words as hints towards a wordless existence.
This is it! What are you asking about? Feel this moment...in its totality, in all its dimensionality, and a great beauty will descend, a great beautitude, a great benediction will surround you; a grace, a very silent ecstasy will start rising in you. You will feel drunk with existence.
Be drunk with existence -- that is the only way to know it.

The third question:
Question 3
BELOVED MASTER,
WHAT IS YOUR OPINION OF SCIENTOLOGY?

Aida, it is fantastic...I mean bullshit, utter bullshit! Be aware of such stupid things. They move in the world in the

name of science because science has credit, so any kind of stupidity can pretend to be scientific. And people are very much impressed by words: 'scientology'. People are very much impressed by shining gadgets, instruments.... Man is so unaware and unconscious of himself that he falls a victim to anything! You just need to propagate it, advertise it -- and our century has the most efficient media to advertise, to propagate things.

Scientology is nothing but a kind of hypnosis -- it can hypnotize you. And real religion is just the opposite: it is dehypnosis. You are already hypnotized, you don't need any scientology anymore. You need a process of dehypnosis, you need deconditioning, you need to come out of all kinds of ideologies. Scientology is an ideology. It talks in terms of science, and science has great appeal. Science is the modern superstition.

The modern man is immediately impressed if you bring science in. So anything and everything has to be proved scientifically. And there are quacks who even go on proving God scientifically, and who are trying to measure states of meditation -- as if meditation can be measured. Whatsoever you can measure will be mind; no-mind cannot be measured. All your alpha waves, etcetera, are not going to help. They can only go to a certain extent IN the mind. But meditation begins only where mind ends.

Mind is measurable, because mind IS a machine. But no-mind is immeasurable, it has no limits. So all the nonsense that goes on in the name of measuring...and people are very much impressed. They are sitting before very shiny gadgets -- it gives an impression of science -- wires attached to the head, to the hands, just like a cardiogram. They are trying

to figure out the inner silence. It is impossible! Whatsoever you come to record is mind. All waves are of the mind. Meditation is wavelessness because it is thoughtlessness. Meditation cannot be recorded; there can be no cardiogram, there can be no machine which can record it. It is very elusive, it is very subjective, it cannot be reduced to an object. But because the Western mind is very objective, is trained in science, now there are quacks around who are cashing in on this attraction and this training.

Scientology is one of those pseudo religions. The real religion has no need of any such thing. And scientology is destroying many people's minds.

Modern man is in a special situation: the old religions have lost their grip, their credibility, and the new religion has not yet arrived -- there is a gap. And man cannot live without religion, it is impossible; religion is such a need. So if the true is not available, the false becomes prevalent, the false becomes a substitute. Scientology is a false religion, and there are many like scientology.

Real religion consists of becoming utterly silent, unconditioned, unhypnotized. It is going beyond mind, beyond ideology; it is going beyond scripture and beyond knowledge. It is simply falling into your own interiority, becoming utterly silent, not knowing a thing, and functioning from that state of not knowing, from that innocence. When you function out of innocence, your actions have a beauty of their own. That's what virtue is -- AES DHAMMO SANANTANO.

The fourth question:

Question 4

BELOVED MASTER,
CANNOT PSYCHOANALYSIS SOLVE MAN'S PROBLEMS? IS RELIGION REALLY NEEDED AT ALL?

Neelima, psychoanalysis is a superficial thing -- helpful but very superficial. It only analyzes the surface rumblings of your mind. It is far better than scientology certainly, because at least it analyzes ACTUAL reality. It is concerned with the mind that you have got. It tries to penetrate into your unconscious, into the repressed part of your mind. It can help you, but it cannot solve all your problems because its reach is very limited. Hence, Freud could not satisfy, he could only touch a part of your mind. Adler touched another part of your mind -- he could not satisfy either. Jung touched still another part of your mind -- he could not satisfy, because parts are parts and the problem belongs to the whole.

Assagioli goes a little deeper than all these three. He drops psychoanalysis and starts calling his endeavor "psychosynthesis." That is a little better -- he synthesizes.

Freud is a fanatic; he claims that whatsoever he is saying is the truth and the only truth and the whole truth. And anybody who is against it is against truth. There can be no other possibility -- this is the only way. The fanatic always claims, "This is the only way." The fanatic does not allow life its richness, its variety.

And so is Adler. They were all basically disciples of Freud, although they rejected his knowledge. But they never could reject his basic fanaticism. They rejected what he said, but

they never could reject the impression that he had left on their beings.

Jung was also a follower, a disciple, then rebelled against him. But even in his rebellion he remained, deep down, the same person -- the same emphasis of claiming the whole, of knowing the whole.

Assagioli is far better, because he says all these three persons are talking sense but they are partial -- they have to be synthesized. A synthetic approach is needed which combines all the endeavors. But Assagioli commits a mistake which is very fundamental. You can dissect a man's body to know what is inside; once you have dissected it you will not find any soul -- that is not the way to find a soul. You will find hands and legs and head and eyes and heart and kidneys, and thousands of things you will find, and you can make a long list...but you will not find the soul. And naturally you will conclude there is no soul.

That's what was done by Freud, Adler and Jung. Then came Assagioli. He said, "This is not right. Dissection is not the way, analysis is not the way -- I will try synthesis." So he puts all those parts together again, stitches them together; does a good job of stitching, but still the man is not alive, the soul is not there. Once the soul has left, just by putting the body together you cannot bring it back. So now it is a corpse -- better than Freud, Adler and Jung, because they were only like the proverbial blind men, the five blind men, who had gone to see the elephant. Each was claiming, "My experience of the elephant IS the elephant." The one who had touched the leg of the elephant was saying that the elephant is nothing but a pillar...and so on and so forth.

Freud, Jung and Adler are all blind, feeling parts of the elephant. And the elephant of life is really huge, enormous. Now what Assagioli has done is that he has collected the opinions of the five blind men and he has put all those opinions together, and he says, "This is the right thing. I have made the synthesis, this is the truth." This is not the way to find the truth. By putting five blind men's opinions together, you don't arrive at the real elephant.

The real elephant needs EYES to be seen. Psychoanalysis is blind and so is psychosynthesis -- a little wiser but blind all the same. They cannot solve man's problems because man's basic problem is not psychological but spiritual, not psychological but existential. Man is not only the body; otherwise the physiologist would have solved all his problems. And man is not only a psyche; otherwise the psychologist would have solved his problems. Man is far more: man is an organic unity -- body, mind, soul...these three plus something mysterious: the fourth. The mystics in India have called it just the fourth -- TURIYA. They don't give it any name because no name can be given to it.

Body, mind, soul, these three are nameable. The body is available for objective observation. The mind is available for both objective and subjective observation -- you can observe it from the outside as behavior and from the inside as ideas, thoughts, imagination, memory, instinct, feeling, and so on and so forth. The soul is available only as a subjective experience. And beyond all these three is the fourth that keeps them all together: turiya -- the fourth, unnameable. That fourth has been called God, the fourth has been called nirvana, the fourth has been called enlightenment.

Man's problem is complex. If he were only the body, things would have been simple; science would have solved everything. If he were only the mind, psychology would have been enough. But he is a very complex phenomenon, four-dimensional. And unless you know the fourth, unless you enter the fourth, you don't know the man in his totality. And without knowing him in his totality, the problem cannot be solved.
Psychoanalysis can give you a philosophic approach, but not an existential transformation.

During the last days of a psychiatrists' convention, one of the doctors present at the closing lecture noticed an attractive female Ph.D. being pawed by the man seated next to her.
"Is he bothering you?" the gallant observer asked the woman.
"Why should I be bothered?" she replied. "It is HIS problem."

Psychoanalysis, psychiatry, psychology, can give you a philosophical approach towards life. They can give you the quality of being distant from life's problems, but the problems are not solved. And the psychiatrist has not even solved his own problems -- how can he help others to solve theirs?
Even Sigmund Freud is not a buddha, is full of problems -- in fact more than the so-called human beings. He was very much afraid of death, too much afraid of death -- so much so that even the word 'death' was not uttered in front of him by his disciples, because once or twice, just hearing the

word 'death' he had fainted. Just the word 'death' was enough! He would faint, he would become unconscious, he would fall down from his chair.

Freud brought sex into the light. He did a great work:he destroyed one taboo, the taboo that had remained for centuries. Sex was a taboo subject, not to be talked about. He brought it into the light. He did a great pioneer work -- he should be respected for it. But death was taboo to him; he could not even hear the word. There seems to be a connection.

This is MY observation: that there have been two kinds of societies in the world -- one society which makes sex taboo, then it is not afraid of death; and the other society which drops the taboo against sex, then it immediately becomes afraid of death. We have not yet been able to create a society in which neither sex nor death are taboos. My sannyasin has to do that.

Why does it happen so?

For example, in India, sex is taboo -- you should not talk about it -- but death is not taboo. You can talk about it; in fact, all the religious teachers talk about death. They make people so much afraid of death, talking again and again and again about it. They create so much fear in people that out of fear people start becoming religious. All Indian scriptures are full of the description of death. Death seems to be one of the most talked about subjects in India -- not sex. Sex is taboo. Sex is life, and if you choose death you cannot choose sex -- either/or.

Freud did a great service to humanity; he brought sex from the dark corners of the soul into the open world. But immediately death became taboo; he himself became afraid

of death. They are polar opposites, and the total man will be able to understand both.
And the total man, the whole man, is my definition of a holy man. He will be able to talk about sex, observe, analyze, dissect, go into it, meditate -- and he will be able to do the same with death. ...Because you are neither sex nor death: you are the witness of both. You are neither life nor death: you are a witness to both. This witnessing will bring you to the fourth -- turiya. And only when you enter the fourth do all problems disappear, dissolve. Before that, problems remain.
You can become very very expert in analyzing problems -- that is not going to help.

A beautiful woman visits a psychoanalyst. "Take off your clothes," says the psychoanalyst as soon as she enters.
"But really I was...."
"I am telling you to take off your clothes," insists the shrink without giving her time to answer.
"But, doctor, I came because I have a problem and I thought...."
"Don't think. Take off your clothes and don't waste my time," insists the shrink even more rudely.
The astonished and embarrassed woman takes off her clothes and immediately the shrink jumps on her.
After half an hour, the shrink, zipping up his trousers, looks at the woman who still does not understand what is happening and more calmly says, "Well, now that I have solved my problem, let us see if I can solve yours."

Only a buddha can help you to solve your problems -- one who has no problems of his own.
Religion cannot be dropped, can never be dropped.
Religion is not something superficial and accidental: it is an intrinsic need, it is absolutely needed.
Neelima, you ask me, "Cannot psychoanalysis solve man's problems?" No. It can help you to understand your problems a little bit more, and by understanding your problems you can control your life in a certain way, to a certain extent. Psychoanalysis can help you to become a little more normal than you are; it can reduce your heated, excited abnormality to a little calmer and cooler space -- that's all. It can bring your temperature down a little, but it cannot solve. It can only help, it can console.

I have heard about a man who used to smoke three cigarettes at one time -- that was his obsession. Now, it was very embarrassing; people would look at him, what he was doing, and he would feel very shy and ashamed. But it was impossible, he couldn't help it, he had to do it that way; otherwise he would remain very dissatisfied.
He had tried every possible way, whatsoever was suggested to him. Nothing helped.
Then somebody suggested, "You go to a psychoanalyst."
After one year of psychoanalysis and thousands of dollars wasted, a friend asked him, "Did psychoanalysis help you?"
He said, "Certainly!"
But the man could not believe it, because he saw he was still smoking three cigarettes. So he asked, "But you are still smoking three cigarettes, so I don't understand how psychoanalysis has helped you."

He said, "Now I am no longer ashamed! My psychoanalyst has helped me to understand that this is just normal. What is wrong in it? A few people smoke one, I have heard of one person who smokes two, I smoke three! The difference is only of quantity -- and what is wrong in smoking three cigarettes? For one year my psychoanalyst has persistently said that there is nothing wrong in it; now I don't feel ashamed. In fact, I am the only person in the world who smokes three cigarettes simultaneously! Now I feel very superior."

Psychoanalysis can give you many consolations. It can help you rationalize, it can help you normalize, it can help you not to feel ashamed -- but it doesn't solve. It cannot. Problems are never solved if you remain at the same plane of existence. This is something very fundamental to be understood.

If you want to solve a problem you have to rise above the plane. It can't be solved on the same plane. The moment you reach a higher plane, the lower-plane problems simply disappear. That is the way of religion: to help you go higher and higher and higher. The moment you have reached the fourth state, turiya, all problems disappear, dissolve, lose meaning. Not that you have found solutions, no, not at all -- religion is not interested in solutions. No solution can ever solve a problem; it may help you to solve one problem, but it will create another. The solution itself may become the problem. You may become so much attached and dependent on the solution....

It happens almost every day in your life: you are ill, you take a certain medicine, it helps, and then you become

dependent on the medicine; then you are addicted, then you cannot leave the medicine. Now the medicine has its own side effects -- now they start torturing you. Now for them you will need other medicines...and so on and so forth. There is no end to it.
No solution can really become a solution. Religion has a totally different approach. It does not give you a solution, it simply helps you to raise the level of your consciousness. Religion is consciousness-raising. It raises you higher than the problem, it gives you a bird's-eye view. Now you are standing on a hilltop looking at the valley...and the problems of the valley are simply meaningless. They don't have any significance for the man who is standing on the sunlit hilltop. They have simply lost all relevance.

The fifth question:
Question 5
BELOVED MASTER,
I HAVE BEEN HERE NINE MONTHS AND AM GIVING BIRTH TO MY FIRST QUESTION.
TODAY IN LECTURE YOU SAID, "SEX IS TIRING...."
FOR ME, SEX IS THE SWEETEST EXPLOSION OF MUSIC, COLOR, LIGHT, BRIMMING AND BURSTING EVERY CELL OF MY BEING. IT IS SLIPPING THE NET OF MY SKIN, MELTING WITH LOVE IN GOD'S ARMS, BEING EXQUISITELY LOST, OUT OF TIME, OUT OF MIND -- BEING GOD. AND THOSE WORDS DON'T SAY IT. IT IS THESE EXPERIENCES THAT LED ME TO YOU. I DON'T EVEN HAVE A GLIMPSE OF THE "STUPIDITY OF SEX." SEX IS MY SOURCE OF DEEPEST RELAXATION AND BOUNDLESS

ENERGY, AS WELL AS HIGHEST BLISS: THE OPPOSITE OF TIRING.
DO MEN FIND SEX MORE TIRING THAN WOMEN, OR DO I JUST HAVE SO FAR TO GO TOWARDS DROPPING IT? OR WHAT?
PLEASE COMMENT.

Apurna, your experience is perfectly valid, but because it is such an ecstasy, such an excitement, how long can you go on repeating it? Sooner or later a moment arrives when it becomes repetitive, the same, and then it will start losing its joy. That moment it becomes tiring.
Your experience is perfectly valid, but very limited. Life is far more. It begins in sex, but it doesn't end in it. I am perfectly happy that you are enjoying your sex -- enjoy it as much as possible while it lasts. And the more you enjoy it, the sooner you will be tired of it.
But no need to worry about that. I was answering somebody else's question, who is tired of it. He has lived all these joys, he has played with all these toys. You are giving big names to those toys -- these are all teddy bears. You can call your teddy bear "God," and nothing is wrong.... When a child is carrying his teddy bear and calling him "God" and cannot go to sleep without him, it is very relaxing, and if you take the teddy bear he becomes very tense! Even dirty teddy bears...and he will carry them. Even parents feel ashamed because if they are going on a holiday he is carrying his teddy bear -- dirty, smelly...but the child cannot live without it. It is his very life. But one day, hopefully, he will be tired of it and he will throw it in a corner and will forget all about it forever.

It is really difficult to answer your questions, because one person's question is relevant only to him, and the answer that I give is relevant only to him. It may not be your experience.

On one day I said that homosexuality is a perversion. Immediately a few letters arrived -- very angry, because there are a few homosexuals here. And they said, "What are you talking about? We have come here only because we thought that you accept all, that you don't reject, don't condemn anything." I have not condemned. But the question and the answer were for a particular person. You need not be worried about it; it may not be relevant to you.

To a homosexual, homosexuality is religion -- his religion -- he does not believe in heterosexuality. He thinks the heterosexuals are a little perverted, or at least very orthodox, out-of-date people...should not exist anymore, are no longer contemporaries -- what nonsense are they talking about?

To the heterosexual, the homosexual seems to be very perverted, animalistic, even below the animals. And to the homosexual, the heterosexual is animalistic, because homosexuality is the invention of man, the superior man. Animals are not homosexual -- at least not in their wild state. In zoos sometimes, yes, but there they become affected by human beings, they learn from human beings. But in the wild they are not homosexuals.

So homosexuality is something special that man has discovered. It is a defining phenomenon. Just as Aristotle says man is a rational being, the homosexual says man is a homosexual being -- only man has the capacity to rise to

such heights. Heterosexuality is just ordinary: dogs do it and...it is nothing special! One should not brag about it.

Two camels slowly approach each other in the desert, their riders identically dressed in excessively long Bermuda shorts and topi helmets. They pause, and the riders speak -- in an exaggerated British accent:
"English?"
"Of cawss."
"Foreign Office?"
"Cinema photography."
"Oxford?"
"Cambridge."
"Homosexual?"
"Certainly not!"
"Pity!"
And the two camels continue their separate ways across the desert.

I have to talk to many kinds of people -- camels are there. So if it is not your question, don't be bothered by my answer, forget all about it. It concerns somebody else, who is far more mature than you....

The last question:
Question 6
BELOVED MASTER,
WHAT ARE YOUR LAST WORDS GOING TO BE TO THE WORLD?
It reminds me of a story George Gurdjieff used to tell his closest disciples. The story is about a great past master, a

buddha, who had a self-appointed right-hand man who was a faithful follower for year after year. And when the master was in his room on his deathbed, all of the followers silently waited by the door not knowing what to do and incapable of believing that their mystical master was really dying.
Finally, through the sorrowful stillness, the master's voice was faintly heard to call the name of the right-hand man, and all of the followers looked at him intently as he made his way to the master's door. As he reached for the knob he glanced at the peering faces around him and imagined their envy and respect for him at being the only one to be called to the master's side during his final moments. He already imagined how after the master's death he would slowly emerge from the room as the new head of the system, a veritable Peter-of-the-Rock.
Quietly he entered the darkened room and slowly he made his way and knelt by the bed. The old master nodded for him to come nearer, and he leaned over with his awaiting ear by the old man's mouth, and the master whispered, "Fuck you."

Enough for today.
The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 2
Chapter #7
Chapter title: Does the spoon taste the soup?
7 July 1979 am in Buddha Hall

HOW LONG THE NIGHT TO THE WATCHMAN,

HOW LONG THE ROAD TO THE WEARY
TRAVELER,
HOW LONG THE WANDERING OF MANY LIVES
TO THE FOOL WHO MISSES THE WAY.

IF THE TRAVELER CANNOT FIND
MASTER OR FRIEND TO GO WITH HIM,
LET HIM TRAVEL ON ALONE
RATHER THAN WITH A FOOL FOR COMPANY.

"MY CHILDREN, MY WEALTH!"
SO THE FOOL TROUBLES HIMSELF.
BUT HOW HAS HE CHILDREN OR WEALTH?
HE IS NOT EVEN HIS OWN MASTER.

THE FOOL WHO KNOWS HE IS A FOOL
IS THAT MUCH WISER.
THE FOOL WHO THINKS HE IS WISE
IS A FOOL INDEED.

DOES THE SPOON TASTE THE SOUP?
A FOOL MAY LIVE ALL HIS LIFE
IN THE COMPANY OF A MASTER
AND STILL MISS THE WAY.

THE TONGUE TASTES THE SOUP.
IF YOU ARE AWAKE IN THE PRESENCE OF A
MASTER
ONE MOMENT WILL SHOW YOU THE WAY.

THE FOOL IS HIS OWN ENEMY.

THE MISCHIEF HE DOES IS HIS UNDOING.
HOW BITTERLY HE SUFFERS!

WHY DO WHAT YOU WILL REGRET?
WHY BRING TEARS UPON YOURSELF?
DO ONLY WHAT YOU DO NOT REGRET,
AND FILL YOURSELF WITH JOY.

Man is a bridge between the known and the unknown. To remain confined in the known is to be a fool. To go in search of the unknown is the beginning of wisdom. To become one with the unknown is to become the awakened one, the buddha.

Remember, again and again, that man is not yet a being -- he is on the way, a traveler, a pilgrim. He is not yet at home, he is in search of the home. One who thinks that he is at home is a fool, because then the search stops, then the seeking is no longer there. And the moment you stop seeking and searching, you become a stagnant pool of energy, you start stinking. Then you only die, then you don't live at all.

Life is in flowing, life is in remaining a river -- because only the river will reach the ocean. If you become a stagnant pool then you are going nowhere. Then you are not really alive. The fool does not live, he only pretends to live. He does not know, he only pretends to know. He does not love, he only pretends to love. The fool is a pretension. The wise lives, loves, the wise inquires. The wise is ready, always ready, to go into the uncharted sea. The wise is adventurous. The fool is afraid.

When Buddha uses the word 'fool' you have to remember all these meanings of the word. It is not the ordinary meaning that Buddha gives to the word 'fool'. For him, the fool means one who lives in the mind and knows nothing of the no-mind; one who lives in information, knowledge, and has not tasted anything of wisdom; one who lives a borrowed life, imitative, but knows nothing of anything that arises in his own being.

By "the fool" Buddha means one who is well acquainted with the scriptures, but has not tasted a single moment of truth. He may be a great scholar, very learned -- in fact, fools ARE scholars; they have to be because that is the only way to hide their foolishness. Fools are very learned people; they have to be, because it is only through learning words, theories, philosophies, that they can hide their inner ignorance, that they can hide their emptiness, that they can believe that they also know.

If you want to find the fools, go to the universities, go to the academies. There you will find them -- in their utter ignorance, but pretending to know. They certainly know what others have said, but that is not real knowing. A blind man can collect all the information there is about light, but he will still remain blind. He can talk about light, he can write treatises on light; he may be very clever in guessing, in fabricating theories, but still he remains a blind man and he knows nothing of light. But the information that he collects may not only deceive others, it may deceive himself too. He may start thinking that he knows, that he is no longer blind.

When Buddha uses the word 'fool' he does not mean simply the ignorant, because if the ignorant person is aware that he

is ignorant, he is not a fool. And it is more possible for the ignorant person to be aware that he is ignorant than it is for the so-called learned people. Their egos are so puffed up; it is very difficult for them to see -- it goes against their investment. They have devoted their whole lives to knowledge, and now, to recognize the fact that all this knowledge is meaningless, futile, because they have not tasted truth themselves, is difficult, is hard.

The ignorant person can remember that he is ignorant -- he has nothing to lose; but the learned, he cannot recognize that he is ignorant -- he has much to lose. The knowledgeable person is the real fool. The ignorant person is innocent; he knows that he knows not, and because he knows that he knows not, because he is ignorant, he is just on the threshold of wisdom. Because he knows he knows not, he can inquire, and his inquiry will be pure, unprejudiced. He will inquire without any conclusions. He will inquire without being a Christian or a Mohammedan or a Hindu. He will simply inquire as an inquirer. His inquiry will not come out of ready-made answers, his inquiry will come out of his own heart. His inquiry will not be a by-product of knowledge, his inquiry will be existential. He inquires because it is a question of life and death to him. He inquires because he really wants to know. He knows that he knows not -- that's why he inquires. His inquiry has a beauty of its own. He is not a fool, he is simply ignorant. The real fool is one who thinks he knows without knowing at all.

Socrates was trying to do the same thing in Athens: he was trying to make these learned fools aware that all their learning was false, that they were really fools, pretenders,

hypocrites. Naturally, all the professors and all the philosophers and all the so-called thinkers...and Athens was full of them. Athens was the capital of knowledge in those days. Just as today people look towards Oxford or Cambridge, people used to look towards Athens. It was full of the learned fools, and Socrates was trying to bring them down to the earth, was shattering their knowledge, was raising such questions -- simple in a way, but difficult to be answered by those who have only acquired knowledge from others.

Athens became very angry with Socrates. They poisoned this man. Socrates is one of the greatest men who has ever walked on the earth; and what he did very few people have done. His method is a basic method. The Socratic method of inquiry is such that it exposes the fools as fools. To expose a fool as a fool is dangerous, of course, because he will take revenge. Socrates was poisoned, Jesus was crucified, Buddha was condemned.

The day Buddha died, Buddhism was thrown out of the country, expelled from the country. The scholars, the pundits, the brahmins, could not allow it to remain. It was too uncomfortable for them. Its basic attack was on the brahmins, the learned fools, and naturally they were offended. They could not face Buddha, they could not encounter him. They waited for their opportunity in a cunning way: when Buddha died, then they started fighting the followers. When the light was gone, then it was the time for the owls, the learned fools, to reign over the country again. And since that time they have reigned even up to now -- they are still in power. The same fools!

The world has suffered much. Man could have become the glory of the earth, but because of these fools...and because they are powerful they can harm, and because they are powerful they can destroy any possibility, any opportunity for man to evolve. Man has been moving in circles, and these fools would not like man to become wise, because if man becomes wise these fools will be nowhere. They won't be in power anymore -- religiously, politically, socially, financially, all their power will be gone. They can remain in power only if they can go on destroying all possibilities of wisdom for man.

My effort here is to create a Socratic inquiry again, to ask again the fundamental questions that Buddha raised.

In the new commune we are going to have seven concentric circles of people. The first, the most superficial circle, will consist of those who come only out of childish curiosity, or out of already accumulated prejudices, who are, deep down, antagonistic -- the journalists, etcetera.

They will be allowed only to see the superficial part of the commune -- not that anything will be hidden, but just because of their approach they will not be able to see anything more than the most superficial. They will see only the garments. Here also the same goes on happening. They come and they see only the superficial.

Just the other day I was reading a journalist's report; he was here for five days. He writes, "for five days," as if it is a very long time to be here; five days, as if he has been here for five lives! Because he has been here for five days he has become an authority. Now he knows what is happening here because he has watched people meditating. How can you watch people meditating? Either you can meditate or

not, but you cannot watch people meditating. Yes, you can watch people's physical gestures, movements, dance, or their sitting silently under a tree, but you cannot SEE meditation! You can see the physical posture of the meditator, but you cannot see his inner experience. For that, you have to meditate, you have to become a participant. And the basic condition for being a participant is that you should drop this idea of being a watcher. Even if you participate, if you dance with the meditators, with this idea that you are participating only to watch what happens, then nothing will happen. And, of course, you will go with the conclusion that it is all nonsense -- nothing happens. And you will feel perfectly right inside yourself that nothing happens, because you even participated and nothing happened.

That man writes that he was in darshan and much was happening to sannyasins -- so much was happening that after a deep energy contact with me they were not even able to walk back to their places -- they had to be carried away. And then he mentions, "But nothing happened to me." That is enough proof that all that was happening was either hypnosis, or people were pretending just because the journalist was there, or it was just an arranged show, something managed -- because nothing was happening to him.

There are things which can happen only when you are available, open, unprejudiced. There are things which can happen only when you put aside your mind.

The journalist writes again, "The people who go there, they leave their minds where they leave their shoes -- but I could not do that. Of course," he says, "if I had left my mind

behind, then I would have also been impressed." But he thinks the mind that he has is something so valuable -- how can he leave it behind? He feels himself very clever because he didn't leave his mind behind.

Mind is the barrier, not the bridge. In the new commune, the first concentric circle will be for those who come like journalists -- prejudiced people, who already know that they know. In short, for the fools.

The second concentric circle will be for those who are inquirers -- unprejudiced, neither Hindus nor Mohammedans nor Christians, who come without any conclusion, who come with an open mind. They will be able to see a little deeper. Something of the mysterious will stir their hearts. They will cross the barrier of the mind. They will become aware that something of immense importance is happening -- what exactly it is they will not be able to figure out immediately, but they will become aware vaguely that something of value IS happening. They may not be courageous enough to participate in it; their inquiry may be more intellectual than existential, they may not be able to become part, but they will become aware -- of course, in a very vague and confused way, but certainly aware -- that something more is going on than is apparent.

The third circle will be for those who are sympathetic, who are in deep sympathy, who are ready to move with the commune a little bit, who are ready to dance and sing and participate, who are not only inquirers but are ready to change themselves if the inquiry requires it. They will become aware more clearly of deeper realms.

And the fourth will be the empathic. Sympathy means one is friendly, one is not antagonistic. Empathy means one is

not only friendly; one feels a kind of unity, oneness. Empathy means one feels with the commune, with the people, with what is happening. One meets, merges, melts, becomes one.

The fifth circle will be of the initiates, the sannyasins -- one who is not only feeling in his heart but who is ready to be committed, to be involved. One who is ready to risk. One who is ready to commit, because he feels a great, mad love -- mad, mad love -- arising in him. The sannyasin, the initiate.

And the sixth will be of those who have started arriving -- the adepts. Those whose journey is coming closer to the end, who are no longer sannyasins only but are becoming SIDDHAS, whose journey is coming to a full stop, is getting closer and closer to the conclusion. The home is not far away, a few steps more. In a way, they have already arrived.

And the seventh circle will consist of ARHATAS and BODHISATTVAS. The arhatas are those sannyasins who have arrived but are not interested in helping others to arrive. Buddhism has a special name for them: arhata -- the lonely traveler who arrives and then disappears into the ultimate. And the bodhisattvas are those who have arrived but they feel a great compassion for those who have not yet arrived. The bodhisattva is an arhata with compassion. He holds on, goes on looking back and goes on calling forth those who are still stumbling in darkness. He is a helper, a servant of humanity.

There are two types of people. The one who is at ease only when he is alone; he feels a little uncomfortable in relationship, he feels a little disturbed, distracted, in

relationship. That type of person becomes an arhata. When he has arrived, he is finished with everything. Now he does not look back.

The bodhisattva is the second type of person: one who feels at ease in relationship, in fact far more comfortable when he is relating than when he is alone. He leans more towards love. The arhata leans more towards meditation. The path of the arhata is of pure meditation, and the path of the bodhisattva is that of pure love. The pure love contains meditation, and the pure meditation contains love -- but the pure meditation contains love only as a flavor, a perfume; it is not the central force in it. And the pure love contains meditation as a perfume; it is not the center of it.

These two types exist in the world. The second type -- the follower on the path of love -- becomes a bodhisattva. The seventh circle will consist of arhatas and bodhisattvas. Now, the seventh circle will be aware of all the six other circles, and the sixth circle will be aware of the other five circles -- the higher will be aware of the lower, but the lower will not be aware of the higher. The first circle will not be aware of anything other than the first circle. He will see the buildings and the hotel and the swimming pool and the shopping center and weaving and pottery and carpentry. He will see the trees, the whole landscape...he will see all these things. He will see thousands of sannyasins, and he will shrug his shoulders: "What are these people doing here?" He will be a little puzzled, because he was not thinking that so many mad people can be found in one place: "All are hypnotized!" He will find explanations. He will go perfectly satisfied that he has known the commune. He will not be aware of the higher -- the lower cannot be

aware of the higher. That is one of the fundamental laws of life -- AES DHAMMO SANANTANO -- only the higher knows the lower, because he has passed from the lower. When you are standing on the sunlit mountain peak, you know everything down in the valley. The valley people may not be aware of you at all, it is not possible for them. The valley has its own occupations, its own problems. The valley is preoccupied with its own darkness.

The fool can come to a master but will remain unbenefited because he will see only the outer. He will not be able to see the essential, he will not be able to see the core. The fool comes here too, but he listens only to the words -- and he goes on interpreting those words according to his own ideas. He goes perfectly satisfied that he knows what is happening.

There are many fools who don't come here -- they don't feel the need. They simply depend on other fools' reports. That's enough. Just one fool can convince thousands of fools, because their language is the same, their prejudices are the same, their conceptions are the same...there is no problem! One fool has seen, and all the other fools are convinced. One fool reports in the newspaper and all the other fools read it early in the morning, and are convinced.

The sutras:

HOW LONG THE NIGHT TO THE WATCHMAN,
HOW LONG THE ROAD TO THE WEARY TRAVELER,
HOW LONG THE WANDERING OF MANY LIVES
TO THE FOOL WHO MISSES THE WAY.

The night is very long to the watchman -- why? He cannot relax, he has to keep himself somehow awake. It is a struggle. He has to keep himself awake against nature, because the night is meant for relaxing and resting and going to sleep. He is fighting against nature -- so is the fool. The fool goes on fighting against nature. He tries to swim against the current; hence, his misery is long, unnecessarily long. He multiplies it a thousandfold because he cannot let go, he cannot relax.

The first indication of a foolish mind is that it cannot relax, it is always tense, it is always on guard, it is always afraid.

HOW LONG THE NIGHT TO THE WATCHMAN.... It is not so long for those who are resting, relaxing, and have gone into deep sleep. It goes so fast! Just one moment you were awake, then you fall asleep...and the next moment you are awake, it is morning. You cannot believe the night has flown so fast. If you have been really restful...the more you rest, the faster the night flies. If your rest is total, time disappears. This is something to be understood.

Time is a psychological phenomenon. I am not talking about the time that you see on the clock, I am talking about the psychological time. When you are happy, relaxed, peaceful, time flies fast. When you are in pain, misery, anguish, time goes very slowly; it seems unending.

Have you sat by the side of a dying man in the night? It seems as if the morning will never come. The night seems so long...it is the same night. The same night you can sit with your beloved, and it flies so fast that you cannot believe it -- because you were happy and you were relaxed

and you were enjoying and you were moving with nature, not fighting. Love means surrender, love means relaxation.
Albert Einstein was asked again and again in his life, "What is the theory of relativity?" It is a complicated theory and it cannot be explained easily to people who are not aware of higher mathematics. In fact, it is said that only twelve persons on the whole earth understood exactly what Einstein meant by the theory of relativity. How to explain it to a layman?
So he had made this beautiful explanation. He would say, "Sit on a hot stove and then one second seems to be almost like eternity, nonending -- it is so hot, is it so painful. And then you hold the hand of your beloved and sit by her side on the bank of the river on a full-moon night, and hours go like moments." This, he used to say, is the theory of relativity.
Everything depends on you, on your psychological state. Time is not a physical, material phenomenon; it is psychological. Hence, in deep meditation time disappears totally. And this is not something new, the mystics have known it down the ages. They have said, all the mystics of all countries, that time stops when meditation really begins.
Jesus is asked by somebody, "You talk so much about the kingdom of God -- what is going to be very special about it, something that we don't know at all? Tell us something about the kingdom of God which will be absolutely special."
And do you know what he said? A very strange answer -- he said, "There shall be time no longer."
Yes, in the kingdom of God there can be time no longer, because time exists only in proportion to pain, anguish,

anxiety. If all anxiety, all pain, all nightmares disappear, time disappears. Time is a mind phenomenon: if there is no mind, there is no time. And you also know about it. This relativity you have felt.

Vivek was saying just the other day, and many times she has said it, that time flies so fast here that she cannot believe that she has been here for seven years. It looks as if just seven days ago she had come here.

And still we are amidst the world! Once we have moved away from the world, once we have our own small world, once we drop all the bridges, time will start disappearing. My effort is to give you a taste of timelessness. Once you have tasted it, then you can go back into the world and it will remain with you. The most important thing is to taste it once at least -- no-time -- and suddenly you are transported into another world.

This world consists of time and space. That's how Albert Einstein defines it: spaciotime. He makes one word out of the two, because he says time is nothing but the fourth dimension of space. So this world consists of space and time, and in meditation you disappear from both, or both disappear from your being. You don't know where you are. YOU ARE, certainly, more than you have ever been; you are totally there but there is no space confining you and no time defining you. A pure existence. Once tasted, all foolishness disappears.

The fool lives in time, the wise man lives in timelessness. The fool lives in mind, the wise man lives in no-mind.

HOW LONG THE NIGHT TO THE WATCHMAN, HOW LONG THE ROAD TO THE WEARY TRAVELER....

Just look at people's faces -- how tired, weary, utterly

frustrated they look. And they not only look it, they are. Their souls are tired, their very beings have become a kind of boredom. They are dragging themselves -- no joy, no dance in their steps, no song in their hearts, no gratitude, no thankfulness that they are...on the contrary, so many complaints.

One of Dostoevsky's characters in THE BROTHERS KARAMAZOV says, "I would like to return this life to God if I meet him. I don't want to live anymore. Life is such an anguish!" He wants to return the ticket. How can he be thankful?

Just think: if you meet God some day, what are you going to say to him? It will be difficult even to say "Hi!" You will be so angry with him, so utterly annoyed, irritated, that this is the man who created you, this is the man who created the world! It is simply because of this that God goes on hiding; otherwise people are bound to kill him. They won't leave him alive; he has to hide, just to survive he has to hide.

HOW LONG THE ROAD TO THE WEARY TRAVELER, HOW LONG THE WANDERING OF MANY LIVES TO THE FOOL WHO MISSES THE WAY. And the fool is bound to miss the way. Why? -- because he thinks he already knows the way, because he thinks he is on the way. Everybody else is wrong, he is right. He believes that if everybody follows him, everything will be right in the world. He is a fanatic. He has the Bible, the Koran, the Vedas -- what else is needed? He knows all the beautiful dogmas of all the religions -- what more is needed? He knows the way!

But when Buddha uses the word 'way', he means dhamma -- AES DHAMMO SANANTANO. He means the way that

takes you out of your ego, the way that takes you out of your mind, the way that takes you out of your identities, the way that makes you an absolute nothingness...the way that helps you to dissolve into the whole.

He is not talking about religions, he is not talking about so-called techniques, devices, methods. When he uses the word 'way', he means exactly what Lao Tzu means by 'tao'. Tao exactly means "the way" -- the way to what? The way beyond yourself, the way that leads you out of your confined, imprisoned state, into the open.

HOW LONG THE WANDERING OF MANY LIVES....

And it is really a long long wandering -- not of one day or of one life, but of many lives, of millions of lives. And if people are tired it is not surprising. If their eyes look full of dust, it is not surprising. If their souls are covered with layers of dust, it is not surprising. If they no longer reflect, if their mirrors are lost, it is not an accident -- it is understandable, although unforgivable, because nobody else is responsible for this situation except you. If you decide, you can drop all the layers of dust THIS very moment, and the moment you drop all the dust of your thoughts, you are on the way. You ARE the way!

Jesus says, "I am the way, I am the truth, I am the door." Christians go on interpreting it as if Jesus is the way; that is not true, that is falsifying Jesus utterly. When Jesus says, "I am the way," he is saying, "Whoever can say 'I am', there is the way." He is not talking about Jesus, the son of Joseph and Mary; he is talking about this "I-amness."

The moment, in deep silent meditation, you come across this I-amness, you are the way. It is not a question of being a Christian. It is not what Christians go on telling the whole

world, "Unless you come to Jesus, you will not find the way to God." That is sheer nonsense! -- because Buddha has found without being a Christian, and Mohammed has found without being a Christian, and Mahavira has found and Krishna has found and Lao Tzu has found...I have found without being a Christian. That is nonsense.

But what Jesus really means IS true.

Moses asked God when he encountered him...a beautiful story; remember, it is a story, not history. History is a very ordinary thing; history consists of Tamerlane, and Genghis Khan and Adolf Hitler and Joseph Stalin and Mao Zedong -- history is very ordinary. It consists of all that is ugly. It is not history, it is a parable, a metaphor, of tremendous poetry and beauty.

It says when Moses encountered God he asked, "Who are you?" And God is reported to have said, "I am that I am." That's what Jesus means when he says, "I am the way."

If you can feel your own being, your own "amness," you will find the way. The fool cannot find it. He goes on and on...living in the same desires, in the same stupid thoughts, in the same memories. The fool is repetitive; he only repeats what he knows -- he never endeavors to go beyond his knowledge. And truth is unknown.

Just watch your mind and you will be able to understand what I am trying to convey to you. Your mind is repetitive! It says, "Yesterday the food was very good, let us go to the same hotel again.... Yesterday that man was very friendly, let us find him again." It wants to repeat the yesterdays, and it does not allow the today to have its own being. It does not allow even the tomorrow to have its own being; for tomorrows also, it has plans to repeat just what it has

known in the past. And what have you known in the past except misery? But you have become familiar with it and you go on repeating it.
The fool is repetitive: the wise lives every moment anew.

All the soldiers of an American regiment in Korea put up a dollar apiece and draw lots for which of them will take the resultant money and spend one night in the finest brothel in the Orient.
Hymie Kaplowitz, the terror of Brooklyn, naturally wins, and on his return from the legendary brothel describes to his assembled bunk-mates what happened: the hanging gold curtains, the sensuous oriental music, the exotic aphrodisiacal meal served by little naked twelve-year-old girls beforehand, etcetera, ending every passage with "...nothing like Brooklyn!"
Finally he describes how the most beautiful woman he had ever seen comes slowly down the ornate staircase, wearing only a pagoda-headdress with trailing veils of white lace, and leads him up the stairs by the hand to her perfumed bed "...nothing like Brooklyn!"
"And then?" all the other soldiers ask feverishly.
"And then?" answers Hymie. "Oh, then it was just like Brooklyn."

The fool's mind goes on repetitively doing the same thing again and again. The fool's mind is a vicious circle -- it moves in circles. The wise man is not at all repetitive. He lives each moment anew, he is born anew each moment. He dies to the past every moment, and is born again.

The wise man's whole life is a process of rebirthing. The wise man is not born once, he is born every moment again and again. The old never takes hold of him. But the fool is born only once, and then he goes on repeating.
If you go on repeating you will miss the way, because your amness, your being, is absolutely fresh and always young. It is never old. The mind grows old, the body grows old, but the being knows nothing of time -- how can it grow old? It is always young, it is always youthful. It is as fresh as dewdrops in the early morning sun, it is as fresh as lotus leaves in the lake.

IF THE TRAVELER CANNOT FIND
MASTER OR FRIEND TO GO WITH HIM,
LET HIM TRAVEL ON ALONE
RATHER THAN WITH A FOOL FOR COMPANY.

The best thing is to find a master, because the master is the greatest friend possible; hence Buddha says MASTER OR FRIEND.
IF THE TRAVELER CANNOT FIND MASTER OR FRIEND TO GO WITH HIM, LET HIM TRAVEL ON ALONE RATHER THAN WITH A FOOL FOR COMPANY. But avoid fools. And that's what you never do. You collect fools around yourself. There is some secret in it: when you are surrounded by fools, you appear superior. It is very ego-fulfilling; hence nobody wants to live with somebody who is superior. People want to live with their inferiors, because your inferiors give you the idea that you are great.

To be with a master you will have to drop that idea that you are great, you will have to drop all that rubbish, you will have to drop your whole ego, you will have to surrender. You will have to dissolve in the master; hence people avoid masters. How many people went to Jesus? Very few, they can be counted on the fingers. How many people went to Buddha? Very few.... This has been always so. But people are very happy going to the Rotary Club. It feels very good when you are surrounded by fools -- it feels very good: all fools dressed up, and every fool feeling better than the others, and every fool bragging about himself, and every fool is being supported by other fools.

People love to be in the crowds, because in the crowds you can forget your inferiority. That's why people don't leave crowds. One crowd is that of Hindus, another is that of Mohammedans, the third is that of Christians and so on and so forth. Nobody wants to leave the crowd.

And even if sometimes people leave one crowd, they immediately join another. They escape somehow from one prison just to enter into another -- they cannot live alone. Buddha says it is better to live alone than with fools. If you can find a master or a friend, good; if you cannot, then it is better to be alone. Of course, it will be hard to be alone, it will be difficult because the crowd will create so many difficulties for you. The crowd does not love individuals, it does not want anybody to be independent; it wants everybody to be dependent on the crowd. It will create trouble for you. But all those troubles are cleansing, all those troubles are challenges. They sharpen your intelligence, they will make you wise.

"MY CHILDREN, MY WEALTH!"
SO THE FOOL TROUBLES HIMSELF.
BUT HOW HAS HE CHILDREN OR WEALTH?
HE IS NOT EVEN HIS OWN MASTER.

The fool lives around the idea of "my" and "mine": my nation, my religion, my race, my family, my wealth, my children, my parents...he lives around "my" and "mine." And he has come alone and he will go alone; nobody brings anything into the world and nobody takes anything from the world. Alone, empty-handed we come; alone, empty-handed we go. The wise knows it; hence the wise claims nothing as "mine." He uses things, but he does not possess them. Using is perfectly good -- use all the things of the world, they ARE for you. The world is a gift from God -- use it, but don't possess it. The moment you become a possessor, you cannot use things -- the things start using you. The moment you become a possessor, in fact you are possessed by your things, you become a slave. And the very idea of possessing is stupid. How can you possess anything? You don't even possess your own being. What else can you possess? You are not even a master of yourself.

Buddha says: "MY CHILDREN, MY WEALTH!" SO THE FOOL TROUBLES HIMSELF. And how many anxieties arise out of this "mine," "my" business? Totally false! Basically false, but it can create many many miseries. It is like when in the dark night you see a rope and you think that it is a snake. Now you are running, screaming, trembling, you may have a heart attack. And there was no snake at all -- there was only a rope! But the heart attack

will be real, remember: an unreal snake can create a real heart attack.
These are unreal problems. Claiming "mine" -- anything! Country, church, children, wealth, anything -- when you claim "It is mine!" you are creating a great source of anxiety, anguish for yourself. You are creating a hell around yourself.
BUT HOW HAS HE CHILDREN OR WEALTH? Buddha asks. HE IS NOT EVEN HIS OWN MASTER.

A fool fell out of a sixth-story window. He is lying on the ground with a big crowd around him. A cop walks over and says, "What happened?"
The fool says, "I don't know. I just got here."

What do you know about how you got here? What do you know about from where you come? What do you know about where you are bound to go? What do you know about who you are? The most fundamental questions remain in darkness, and still you go on claiming, "This is my house...."

When Buddha became enlightened, he came back home. The father was very angry, obviously -- this was his only child and he became a drop-out. The father was getting old, and he had managed a big kingdom. He was very much worried: "Who is going to own it? Who is going to rule it? That fool, my son, has escaped."
Many efforts were made to persuade Buddha to come back, but all efforts failed. When he became enlightened he came

on his own -- that encounter is one of the most beautiful encounters in human history.

Buddha's old father is very angry, so angry that out of anger tears start coming into his old eyes. He shouts, screams, abuses, and Buddha stands there, utterly calm and quiet, as if nothing is happening. Maybe for half an hour, or for one hour...then the father, the old man, is exhausted. Then he becomes aware that the son has not even uttered a single word, he has not reacted at all. "And he looks so calm and quiet! What is the matter? Is he deaf or something? Has he gone mad or something?" He asks, "Why aren't you answering me?"

Buddha says, "The man who had left you is no more. You are not talking to ME -- you are talking to your son, who is no more. Much water has gone down the Ganges since then. Twelve years have passed. I am a totally different person."

Buddha, of course, means metaphorically. He means, "I am no longer the same consciousness, no longer in the same mind. My attitudes have dropped, my prejudices gone. I am a totally fresh being. Now I know who I am. That time I was a fool. Now the light has come within my soul. That's why," he says, "I am no longer the same."

Buddha's old father again becomes infuriated. He says, "What do you mean that you are not the same? Can't I recognize my son? Don't I know you? I have given birth to you, my blood flows in your veins, you are made of my blood and bones -- and I don't know you? You have some nerve to say this!"

And Buddha again says, "Excuse me, but I say again that my body may be a part of your body -- I am not. Now I

know that I am not my body, not my mind. Now I know who I am. And you have nothing to do with my being; you have not created my being, you have not given birth to my being. I have been before my birth, and I will be after my death. Please try to understand me; don't get irritated, don't be annoyed. I have come only to share my joy that I have found."

But parents think the children are theirs, the children think the parents are theirs. In this world, your being is absolutely alone. Yes, share your joy with others, but never possess. Only the fool possesses, the wise man has no possessiveness.

THE FOOL WHO KNOWS HE IS A FOOL
IS THAT MUCH WISER.
THE FOOL WHO THINKS HE IS WISE
IS A FOOL INDEED.

Ponder over it: what do you think about yourself? It is going to be painful to see your foolishness. It is easy to see other people as fools -- in fact, everybody knows that everybody else is a fool -- but to see your own foolishness is a great step towards wisdom. To see your own foolishness is already transforming your being, your consciousness.

A man is visiting in France. Does a little wandering the first night. Makes love to the host's wife, his daughter, the cook, the second maid, etcetera. The host berates him in the morning.

"What is the big idea? Here you are my guest. I receive you as a friend. And what do you do? You make love to my wife, my daughter, and half the servants -- and for me, nothing?"

The fool is always concerned with only one thing -- his ego. Anything that is for him is good -- anything. And he is ready to cling to it. The fool even clings to misery, because it is HIS misery. He goes on accumulating whatsoever he can get, because the fool has no idea of his inner kingdom, of his inner treasures; he goes on accumulating junk because he thinks this is all that can be possessed. Junk outside and junk inside; that's what people go on collecting -- things they collect and thoughts they collect. Things are junk outside, thoughts are junk inside, and you are drowned in your junk.

Have a look, a dispassionate, detached look at your life, what you have been doing with it, and what you have got out of it. And don't try to befool yourself, because this is how mind goes on. It says, "Look how much you have got! So much money in the bank, so many people know you, respect you, honor you; you have such a great post, politically you are powerful...what else? What else can one hope for? Life has given all that one can hope for."

But money or power or prestige are nothing, because death will come and all your great citadels of wealth, power, prestige, respectability, will just start falling as if you have made them with playing cards. Just a blow of death and everything shatters.

Unless you have something that you can take beyond death, remember, you don't have anything at all -- your hands are

empty. Unless you have something deathless, eternal, you are a fool. The Buddha calls that man wise who has attained some real treasure -- of meditation, of compassion, of enlightenment.

DOES THE SPOON TASTE THE SOUP?
A FOOL MAY LIVE ALL HIS LIFE
IN THE COMPANY OF A MASTER
AND STILL MISS THE WAY.

The spoon cannot taste the soup, the spoon is dead -- so is the fool. He only appears to be alive; otherwise, his heart is dead, almost dead, because his heart is not functioning. He lives only through the head, and the head is only a spoon. Through the head you cannot taste any joy of life. Can you see beauty through the head? You can see the flower, but you will miss the beauty; you will see the moon, but you will miss the beauty; you will see the sunset, but you will miss the beauty. Your head cannot know anything of beauty.

Your head can know something about sex but cannot know anything about love. Your head can understand the prose part of life, your head is a calculating machine -- but it cannot know the poetry of existence. And the poetry of existence contains the truth. The music of existence contains the real benediction. It can be known only by the heart. Only the heart can experience it.

Remember, all that is meaningless, the head is efficient with it; and all that is significant, only the heart is capable of it. And we all are living in the head. Our schools, colleges, universities, exist only for a single purpose, for a

single crime they exist, and that crime is: divert people's energies from the heart to the head so that they can all become calculating machines, efficient clerks and deputy collectors, stationmasters.... But the education system does not allow you to become a lover, a poet, a singer. It does not allow you to know the real significance of life. It does not allow you to enter into the temple, it keeps you outside. The head is superficial, the heart is at the center. And if the heart is not functioning, you are a spoon, a wooden spoon. You will not taste the soup. A FOOL MAY LIVE ALL HIS LIFE IN THE COMPANY OF A MASTER AND STILL MISS THE WAY.

To be in the company of a master is the greatest blessing possible, because being in the company of one who is awakened, the possibility opens up for you also to be awakened. One who is awake can make you awake, because awakening is contagious. He can shake you out of your dreams and nightmares. But the fool can live in the company of a master his whole life and miss. How does he miss? Because with the master also he is connected through the head -- that is his way of missing the master.

Now, there are a few people here who ARE missing and who will go on missing if they remain head-oriented. This is not a place to live in the head. Be headless! A true sannyasin will be headless. He will be heartful, because it is only through the heart that I can penetrate into you. It is only through the heart that there is any possibility of communion. Otherwise, you will listen to my words and you will collect my words, and you will become parrots and you will repeat my words -- and that is all futile...unless you taste, unless you drink out of me.

THE TONGUE TASTES THE SOUP. Please don't be spoons, be tongues. When you are around a buddha, don't be spoons, be tongues -- be alive, be sensitive, be heartful, be loving, be trusting.

THE TONGUE TASTES THE SOUP.
IF YOU ARE AWAKE IN THE PRESENCE OF A MASTER
ONE MOMENT WILL SHOW YOU THE WAY.

A SINGLE moment is enough! It is not a question of being with a master for a long time; time does not enter into it. It is not a question of quantity, of how long you have lived with the master. The question is how deep you have loved the master, not how long you lived with the master -- how intensely, passionately you have become involved with the master...not the length of time, but the depth of your feeling. Then a single moment of awareness, of heart wakefulness, a single moment of silence...and the transmission, the transmission beyond all scriptures.

THE FOOL IS HIS OWN ENEMY.
THE MISCHIEF HE DOES IS HIS UNDOING.
HOW BITTERLY HE SUFFERS!

THE FOOL IS HIS OWN ENEMY, says Buddha. Why? -- because it is simply of his own accord that he goes on missing all that is significant in existence. Nobody is barring the way. The poetry of life is available to all. The fool remains deaf, he keeps his ears closed. Life is full of light, but the fool keeps his eyes closed. Life is

continuously showering divine joy, flowers go on showering, but the fool remains completely oblivious. Even if sometimes in spite of himself he comes across a flower, he does not believe in it. He says, "I must be deceived."

It happens almost every day. People write to me that in their meditation something strange is happening: they are feeling very happy -- it can't be true! Nobody ever writes to me, "I am feeling unhappy -- it can't be true!" But whenever happiness is felt, joy arises, they become afraid, they can't believe it. They start suspecting. They start suspecting and they start theorizing that it must be the hypnosis of the place, it must be the many orange people around, that's why they are being affected. How can they be happy?! They have known only misery their whole lives, they have become accustomed to it, misery has become their being. Now, ecstasy? No, these flowers can't be true -- something is wrong.

In almost all the languages of the world there are proverbs such as this one in English: you say, "It can't be true because it is so good." The good can't be true? Nobody believes in the good. "Too good to be true," you say. Nobody says, "Too bad to be true." No proverb like that exists in any language of the world: "Too bad to be true." The bad is accepted, the ugly is accepted, the mundane is accepted -- and the sacred is denied.

And even if you accept the sacred, you only accept it formally. You go to the temple and the church as a social formality; you don't really believe in God, you don't really believe in the temple. It is good, it keeps things smooth, it is like a lubricant. If you go to the temple and the church, people think you are a good man, honest, religious; and if

people think you are religious, honest and good, you can cheat them in a better way than you could otherwise. They will trust you, and you can cheat them and deceive them only if they trust you. It is a social formality, maybe a social strategy to cheat and deceive people. But you don't believe.

Whenever something immense, huge, bigger than you, descends on you, you simply shrink back, you close your eyes, you become an ostrich. You simply deny it! It can't be so. It is not that God has not come on your way -- he has come many times, he has knocked on your doors many times, but you don't open the doors. On the contrary, you go on finding rationalizations. Sometimes you say, "It must be the wind, it must be the rain, it must be some neighborhood child playing on the steps, knocking on the door." You go on explaining to yourself...but you never open the door and see who is there.

THE FOOL IS HIS OWN ENEMY. THE MISCHIEF HE DOES IS HIS UNDOING. HOW BITTERLY HE SUFFERS!

WHY DO WHAT YOU WILL REGRET?
WHY BRING TEARS UPON YOURSELF?

Out of his great compassion he raises this question -- he is talking to YOU -- WHY DO WHAT YOU WILL REGRET? WHY BRING TEARS UPON YOURSELF?

DO ONLY WHAT YOU DO NOT REGRET,
AND FILL YOURSELF WITH JOY.

Remember, let this be the criterion: whatsoever brings joy and bliss and benediction IS true -- because bliss is God's nature. Truth is another name for bliss. Untruth brings misery. If you live in lies, you will live in misery. And if you are living in misery, remember and find out on what lies you have based your life. Withdraw yourself from those lies. Don't waste time and don't postpone. Immediately withdraw! That withdrawal I call sannyas.
It is not withdrawing from the world, it is withdrawing from the lies that you have been living up to now. It is not renouncing the world, it is renouncing the lies that you have based your life upon. The moment you withdraw yourself from the lies, they start falling, start dying, because they depend on you, they nourish themselves on you -- they cannot live without your support. Withdraw your cooperation, and all lies disappear. And when all lies disappear, what is left is truth.
Truth is your innermost nature. Truth has not to be found anywhere else. AES DHAMMO SANANTANO -- this is the ultimate law, the inexhaustible law, the ultimate truth, that it is within you. You need not go anywhere. You can find it within yourself if you can fulfill only one condition: withdraw the lies in which you have invested so much -- withdraw from them. Renounce all that is untrue. Misery is an indication of untruth.
Whenever some bliss happens, trust it, and go in that direction...and you will be moving towards God. Bliss is his fragrance. If you can follow bliss, you will never go astray. If you follow bliss, you will be following nature. And if you are natural, blissful, relaxed, wisdom arises.

Wisdom is a very relaxed state of being. Wisdom is not knowledge, not information; wisdom is your inner being awake, alert, watchful, witnessing, full of light. Be full of light -- it is your birthright. If you miss, you are a fool. And you have missed many lives already -- this time, please, be a little more compassionate towards yourself.
Enough for today.
The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 2
Chapter #8
Chapter title: God loves laughter
8 July 1979 am in Buddha Hall

The first question:
Question 1
BELOVED MASTER,
IN THE WEST I WAS TRAINED AS A SOCIAL WORKER. I WAS TAUGHT THAT IT IS IMPORTANT THAT A PERSON RESPECTS AND LOVES HIMSELF AND FEELS WORTHWHILE. I WAS TAUGHT THAT IT IS IMPORTANT TO GIVE SUPPORT TO HELP STRENGTHEN THE EGO. YOU SAY KILL THE EGO. I AM CONFUSED.

Prem Aradhana, the ego is needed because the true self is not known. The ego is a substitute, it is a pseudo entity. Because you don't know yourself you have to create an artificial center; otherwise functioning in life will be impossible. Because you don't know your real face, you have to wear a mask. Not knowing the essential, you have to trust in the shadow.

There are only two ways of living in life. One is to live it from the very core of your being -- that has been the way of the mystics. Meditation is nothing but a device to make you aware of your real self -- which is not created by you, which need not be created by you, which you already are. You are born with it, you ARE it! It needs to be discovered. If this is not possible, or if the society does not allow it to happen...and no society allows it to happen, because the real self is dangerous -- dangerous for the established church, dangerous for the state, dangerous for the crowd, dangerous for the tradition -- because once a man knows his real self, he becomes an individual. He no longer belongs to the mob psychology; he will not be superstitious, and he cannot be exploited. He cannot be led like cattle, he cannot be ordered and commanded. He will live according to his light, he will live from his own inwardness. His life will have tremendous beauty, integrity. But that is the fear of the society.

Integrated persons become individuals, and the society wants you to be nonindividuals. Instead of individuality, the society teaches you to be a personality. The word 'personality' has to be understood. It comes from a root, 'persona' -- persona means a mask. The society gives you a false idea of who you are; it gives you just a toy, and you go on clinging to the toy your whole life.

The one way is to live through meditation -- then you live a life of rebellion, of adventure, of courage. Then you really live! The other way to live, or to fake living, is the way of the ego -- strengthen the ego, nourish the ego; so that you need not look into the self, cling to the ego. The ego is an

artefact created by the society to deceive you, to distract you.

The ego is man-made, manufactured by us. And because it is manufactured by the society, society has power over it. Because it is manufactured by the state and the church, and those who are in power, they can destroy it any moment; it depends on them. You have to be constantly in fear, and you have to be constantly obeying them, conforming to them, so that your ego remains intact. The society gives you respect if you are not an individual. The society honors you if you are not a Jesus, not a Socrates, not a Buddha. It respects you only if you are a sheep, not a man.

The West has completely forgotten how to meditate -- and Christianity has been the reason. Christianity has created a very false religion, which knows nothing of meditation. Christianity is very formal; it is a ritual. It is part of the society and the political structure of the society. Karl Marx is perfectly right about it, that it is the opium of the people. Because of Christianity, the West has lost track of its own being. And one cannot live without SOME idea of one's self -- and if you cannot discover, then create something. It will be false, but something is better than nothing.

Aradhana, what you have been told is utter nonsense. It does not matter who has been telling it -- the universities, the politicians, the priests. Certainly, you will be feeling confused, because I am telling you just the opposite: I am telling you to get rid of the ego, because if you get rid of the ego, you get rid of the rock that is preventing the flow of your consciousness.

Your consciousness is there, just behind the rock; it has not to be brought from somewhere else. Remove the rock --

real religion consists only of removing that which is unnecessary, and then the necessary starts flowing. That which is unessential has to be removed. And the essential is already there, is already the case! You remove the rock and you will be surprised: you need not create the real self -- it reveals itself to you.
And the real has beauty, and the real is deathless. Because it is deathless it has no fear. The unreal is constantly trembling. The ego is always in danger -- anybody can destroy it. Because it has been given to you by others, they can take it back. Today they respect you, tomorrow they may not respect you. If you don't follow their idea of life, if you don't confirm their style of being, they will withdraw their respect. And you will be flat on the ground...and you will not know who you are.

Borges writes:
"I dreamt that I was awakening from another dream -- full of cataclysms and turmoil -- and that I was waking up in a room which I did not recognize. Dawn was breaking: a faint diffused light outlined the foot of the iron bedstead, the table. I thought fearfully 'Where am I?' and realized that I did not know. I thought 'Who am I?' and I could not recognize myself. Fear grew within me. I thought, 'This distressing awakening is already hell, this awakening without a future will be my eternity.' Then I really awoke, trembling."

Not to know oneself, to know one's destiny, that's certainly real hell. And man does not know himself. Now, the cheaper way is to create the ego, and the West has been

following the cheaper way. And not only the West: the majority of people in the East, too, have been doing the same. Just leave a few enlightened people aside, and the whole world has been doing the same.

The West consists of ninety-nine point nine percent of the people in the world; the East consists of only a few people, they can be counted on the fingers. To me, the East and the West are not geographical -- they are spiritual dimensions. Gautam Buddha, Lao Tzu, Zarathustra, Abraham, Moses, Christ, Saint Francis -- the East consists of these people. Where they were born is immaterial, is irrelevant. Certainly Saint Francis was not born in the East, but I count him as part of the East.

The spiritual dimension, the dimension where the inner sun rises, is the East. And the dark night of the soul, which knows nothing of the sunrise, is the West. You don't become religious just by being born in India. Religion is not that cheap. It is the costliest thing in existence, because it is the most precious. There is no shortcut to it, and those who seek shortcuts are bound to be deceived by somebody. They will be given toys, and you can go on believing in toys because you don't want to risk an adventure into the unknown.

The greatest unknown exists within you. The most uncharted sea is your consciousness, and the most dangerous too, because when you start moving inwards, you start falling into an emptiness, and great fear arises, the fear of going mad, the fear of losing your identity.

...Because you have known yourself as a name, you have known yourself as a particular person -- you have known yourself as a doctor, as an engineer, as a businessman; you

have known yourself as an Indian, a German, a Chinese; you have known yourself as black or white; you have known yourself as man or woman; you have known yourself as educated or uneducated -- all these categories start disappearing.

As you move inwards, you are neither man nor woman: NETI, NETI -- neither this nor that, neither white nor black, neither Hindu nor Mohammedan, neither Indian nor Pakistani. As you move inwards, all these categories start slipping out of your hands. Then who are you? You start losing track of your ego, and a great fear arises -- the fear of nothingness. You are falling into infinity. Who knows whether you will be able to come back or not? And who knows what is going to be the outcome of this exploration? The coward clings to the shore and forgets all about the sea. That's what is happening all over the world. People cling to the ego because ego gives you a certain idea of who you are, gives you a certain clarity. But the ego is false, and the clarity is false.

It is better to be confused with reality than to be clear with unreality.

Aradhana, you are right: with me a great confusion is bound to happen -- because all your knowledge, slowly slowly, will be proved simple ignorance and nothing else. Hiding behind your knowledge is your ignorance. Hiding behind your cleverness is your stupid mind. And behind the ego there is nothing -- it is a shadow.

Once this becomes clear to you, that you have been clinging to the shadow, a great fear and a great confusion, a great chaos is bound to happen. But out of the chaos stars are born. One has to pass through such chaos -- that is part

of spiritual growth. You have to lose the false to get to the real. But between the two there will be an interval when the false will be gone and the true will not yet have arrived. Those are the moments, the most critical moments...these are the moments when you need a master or a friend.

Just the other day, Buddha was saying, "A master or a friend is needed." These are the moments when you will need somebody's hand who can hold you, who can support you, who can say, "Don't be afraid. This emptiness is going to disappear. Soon you will be overflowing -- just a little more waiting, a little more patience." The master cannot give you anything, but he can give you courage. He can give you his hand in those critical moments when your mind would like to go back, to turn back, to cling again to the shore.

The joy of the master, his confidence, his authority...remember, when I say "his authority" I don't mean that a master is authoritarian. A master is never authoritarian, but he has authority, because he is a witness to his own self. He knows about the other shore, he has BEEN to the other shore. You have only HEARD about the other shore, you have read about it; you know only about this shore, and the comfort and the security, and the safety of this shore. And when the storms rage and when you start losing sight of this shore, and you are not able to see the other shore, your mind will say, "Go back! Go back as fast as possible! The old shore is disappearing and the new is not appearing. Maybe there is nothing on the other shore, maybe there is no other shore at all. And the storm is great!"

In those moments, if you are with a master, and somebody is sitting in the boat silent, utterly calm and quiet, laughing and saying, "Don't be worried," playing on his flute, or singing a song, or telling you a joke, and he says, "Don't be worried. The other shore is -- I know, I have been there. Just a little patience...."

Looking into his eyes...in his absolute confidence will be the only help. Seeing his calmness, quietness, his integrity.... He is not looking back, he is not afraid: he must have seen the other shore, he must have been there. His whole being says it, his whole being proves it. And when he holds your hand you can feel that his hand is not trembling; you can feel that whatsoever he is saying he is saying out of his own experience, not because it is written in the Bible, in the Gita, in THE DHAMMAPADA. He KNOWS it on his own! -- that is his authority.

Once his confidence, his trust, becomes contagious to you, you will also start laughing. Of course, your laughter will have a little nervousness in it, but you will start laughing. You may start singing with him, maybe just to avoid fear, just as people whistle in the dark. You may join in his dance, just to forget all about what is happening. You don't want to see the storm that surrounds you, and you don't want to remember the past and you don't want to think about the future. It seems dark and dismal to you. You may join in his dance....

Dancing with him, even if out of fear, singing with him even though your singing is bound to be nervous, laughing with him although your laughter is not total, the storm will soon be passed. The deeper your patience, the sooner it happens -- you will be able to see the other shore, because

when the eyes are not troubled, when the eyes are not full of fear, they become perceptive. A seeing arises in you -- you become a seer.

The other shore is not far away; just your eyes are so full of smoke that you cannot see. In fact, this very shore IS the other shore. If your eyes are clear, if your perception is not clouded, if your insight has arisen in your being, if you can see and hear, this very shore is the other shore. When one knows, one really laughs at the whole ridiculousness of life -- because we have already got that for which we are longing. The treasure is with us, and we are running hither and thither.

The ego has not to be created, because you have the supreme self within you.

But I can understand your confusion. Remain confused. Don't go back to your old clarity -- it is deceptive. Be in this confusion, be with me a little while more, and soon the confusion will disperse and disappear. And then comes a totally new kind of clarity.

There are two kinds of clarity -- one, which is simply intellectual, which any moment can be taken away, doubt can be created any moment.... Intellect is full of doubt. Whatsoever you had heard and whatsoever you had been told has been taken away so easily by me; it was not of much value. Your whole life's training, and I have taken the earth from underneath your feet so easily...and you are confused. What value can such clarity have? If I can confuse you so easily, that means it was not real clarity. I will give you a new kind of clarity which cannot be confused.

Once a great philosopher went to see Ramakrishna. The philosopher argued against God, and he argued really well. His name was Keshav Chandra Sen. Ramakrishna was utterly illiterate; he knew nothing of philosophy, he had never been to the university, he had only read up to the second standard. He could write and read Bengali a little bit.

The philosopher was well educated, world famous, he had written many books. He argued, and Ramakrishna laughed. And each time the philosopher gave a beautiful, profound argument against God, Ramakrishna would jump and hug him. A great crowd had gathered to see the scene, what was happening. The philosopher was very much embarrassed, because he had come to argue, and what kind of argument is this? This man laughs, dances -- sometimes hugs.

The philosopher said, "Are you not disturbed by my arguments?"

Ramakrishna said, "How can I be disturbed? I am really enjoying your arguments. You are clever, you are intelligent, your arguments are beautiful -- but what can I do? I know God! It is not a question of argument, it is not that I believe in God. Had I believed, you would have disturbed me, you would have taken all my clarity and you would have confused me. But I KNOW he is!"

If you know, you know -- there is no way of distracting you. I will give you THAT kind of clarity -- which knows, and is not dependent on any argument but arises out of existential experience. Then you need not be taught to respect yourself or love yourself or feel worthwhile. Knowing oneself, one knows one is God. Now what more

respect can you give to yourself? When this experience arises in you -- "AHAM BRAHMASMI! I am God!" -- what more respect can you give to yourself?

And who is there to give respect? Only God is. When in the deepest recesses of your being the realization happens: "ANA'L HAQ! -- I am truth!" what more worthwhileness do you need to feel? You have come to the ultimate, and you have come to know the ultimate as your innermost being, your interiority.

Yes, you have been told to be respectful to yourself because you don't know who you are. You have been told to feel worthwhile because you feel worthless. You have been told to love yourself because you hate yourself. And the strange thing is, the irony is, that it is the SAME people who have been doing both things to you.

The same people first make you feel worthless; this is the trade secret of all the churches, of all the so-called religions, of all political ideologies, of all societies, civilizations and cultures that have existed up to now. This is the trade secret: first they make you feel worthless -- every child is made to feel worthless. He is told, "Unless you become this or that, you have no worth." When he starts feeling worthless, than we start telling him, "Feel worthwhile, feel some worth. If you cannot feel worthwhile, your life is wasted."

First we tell him to hate himself and condemn himself; everything that he does is wrong, hence he starts hating himself because he is not a beautiful person. The parents, the teachers, the priests, they are all joined in the conspiracy. Every child is reduced to such a condemnable state that he starts feeling, "I must be the ugliest person in

the world, because I do things that should not be done, and I don't do things which should be done." And then one day we start telling the child, "Why don't you love yourself? Otherwise, how will you survive?"

We take all respect away from the child, and when he becomes disrespectful towards himself we start telling him to create respect. This is such an absurd situation! Each child is born with great respect for himself. Each child knows his worth, his intrinsic worth. He is not worthy because he is like Buddha or Krishna or Christ -- he simply knows he has worth because he is, he has being. That's enough! And each child loves himself, respects himself.

It is you who teach him just the opposite. First you destroy all that is beautiful in him, and then you start painting a false picture. Destroy the natural beauty and then paint his face, make him absolutely false. But why is this done? -- because only false people can be slaves, only false people can follow the stupid politicians, only false people can be victims of utterly ignorant priests. If people are real, they cannot be exploited and cannot be oppressed.

Aradhana, remain confused -- it is good. It is good that you have come to this point where a great confusion has arisen in you. You can no longer trust your ego -- good! It is tremendously important, because now a second step becomes possible. I will give you your childhood back, your inner worth, which is not a created phenomenon; your natural love, which is not cultivated; your spontaneous respect, which arises only when you start feeling that you are part of God, that you are divine.

Remember, ego is comparative -- it always compares itself with others -- and the self is noncomparative. When you

know yourself it is neither inferior nor superior in comparison to anybody, it is simply itself. But the ego is comparative. And remember, if you feel superior to somebody, you are bound to feel inferior to somebody else. So the ego is a very tricky phenomenon: on the one hand it makes you feel superior, on the other hand it makes you feel inferior. It keeps you in a double bind, it goes on pulling you apart. It drives you crazy.

On the one hand you know that you are superior to your servant, but what about your boss? You force the servant to surrender to you, and you surrender to your boss. You force your servant or your wife or your children to be slaves to you. And then to your boss? You wag your tail there.

How can you be blissful? Both things are wrong. To make others feel inferior is violent, it is a crime against God; and to make yourself feel inferior before somebody is again a crime against God. When you know the real self, both things disappear. Then you are you, and the other is the other, and there is no comparison -- nobody is superior and nobody is inferior.

This is what I call real spiritual communism, but this is possible only when self-knowledge has happened. Karl Marx or Friedrich Engels, Joseph Stalin or Mao Zedong, these are not the real communists. They live in the ego. The real communists are Gautam Buddha, Jesus, Lao Tzu -- nobody knows them as communists but they are real communists, because if you understand their vision, all comparison disappears. And when there is no comparison, there is communism. Equality is possible only when comparison disappears from the world.

Not knowing yourself, you are almost fast asleep; not knowing yourself, you are like a drunkard who asks others, "Where is my home?" The drunkard sometimes even asks, "Can you tell me, sir, who I am?"

Once a drunkard came back to the bartender and asked him, "Have you seen my friend? Has he been here?"
The bartender said, "Yes, just a few minutes before, he was here."
And the drunkard asked, "Will you be kind enough to tell me, was I with him too?"

There was a drunk standing at a bar one day. He turned to the man on his right and said, "Did you pour beer in my pocket?"
"I certainly did not," said the man.
Then the drunk turned to the man on his left and said, "Did you pour beer in my pocket?"
The man said, "I most certainly did not pour beer in your pocket."
The drunk said, "Just like I thought -- an inside job."

The second question:
Question 2
BELOVED MASTER,
WHAT IS YOUR VISION FOR THE NEW COMMUNE?

Krishna Prem, the new commune is an experiment in spiritual communism. The word 'communism' comes from 'commune'. There is only one possibility of communism in the world and that possibility is through meditation.

Communism is not possible through changing the economic structures of societies.

The change of economic structures of societies will only bring new classes; it cannot bring a classless society. The proletariat may disappear, the bourgeoisie may go, but then the ruler and the ruled...that's what has happened in Soviet Russia, that's what has happened in China. New distinctions, new classes have arisen.

Communism is basically a spiritual vision. It is not a question of changing the economic structures of the society, but changing people's spiritual vision. The new commune is going to be a space where we can create human beings who are not obsessed with comparison, who are not obsessed with the ego, who are not obsessed with the personality.

The new commune is going to be a context in which a new kind of man can become possible. Socrates says that the master is a midwife, and he is right: all masters are midwives. They always bring new humanities into existence. Through them a new man is born.

The old man is finished. The old man is no more valid. And with the old man, all that belonged to the old man has also become invalid, irrelevant. The old man was life-negative.

The new commune will create a life-affirmative religiousness. The motto of the new commune is: This very body the Buddha, this very earth the Lotus Paradise.

The new commune is going to hallow the earth, to make everything sacred. We are not going to divide existence into this world and that world: we are going to live existence in its totality. We are going to live as scientists, as poets, as mystics -- all together!

The scientist is partial. He believes only in the body, he cannot go beyond it; his vision is very limited, shortsighted. The poet clings to another aspect of humanity, the feeling part. He can see the beauty, but his beauty is very momentary. He has no idea of the eternal. The mystic lives in the being, he lives in the deathless, timeless state. Because he lives in the deathless, timeless state he becomes indifferent to the world of time and space. He becomes indifferent both to science and to poetry. These are all three aspects of reality, three faces of God, the trinity, TRIMURTI.

My effort in the new commune is to create a man who is not partial...who is total, whole, holy. A man should be all three together. He should be as accurate and objective as a scientist; and he should be as sensitive, as full of the heart, as the poet; and he should be as rooted deep down in his being as the mystic. He should not choose. He should allow all these three dimensions to exist together.

The East suffered because we became too much concerned with the being; we lost track of science, we lost track of art. The West has suffered, is suffering, because it has lost track of being. The East became inwardly rich but outwardly poor; the West has become outwardly rich, inwardly poor. The new commune is going to be rich in both ways.

I believe in richness. I am not a worshipper of poverty. That is simply stupid. I would like humanity to be rich in all possible ways: rich in science, rich in technology, rich in poetry, rich in music, rich in meditation, rich in mysticism. Life should be lived in its multidimensionality. God should be approached through all possible ways. Why impoverish your soul?

The new commune is going to create a space, a context, for this multidimensional human being to be born. And the future belongs to this new man.
The old man believed in renunciation; the old man believed that if you want to come closer to God you have to be away from the world, as if there is a conflict between God and the world. It is obviously wrong. The world exists through God! The world is God's body -- there can't be any conflict! If there had been any conflict, then the world would have disappeared long ago.
The world breathes, is alive, and life is God. The tree is divine because it is alive, and the rock is divine because the rock is also alive in its own way, the rock also grows. The whole existence is full of life, overflowing with life. God is not against the world -- how can the painter be against his painting? and how can the poet be against his poetry? and how can the musician be against his music? The world is his poetry, his painting, his music -- it is his dance.
The old man lived in renunciation, escaped away from the world to the caves, to the monasteries, to the Himalayas. The old man was escapist, the old man was afraid to live, he was more ready to die. The old man was somehow suicidal.
My new man is going to be deep in love with life. And my religion is not of renunciation but of rejoicing. The new commune will create every possible opportunity to rejoice, sing, dance.
The new commune is going to be of a totally new kind of religiousness, spirituality. Nobody is going to be a Hindu or a Mohammedan or a Christian or a Jaina, but everybody is going to be religious -- just religious. To me, religion needs

no adjectives. And the moment a religion becomes attached to an adjective, it is no longer religion -- it becomes politics.

Bayazid is not Mohammedan. Mohammed himself is not Mohammedan, cannot be. Christ is not Christian and Buddha is not Buddhist. They are simply religious. They have a certain flavor, a certain silence, a certain grace, surrounding them. They are windows to the beyond. Through them you can see the beyond, through them God goes on singing a thousand and one songs.

The new commune is not going to be of any religion. It will be religious. But the religion will not be unearthly, it will be very down to earth; hence it will be creative, it will explore all possibilities of being creative. All kinds of creativity will be supported, nourished.

The real religious man has to contribute to the world. He has to make it a little more beautiful than he found it when he came into the world. He has to make it a little more joyous. He has to make it a little more perfumed. He has to make it a little more harmonious. That is going to be his contribution.

In the past we respected people for wrong reasons. We respected somebody because he was fasting. Now, fasting contributes nothing to the world. And the man who goes on long fasts is simply being violent with himself. To respect him is to respect violence, to respect him is to respect suicidal instincts, to respect him is to respect masochism. He is mentally ill! He is not natural, he is abnormal. He needs psychological treatment, he needs help. But you respect him, and because of your respect, his ego becomes puffed up; so if he was going to fast for one month, he will

fast for three months. And the more he fasts, the more he tortures his body, the more respect you give to him.
The new commune will not respect any masochistic tendencies. It will not respect any asceticism, it will not respect any abnormal, unnatural tendencies -- it will respect the natural man. It will respect the child in man, it will respect innocence, and it will respect creativity. It will respect a man who paints a beautiful picture, it will respect the man who plays beautifully on the flute. The flute-player will be religious, and the painter will be religious, and the dancer will be religious; not the man who goes on long fasts, who tortures his body, who lies down on a bed of thorns, who cripples himself.
It is going to be the beginning of a new humanity. It is needed, absolutely needed. If we cannot create the new man in the coming twenty years -- by the end of this century -- then humanity has no future. The old man has come to the end of his tether. The old man is ready to commit a global suicide. The third world war is going to be global suicide. It can be avoided only if a new kind of man can be created.
This is going to be an experiment, a great experiment on which much is going to depend. It has tremendous implications for the future. Be ready for it. Be prepared for it. This ashram is just a launching pad.... On a small scale I am experimenting. The new commune will be on a big scale: ten thousand sannyasins living together as one body, one being. Nobody will possess anything; everybody will use everything, everybody will enjoy. Everybody is going to live as comfortably, as richly, as we can manage. But nobody will possess anything. Not only will things not be

possessed, but persons also will not be possessed in the new commune. If you love a woman, live with her -- out of sheer love, out of sheer joy -- but you don't become her husband, you can't. You don't become a wife. To become a "wife" or a "husband" is ugly because it brings ownership; then the other is reduced to property.

The new commune is going to be nonpossessive, full of love -- living in love but with no possessiveness at all; sharing all kinds of joys, making a pool of all the joys.... When ten thousand people contribute, it can become explosive. The rejoicing will be great.

Jesus says again and again: Rejoice! Rejoice! Rejoice! But he has not been heard yet. Christians look so serious, and they have painted Jesus also in such a way that it doesn't seem that he ever rejoiced himself. Christians say Jesus never laughed! This is ridiculous. The man who was saying "Rejoice!" the man who used to love good food, good wine, the man who used to feast and participate in festivals, the man around whom there was always feasting -- he never laughed? Christians have given a false Christ to the world. In my commune, Buddha is going to laugh and dance, Christ is going to laugh and dance. Poor fellows, nobody has allowed them up to now! Have compassion on them -- let them dance and sing and play. My new commune is going to transform work into playfulness, it is going to transform life into love and laughter.

Remember the motto again -- to hallow the earth, to make everything sacred, to transform the ordinary, mundane things into extraordinary, spiritual things. The whole of life has to be your temple; work has to be your worship, love has to be your prayer.

This very body the Buddha, this very earth the Lotus Paradise.

The third question:
Question 3
BELOVED MASTER,
I AM A PSYCHOLOGIST. I WAS HOPING THAT STUDYING PSYCHOLOGY WOULD HELP TO CHANGE MY LIFE, BUT NOTHING LIKE THAT HAS HAPPENED. WHAT SHOULD I DO NOW?

Psychology is still a very very immature science. It is very rudimentary, it is only the beginning. It is not yet a way of life -- it cannot transform you. It can certainly give you a few insights into the mind, but those insights are not going to be transforming. Why? -- because transformation always happens from a higher plane. Transformation never means solving problems -- remaining on the same plane -- that means adjustment. Psychology is still trying to help you adjust -- to adjust to the society which is itself insane, to adjust to the family, to adjust to the ideas that are dominant around you. But all those ideas -- your family, your society -- they themselves are ill, sick, and to adjust to them will give you a certain normality, at least a superficial appearance of health, but it is not going to transform you. Transformation means to change the plane of your understanding. It comes through transcendence. If you want to change your mind, you have to go to the state of no-mind. Only from that height will you be able to change your mind, because from that height you will be the master. Remaining in the mind and trying to change the mind by

mind itself is a futile process. It is like pulling yourself up by your own shoestrings. It is like a dog trying to catch hold of its own tail; sometimes they do, sometimes they behave very humanly. The dog is sitting in the warm sun early in the morning and he looks at the tail just resting by his side -- naturally, the curiosity arises: Why not catch hold of it? He tries, fails, feels offended, annoyed; tries hard, fails harder, becomes mad, crazy. But he will never be able to catch hold of the tail -- it is his own tail. The more he jumps, the more the tail will jump.
Psychology can give you a few insights into the mind, but because it cannot take you beyond the mind it can't be of any help.

Sam became a psychiatrist and began to prosper. He bought a big expensive limousine and drove it out for the first time. After he had been riding for a few moments, another car slammed into him. He jumped out of his smashed Cadillac, went over to the car that had rammed his, shook his fist at it, and roared, "You idiot! You moron! You crook of a rat! You son of a...!" Then he suddenly remembered he was a psychiatrist and lowered his voice and softly asked, "Why do you hate your mother?"

Psychology cannot help. I have heard another story about this same Sam -- a story of when he was no more in the world, he had died.

The widow was tending to the plants around her husband's grave. As she bent over, some blades of grass tickled the bare flesh under her skirt. Startled, she turned around

quickly, but there was no one in sight. Sighing, she turned back to the grave and whispered, "Sam, behave yourself! And remember, you are supposed to be dead."

Neither in life nor in death is psychology going to help you much. You can be helped only by religion.

Now the psychologist is trying to play the role of the master, which is utterly pretentious. The psychologist, the psychoanalyst and the psychiatrist are not masters! They don't know themselves. Yes, they have understood a little bit about the mechanism of the mind, they have studied, they are well informed. But information never changes anybody, it never brings any revolution. Deep down the person remains the same. He can talk beautifully, he can give you good advice, but he cannot follow his own advice. The psychoanalyst cannot be the master. But in the West particularly he has become so successful professionally that even the priest is in tremendous awe. Even the priests -- the Catholic and the Protestant -- are studying psychoanalysis and other schools of psychology, because they see that people are not coming to the priest anymore, they are going to the psychoanalyst. The priest is becoming afraid that he is losing his job.

The priest has dominated people for hundreds of years. He was the wise man -- he has lost his attraction. And people cannot live without advisors; they need somebody to tell them what to do because they never grow up. They are like small children, always in need of being told what to do and what not to do. Up to now the priest used to do that; now the priest has lost his charm, his validity. He is no longer

contemporary, he has become out of date. Now the psychoanalyst has taken his place, HE is the priest now. But as the priest was false, so is the psychoanalyst. The priest was using religious jargon to exploit people; the psychologist is using scientific jargon to exploit the same people. Neither was the priest awakened, nor is the psychoanalyst awakened.

Man can be helped only by somebody who is a buddha already; otherwise he cannot be helped.

All your advisors will make more and more mess out of you. The more you listen to advisors, the more you will become messed up -- because they don't know what they are saying! They don't even agree amongst themselves. Freud says one thing, Adler says another, Jung says still another. And now there are a thousand and one schools. And every school is fanatical about its philosophy -- that it has the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth. Not only does it say that it is true; it says it has THE truth, and everybody else is lying, deceiving.

If you listen to these psychoanalysts, if you go from one psychoanalyst to another, you will be more puzzled. The only help that they can give to you is that if you are intelligent enough you will become so fed up with them, so bored with them, that you will simply drop the idea of being transformed, and you may start living your life normally, without bothering much about transformation -- IF you are intelligent, which is very rare, because intelligence is crushed from the very beginning. You are made mediocres. From the very beginning, intelligence is destroyed. Only a few people somehow escape the society and remain intelligent.

Nagesh, you ask me, "What should I do now?"
My suggestion is: you have done enough. Now learn something which is not DOING but nondoing. Be here, and learn -- not to do but to be. Sit silently, doing nothing. Within three to nine months, if one is patient enough and if one can simply go on sitting for hours together every day -- as much as one can find time just sit.... In the beginning, great turmoil will arise in your mind; everything from the unconscious will start surfacing. You will see it as if you are going mad. Go on watching -- don't be worried. You cannot go mad because you are already mad, so there is nothing to lose and nothing to fear.

A politician, a great politician, was consulting a psychoanalyst. The politician was suffering from an inferiority complex -- all politicians suffer from inferiority complexes. If they don't suffer from inferiority complexes, they will not be politicians in the first place. To be a politician means striving to be superior, to be in power, so one can prove to others and to oneself, "I am not inferior. Look! I am the prime minister. Look! Only I am the prime minister of the country and nobody else -- how can I be inferior?"
Politics arises out of the inferiority complex -- all power politics arises out of the inferiority complex. So it was not rare that the politician was suffering from an inferiority complex.
The psychoanalyst worked on the politician year in, year out. After two or three years, listening to all his gibberish nonsense...because what can a politician say? For hours together he would lie down on the couch and talk nonsense.

After three years, one day when he came, the psychoanalyst received him with great joy and said, "I am glad to declare, after three years' research on you, that you don't suffer from an inferiority complex. I have come to this conclusion after such a long effort that it can't be wrong. You don't suffer from an inferiority complex -- simply forget all about it."
The politician was very happy and he said, "I am grateful to you, but can you tell me how you arrived at this conclusion?"
The psychoanalyst said, "Because you ARE simply inferior -- how can you suffer from an inferiority complex?"

Nagesh, you need not be worried. If sitting silently you start feeling madness arising, don't be worried -- you can't be more mad than you already are. Man cannot fall more. He has fallen to the rock bottom. Now there is no further to fall.
Sitting silently you will see madness arising in you, because it has remained repressed. And you keep occupied with things -- psychology etcetera -- now you will become occupied with meditation and sannyas, but these are all occupations and you are not allowing your unconscious to reveal itself to you. It is frightening.
My suggestion to you is, just sit silently as much as you can find time to. Zen people sit silently at least six to eight hours per day. In the beginning it is really maddening. The mind plays so many tricks on you, tries to drive you crazy, creates imaginary fears, hallucinations. The body starts playing tricks on you...all kinds of things will happen. But if you can go on witnessing, within three to nine months everything settles, and settles of its own accord -- not

because you have to do something. Without your doing, it simply settles, and when a stillness arises, uncultivated, unpracticed, it is something superb, something tremendously graceful, exquisite. You have never tasted anything like it before -- it is pure nectar....
You have transcended the mind! All mind problems are solved. Not that you have found a solution, but simply they have fallen by themselves -- by witnessing, by just witnessing.
You are already too knowledgeable. No more knowledge is needed; you need unlearning. Knowledgeable people are very cunning people -- they can always go on finding excuses to remain the same.

A professor of philosophy and psychology was addicted to moonshine whiskey. One night, after guzzling a large amount, he went into his cabin, undressed for bed, and tried to blow out the candle. His alcoholic breath burst into flame.
Sadly shaken by the experience, he called out to his wife, "Bring me the Bible, Martha. This here has been a terrible lesson to me. I am going to swear off."
The happy housewife brought the Bible in a hurry, stood by while her man put his hand on it and looked heavenward: "I swear by all that is holy," intoned he, "that I will never again blow on a lighted candle."

Mind is cunning. You have to go beyond mind -- that's what meditation is all about.

The last question:

Question 4
BELOVED MASTER,
YOU SEEM TO BE THE FIRST ENLIGHTENED MASTER WHO TELLS JOKES -- WHY IS IT SO?

Garima, I will tell you a story. The following story in the Talmud was particularly cherished by the great Hassid master, Baal Shem.
Rabbi Baruch used to visit the marketplace where the Prophet Elijah often appeared to him. It was believed that he appeared to some saintly men to offer them spiritual guidance.
Once Baruch asked the prophet, "Is there anyone here who has a share in the world to come?"
He replied, "No."
While they were conversing, two men passed by and Elijah remarked, "These two men have a share in the world to come."
Rabbi Baruch then approached and asked them, "What is your occupation?"
They replied, "We are jesters. When we see men depressed we cheer them up."

God loves laughter, God loves cheerful people. God is not interested in seeing you with long faces.
When Baal Shem was dying, somebody asked, "Are you prepared to meet the Lord?"
He said, "I have always been ready. It is not a question of becoming ready now -- I have always been ready. Any moment he could have called me!"
The man asked, "What is your readiness?"

Baal Shem said, "I know a few beautiful jokes -- I will tell him those jokes. And I know he will enjoy them and he will laugh with me. And what else can I offer to him? The whole world is his, the whole universe is his, I am his, so what can I offer to him? Just a few jokes!"

Baal Shem is one of the great buddhas who has come out of the Jewish tradition, one of the most loved by his disciples. He was the founder of Hassidism.

And remember, I am not the first to tell you jokes. There have been many.... But people are so sad that they forget about people who have been sources of laughter and joy -- they remember only sad people. People are sad; hence they find a certain affinity with sad people. You remember only sad buddhas -- even if they were not sad, you make them sad. In your mind you fabricate stories, you manufacture ideas, and you make them look sad.

Now, a Jaina will be very much offended if I say that Mahavira laughed. Laughter seems to be so mundane, so worldly. How can Mahavira laugh? If I say Buddha laughed, Buddhists, particularly the Hinayana Buddhists, will be angry. I have been in tremendous love with Buddha; I think there is no other man on the earth today who has loved Buddha as much as I. But just the other day I was reading in the newspapers: the president of the Buddhist Society of India is going to raise questions against me in the parliament in the coming session. I can understand, these people must be feeling very much offended because I am giving Buddha a new color -- HIS color, Buddha's color. I am trying to bring his reality to you. And these people have distorted his image totally; they have made

him look so sad, they won't allow him to laugh. If he laughs, they will raise questions against him in the parliament.
I am offending people because I am trying to live religion not according to their ideas. I tell you, privately of course, that Jesus used to joke -- but don't tell it to Christians, they will not understand. They can understand only the Jesus who was crucified. In fact, they are worshipping death, not Jesus; they are worshipping the cross, not Christ. Hence I call Christianity, Crossianity -- it has nothing to do with Christ. I know the man, I personally know the man!
He used to love all the good things of life. How can he avoid joking? He loved to gossip, and they say he was only delivering gospels! He was a very very earth-rooted man. He moved with gamblers, with drunkards, with prostitutes too. He was not afraid of all these fools -- that's why he had to suffer.
That's why I am to suffer....
Enough for today.
The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 2
Chapter #9
Chapter title: Sowing seeds of bliss
9 July 1979 am in Buddha Hall

FOR A WHILE THE FOOL'S MISCHIEF
TASTES SWEET, SWEET AS HONEY.
BUT IN THE END IT TURNS BITTER.
AND HOW BITTERLY HE SUFFERS!

FOR MONTHS THE FOOL MAY FAST,

EATING FROM THE TIP OF A GRASS BLADE.
STILL HE IS NOT WORTH A PENNY
BESIDE THE MASTER WHOSE FOOD IS THE WAY.

FRESH MILK TAKES TIME TO SOUR.
SO A FOOL'S MISCHIEF
TAKES TIME TO CATCH UP WITH HIM.
LIKE THE EMBERS OF A FIRE
IT SMOULDERS WITHIN HIM.

WHATEVER A FOOL LEARNS,
IT ONLY MAKES HIM DULLER.
KNOWLEDGE CLEAVES HIS HEAD.

FOR THEN HE WANTS RECOGNITION.
A PLACE BEFORE OTHER PEOPLE.
A PLACE OVER OTHER PEOPLE.

"LET THEM KNOW MY WORK,
LET EVERYONE LOOK TO ME FOR DIRECTION."
SUCH ARE HIS DESIRES,
SUCH IS HIS SWELLING PRIDE.

ONE WAY LEADS TO WEALTH AND FAME,
THE OTHER TO THE END OF THE WAY.

LOOK NOT FOR RECOGNITION
BUT FOLLOW THE AWAKENED
AND SET YOURSELF FREE.

The last words of Gautama the Buddha on the earth were: Be a light unto yourself. Do not follow others, do not imitate, because imitation, following, creates stupidity. You are born with a tremendous possibility of intelligence. You are born with a light within you. Listen to the still, small voice within, and that will guide you. Nobody else can guide you, nobody else can become a model for your life, because you are unique. Nobody has there been ever who was exactly like you, and nobody is ever going to be there again who will be exactly like you. This is your glory, your grandeur -- that you are utterly irreplaceable, that you are just yourself and nobody else.

The person who follows others becomes false, he becomes pseudo, he becomes mechanical. He can be a great saint in the eyes of others, but deep down, he is simply unintelligent and nothing else. He may have a very respectable character but that is only the surface, it is not even skin-deep. Scratch him a little and you will be surprised that inside he is a totally different person, just the opposite of his outside.

By following others you can cultivate a beautiful character, but you cannot have a beautiful consciousness, and unless you have a beautiful consciousness you can never be free. You can go on changing your prisons, you can go on changing your bondages, your slaveries. You can be a Hindu or a Mohammedan or a Christian or a Jaina -- that is not going to help you. To be a Jaina means to follow Mahavira as the model. Now, there is nobody who is like Mahavira or ever can be. Following Mahavira you will become a false entity. You will lose all reality, you will lose all sincerity, you will be untrue to yourself. You will

become artificial, unnatural, and to be artificial, to be unnatural, is the way of the mediocre, the stupid, the fool. Buddha defines wisdom as living in the light of your own consciousness, and foolishness as following others, imitating others, becoming a shadow to somebody else. The real master creates masters, not followers. The real master throws you back to yourself. His whole effort is to make you independent of him, because you have been dependent for centuries, and it has not led you anywhere. You still continue to stumble in the dark night of the soul. Only your inner light can become the sunrise. The false master persuades you to follow him, to imitate him, to be just a carbon copy of him. The real master will not allow you to be a carbon copy, he wants you to be the original. He loves you! How can he make you imitative? He has compassion for you, he would like you to be utterly free -- free from all outer dependencies.

But the ordinary human being does not want to be free. He wants to be dependent. He wants somebody else to guide him. Why? -- because then he can throw the whole responsibility on the shoulders of somebody else. And the more responsibility you throw away onto somebody else's shoulders, the less is the possibility of your ever becoming intelligent. It is responsibility, the challenge of responsibility, that creates wisdom.

One has to accept life with all its problems. One has to go through life unprotected; one has to seek and search one's way. Life is an opportunity, a challenge, to find yourself. But the fool does not want to go the hard way, the fool chooses the shortcut. He says to himself, "Buddha has attained -- why should I bother? I will just watch his

behavior and imitate. Jesus has attained, so why should I search and seek? I can simply become a shadow to Jesus. I can simply go on following him wherever he goes."

But following somebody else, how are you going to become intelligent? You will not give any chance for your intelligence to explode. It needs a challenging life, an adventurous life, a life that knows how to risk and how to go into the unknown, for intelligence to arise. And only intelligence can save you -- nobody else -- your own intelligence, mind you, your own awareness, can become your nirvana.

Be a light unto yourself and you will be wise; let others become your leaders, your guides, and you will remain stupid, and you will go on missing all the treasures of life -- which were yours! And how can you decide that the other's character is a right character for you to follow?

A Buddha lives in his own way, a Mahavira in his, a Jesus still different. A Mohammed IS Mohammed, he is not Mahavira. Whom are you going to follow? Just by the accidents of birth you are going to decide your life, your destiny? Then you will remain accidental. And the fool IS accidental. The wise man never lives by accidents. He does not become a Hindu because he is born in a Hindu family; he does not become a Christian because his parents are Christian; he does not become a communist because he is born in Russia. He seeks, he inquires.

Life is a tremendously beautiful pilgrimage, but only for those who are ready to seek and search.

Jesus says: Seek and ye shall find; ask and it shall be given to you; knock and the doors shall be opened unto you.

He is not saying: Follow, imitate. He is not saying: Be a Christian and the doors shall be opened unto you. He is not saying: I have knocked on the doors and opened them for you. He is saying: Knock and the doors shall be opened unto you. And everybody has to knock, because everybody has to enter by different doors. People are so unique, people are individuals.

This is your glory. Don't deny it; otherwise you will remain a fool. That does not mean don't learn from the buddhas, the awakened ones -- learn! Imbibe the spirit! Drink out of their springs, fresh springs of joy. Be in their company, become attuned to their inner music, listen to their harmony, and be filled with great joy that a man like you, just like you, has achieved, so you can also achieve. Become thrilled that a man just like you, made of blood and bones, has become enlightened, so you can also become enlightened.

A buddha has not to be followed but understood. A buddha has not to be imitated but listened to -- listened to in tremendous silence, love, trust. And the more you understand a buddha, the more you will feel he is speaking not from the outside but from within, from the very core of your being. He is a mirror who reflects your original face -- but he is only a mirror. All great masters are mirrors, they reflect your original face. But don't cling to the mirror. The mirror is not your face!

These sutras of Buddha are of immense value. Go into them meditatively. And when I say go into them meditatively, I mean don't be in an argumentative mood -- that is not the way to listen. Be in a receptive mood, be feminine. Don't be on guard, don't be defensive. Don't hide

behind armors. Don't bring your mind in to interpret what is being said. Put the mind aside and let the heart dance with these sutras. That's what I mean when I say listen meditatively. Let the heart rejoice. And in that rejoicing is a totally different kind of understanding -- not of the intellect but of intelligence.

You will not become knowledgeable if you listen from the heart; you will become more and more wise. If you listen from the head, in the first place your listening will be distorted because all your prejudices will become mingled with it, and all your a priori conclusions will be a distraction, and your mind will give its color to what is told to you. In the first place you won't listen to what is being said; your mind will make much noise and you will listen to your own noise. In the second place, whatsoever you gather will become knowledge, not wisdom. Knowledge is superficial, it does not go deep, it cannot go deep. Knowledge is a way to hide your ignorance, it does not destroy it. Wisdom is a light, it dispels darkness.

But wisdom is ALWAYS of the heart, remember, it is never of the head. When you come to a buddha, forget all about your head. It is a totally different approach to your being -- through the heart. Listen through the heartbeats, become attuned -- as if you are listening to great music. It IS great music; in fact, what greater music can there be? These sutras are the greatest poetry, the poetry of the ultimate being. These sutras are the lotus flowers, born in the lake of a consciousness of one who is awakened. Listen attentively, meditatively, lovingly, in deep trust, and you will be immensely benefited, blessed.

The first sutra:

FOR A WHILE THE FOOL'S MISCHIEF
TASTES SWEET, SWEET AS HONEY.
BUT IN THE END IT TURNS BITTER.
AND HOW BITTERLY HE SUFFERS!

There is a famous Buddhist parable. Buddha loved to tell it again and again:
A man is being chased by his enemies. They are coming closer and closer; he can hear the sound of the hooves of the horses coming closer and closer every moment. It is death! And there seems to be no way to escape, because he has come to a cul-de-sac, the road ends. He is facing a great abyss. If he jumps he is bound to die. He cannot turn back because the enemy is going to kill him. He was hoping that there may be one chance if he jumps -- he may become crippled, but maybe, by a miracle, he may survive -- but that too seems to be impossible because he sees deep in the abyss two lions looking up at him, ready to devour him. Finding no other way -- cannot go back, cannot go ahead -- he hangs from the roots of a tree, just in the middle. It is a cold morning, his hands are becoming frozen. He knows within minutes he will not be able to hold the roots at all; his hands are slipping, he is losing his grip. He knows death is becoming more certain every moment.
And then he sees that two mice, one black, one white, are eating the root, cutting the root. Those two mice represent day and night -- they represent time, which is cutting everybody's life root. Day and night, death is coming closer. So now it becomes even more absolutely certain that

it is only a question of moments and he will be gone. The root is becoming weaker every moment, thinner every moment. The mice are at work; his hands are getting frozen and he can hear the lions roaring deep in the valley and he can hear the enemy approaching closer and closer. You can understand that man's plight.

And then suddenly he sees that just on the top of the tree there is a bees' nest, and a drop of honey is just slipping out of the nest. He forgets all about the enemies, all about the roaring lions, the white and black mice, his hands getting frozen -- in a moment, he completely forgets everything. His whole mind becomes focused on that drop of honey. He opens his mouth, the honey drops on his tongue...and it is so sweet.

This the situation of the fool. This is the situation of every man on the earth. How sweet it tastes! But how long can this taste remain? Soon death will be arriving from all directions. But that's how we go on living -- living for momentary pleasures, indulgence, food, sex, money, power, prestige...just drops of honey. How sweet it tastes, and in that moment we completely forget what is going to happen. The moment takes possession of us and we become oblivious of the reality of life: that it is rooted in death, that it is going to disappear.

Buddha says: FOR A WHILE THE FOOL'S MISCHIEF TASTES SWEET, SWEET AS HONEY. BUT IN THE END IT TURNS BITTER. AND HOW BITTERLY HE SUFFERS!

Watch yourself. What are you doing here on the earth? What have you done up to now? What does your life

consist of? Have you done anything really real, or have you just been living in dreams? Have you approached in any way the eternal? Or are you too much occupied with the momentary? Have you made any plans, any projects, for the ultimate truth? Or are you just remaining drunk with the mundane, with the ordinary, going into the same rut every day, moving in the same rut every day? The morning comes and you rush to the marketplace, and the evening comes and you are tired and you come home...and the same circle goes on moving, the same wheel. And this has been going on and on for so many lives. When are you going to become bored with it? When are you going to become a little more alert about what you are doing to your life? This is a sheer wastage.

But Buddha says: Certainly, there is some sweetness, momentary, and one suffers for that sweetness. It turns, inevitably, into bitterness. Watch your life. You can earn much money, and while you are earning it tastes sweet. But you are not aware that you are losing your life in earning rubbish, that life is slipping out of your hands, that it is a very costly affair that you are pursuing, utterly foolish, stupid.

The life cannot be bought back; not even a single moment, with all your wealth, can you purchase back. It cannot be claimed back. Such precious time being wasted! You are piling up wealth which will be taken away by death, and you will go empty-handed...as empty-handed as you had come to the earth. Then you will feel the bitterness of it, that you wasted your whole life for something which is not going to be with you. You wasted your whole life in power, politics; you wasted your whole life in becoming

respectable, and now death has come and all will be taken away. And you have not tasted a single moment of your eternal reality -- you have not tasted anything deathless. This is what Buddha calls the fool's approach towards life. Everything turns bitter: your love, your friendship, your family, your business, your politics...everything, finally, proves to be poisonous, turns into bitterness. One who is wise will become aware while there is still time and something can be done.

FOR MONTHS THE FOOL MAY FAST,
EATING FROM THE TIP OF A GRASS BLADE.
STILL HE IS NOT WORTH A PENNY
BESIDE THE MASTER WHOSE FOOD IS THE WAY.

Buddha is not saying become an ascetic. Buddha is not saying renounce the world, renounce food, starve yourself, fast, torture your body -- he is not saying that. He cannot say it. He has learned a lesson, a great lesson by doing all these things himself.

When he left his palace he followed the traditional path for six years, torturing himself, fasting, destroying his body. He came to a point when he was almost on the verge of death -- he had tortured himself too much. In that moment he became aware, "What am I doing? First I was indulging, my whole day and night was devoted to indulgence: women, wine, good food, clothes, palaces, golden chariots, hunting.... That was my life, the life of a prince. I was doing something which proved futile."

He was only twenty-nine when he left his palace -- must have been a man of great intelligence. There are people who are seventy or seventy-nine and they have not yet become aware of the foolishness of their lives. He was only twenty-nine. Must have been a man of rare insight. Must have been watching, looking at what he was doing, meditating over things. Suddenly he became aware, "This whole thing is rubbish -- all these women, all this wine, hunting, all this indulgence is not going to give me anything eternal."

The East has always been in search of the eternal. The definition of truth in the East is: that which is eternal. And the definition of untruth? -- that which is momentary. When the Eastern mystics say that something is illusory, they mean it is momentary. They don't mean that it is not, they know it is, but it is only for the moment, like a soap bubble. It is! And sometimes a soap bubble can look really beautiful. If sunrays pass through it, it can be surrounded by a rainbow, all the colors. A soap bubble is, but its isness is so momentary, so deceptive, that it is better to say that it is not; hence the Eastern mystics say the world is MAYA -- illusory. NOT that it is not, but it is so momentary that it is almost pointless whether it is or it is not. It is better to call it illusory, because that will make you alert, wakeful.

Those twenty-nine years were enough to make him aware that he was playing with soap bubbles. He escaped, he renounced the kingdom. But as it almost always happens, mind moves to the opposite. Mind is like the pendulum of an old clock: goes from right to left, from left to right -- to the opposite. It never stays in the middle. And in the middle is the secret. If the pendulum stops in the middle, the clock

stops, time stops, the world stops. But the pendulum goes from the left to the right, from the right to the left, and it keeps the clock running, it keeps the clock moving -- it keeps TIME alive. And time is the world.

To go beyond time is to know something deathless; hence, in India, for time and death we use the same word, KAL -- the same word for time and the same word for death. It is not coincidental, it has a significance. Time is death, because in time everything is momentary, everything is going to die. One moment it is, another moment it is gone, and gone forever. The moment you go beyond time, you go beyond death.

But just as the mind functions -- it moves to the opposite -- Buddha's mind also moved to the opposite. He escaped from the palace. Up to now he had cared about his body; now he started torturing the body. Up to now he was too obsessed with good food; now he started fasting, long fasts. He became a famous ascetic. People started respecting him, people started following him. He was a beautiful man, one of the most beautiful who has ever walked on the earth, but these six years of self-torture and masochism destroyed his body. He became dark, he became thin, he became ugly.

But one day the great insight arose in him, "What am I doing? First I was obsessed with food, now I am obsessed with fasting -- basically I am still obsessed with food. First it was a positive obsession, now it is a negative obsession. But I have not changed a little bit. First I was obsessed with women, now I am obsessed with BRAHMACHARYA -- celibacy. Basically I have not changed -- I am still obsessed with sex. First I was running towards sex, now I am

running away from sex, but sex remains the center of my being."

The revelation was great. That very revelation created the context in which he became enlightened. The evening he understood this, something tremendously important happened to him. He laughed at the whole ridiculousness of his mind. He laughed at the tricky mind -- that he was thinking that he was going against mind, but he was not going against mind -- mind had played a trick. Mind had befooled him, mind had cheated him. Mind had come from the back door. First it was coming from the front door, now it was coming from the back door, and it is more dangerous when it comes from the back door. By the front door at least you are aware of what you are doing. When it comes from the back door, indirectly, in a subtle way, hiding, it comes hidden behind a facade.

Mind is so cunning that it can hide in the garments of its very opposite. From indulgence it can become asceticism, from being a materialist it can become a spiritualist, from being worldly it can become otherworldly. But mind IS mind -- whether you are for the world or against the world you remain encaged in the mind. For or against, both are parts of the mind.

When mind disappears, mind disappears in a choiceless awareness, when you stop choosing, when you are neither for nor against -- that is stopping in the middle. One choice leads to the left, one extreme; another choice leads to the right, the other extreme. If you don't choose, you are exactly in the middle. That is relaxation, that is rest. That is TRUE renunciation. It is not opposed to the world, it is not opposed to the body, it has nothing to do with the body. It

is sheer awakening of consciousness. You become choiceless, unobsessed, and in that state of unobsessed, choiceless consciousness, intelligence arises which has been lying deep, dormant in your being. You become a light unto yourself. You are no longer a fool.
From indulgence you can move to repression; that is not going to help. That's where all the religions have got hooked.

The head nun is held up one evening while coming back from the bank where she has deposited the charity collection of the week. "You are wasting your time, young man," she tells the robber. "I have no money. I put it all in the night deposit at the bank."

"We will see about that," he says grimly, and begins rumpling up under her black gown to search for the money. "Oh! What are you doing?" she cries. "Oh! Oh!! Oh Jesus, Mary! Don't stop now -- I will write you a cheque!"

Repression is not the way, cannot be the way. All that you have repressed is waiting for its opportunity. It has simply gone into the unconscious -- it can come back any moment. Any provocation and it will surface. You are not free of it. Repression is not the way to freedom. Repression is a far worse kind of bondage than indulgence, because through indulgence one becomes tired sooner or later, but through repression one never becomes tired.
See the point: indulgence is bound to tire you and bore you. Sooner or later you will start thinking how to get rid of it all. But repression will keep things alive. Because you have

not lived, how can you be bored? You have not lived; how can you be fed up? Because you have not lived, the charm continues, the hypnosis continues; deep down, it waits. And the people who indulge are in a way normal compared to the people who repress; the repressing person becomes pathological. The indulgent is at least natural -- that's how nature has made you -- but to repress is to become unnatural. It is easy to go from lower nature to higher nature. It is very difficult to go from being unnatural to higher nature. Buddha calls the ultimate truth, "ultimate nature" -- AES DHAMMO SANANTANO. This is the ultimate nature, the ultimate law, he declares. What is the ultimate law? The eternal, the undying, the pure consciousness.

It is easy to reach this eternal law from nature, because nature is lower but still it is nature. And from the lower to the higher you can step; the lower can become a stepping-stone. But the moment you become unnatural it becomes very difficult. From being unnatural, there is no way to supreme nature.

Hence, my suggestion is: if you are going to choose, choose indulgence rather than repression. The best thing is NOT to choose, to remain choiceless, to be just a witness, to see your instincts, desires, and not get identified with them, for or against. The best thing is just to be a witness because in witnessing, in the fire of witnessing, all desires are burned -- not only desires, but the very seeds of desires are burned. One becomes NIRBEEJ -- seedless.

But don't choose the negative. Once you become repressive, you become pathological, you are ill. In fact,

only pathological people become interested in repressive systems of thought.

All the nuns but one in a Belgian nunnery are found to be pregnant just after the war. The cardinal makes a personal inquiry and learns that the nuns have all been raped by German soldiers.
"But why didn't they rape you?" he asks of the one thin, little, ugly and repulsive looking nun who is not pregnant.
"Who, me?" she says. "I resisted!"

The pathological can also find rationalizations. You know the old Aesop's fable?
The fox says, "The grapes are sour," because the fox could not get to the grapes -- they were too high. She looked around, she tried hard to reach, but the grapes were too high, beyond her reach. She looked around, there was nobody. She walked away, but a hare was watching, hidden behind a bush. And the hare said, "Auntie, what happened? Couldn't you get to the grapes?"
The fox said, "No, it is not a question of getting to the grapes -- they are not yet ripe, they are very sour."

The people who cannot get to the grapes can rationalize that they are sour. These rationalizations may deceive others, but how can they deceive you? The fox knows perfectly well that she had not been able to reach. Now, it is a rationalization, and mind is very clever in rationalizing.

Jake came home in the middle of the afternoon. He was met at the door by his wife and his son. His son exclaimed, "Dad, there is a bogeyman in the closet!"
Jake rushed to the closet and flung the door open. There, huddled among the coats was his partner, Sam. "Sam," shrieked Jake, "why in hell do you come here in the afternoon and scare my kid?"

Mind is very cunning and clever in rationalizing things, in finding ways and means. The mind can suggest repression to you very easily, because if you repress you will be far more in the power of the mind than you ever were when you were in the life of indulgence. And the mind will have a far stronger grip on you.
Buddha learned it through his own experience -- six years of great torture. With Buddha the world entered into a new phase of religiousness. Before Buddha nobody had said this: that repressiveness, austerities, fasting, torturing your body, is not going to help. With Buddha, humanity entered into a new phase, a higher phase.
Buddha is a very very significant milestone in the evolution of human consciousness, but he has not been understood rightly, because again the interpreters were those old scholars, pundits, priests. They again interpreted Buddha in such a way...they started interpreting Buddha almost completely against his own experience. They started talking much about those six years; Buddhist scriptures are full of the description of those six years. And if you read Buddhist scriptures you will find that it seems as if it is because of those six years of austerities that he attained enlightenment. It is not so. It is not by those six years of austerities that he

attained enlightenment; he attained enlightenment the day he dropped all those austerities. It was by DROPPING them that he attained enlightenment, not by or through them.

But if you read the scriptures, particularly those written in India, you will be given a totally false impression. They make it appear as if Buddha has not contributed anything new to human consciousness, as if he is just the old type of ascetic -- maybe far more intelligent in expressing, far more convincing, logical, far more deep-going in his insight, but nothing new. It is the same old religion which he has brought in new words, with new logic; the same old wine in a new bottle, that's all. That's what Indians have made Buddha look like. That is a falsification. Buddha does not represent the old. He is a stepping beyond the old. He is a new phase. And just as he took a new step, again another step is needed. Twenty-five centuries have passed.

My new commune is going to be that new step -- a further step in human evolution, in human consciousness.

Although Buddha dropped asceticism, he did not talk much against it; he could not, because he had to communicate with people who were full of the ancient lore and the ancient ideology. He had to talk to people who would have been absolutely incapable of understanding if he had talked like me. Even I am not comprehensible to people. Twenty-five centuries have passed and people are still stuck. It is very rare to find a contemporary. People are in the twentieth century, but only physically; spiritually they are thousands of years back. Buddha could not even make an effort. He did say to his closest disciples, "It is not through asceticism that I have attained. I have attained by dropping

asceticism -- that was all foolishness." These sutras were given to his closest disciples.

He says: FOR MONTHS THE FOOL MAY FAST, EATING FROM THE TIP OF A GRASS BLADE. STILL HE IS NOT WORTH A PENNY BESIDE THE MASTER WHOSE FOOD IS THE WAY.

If you really want a transformation, then make dhamma your food -- let the very way to God be your food. Nourish yourself on it! Jesus says it in another way: Eat me! He says to his disciples: Drink me! Absorb me, digest me! Buddha says: ...WHOSE FOOD IS THE WAY. The way means dhamma, religion, the ultimate law, that keeps the whole world in harmony. One who starts eating out of this harmony, that one attains -- not by fasting. It is not by fasting from the gross food, but by eating the subtle food that one attains.

Yes, there is a subtle food available. When you look at a roseflower, just watch. Let the beauty of the rose be absorbed in you, and you will feel nourished. You have not eaten the rose but something subtle that surrounds the rose, the aura of the rose, the dance of the rose in the wind, the fragrance which is invisible. Have you not felt it? Seeing a beautiful flower, suddenly you feel saturated, contented. Looking at the sky full of stars, have you not felt nourished? Watching the sunrise or the sunset, or just listening to the faraway call of a cuckoo, a distant song, have you not felt yourself becoming full of something unknown...?

Your body needs food, your soul also needs food. The bodily food is gross, obviously; the body is part of the gross world. The spiritual food is invisible -- in music, in poetry,

in beauty, in dance, in song, in prayer, in meditation...and you go deeper and deeper towards the spiritual nourishment.

Buddha says: It is not by dropping the gross food, by fasting, that one attains, but by eating the way. A strange expression -- by eating the dhamma. What is dhamma? Just the other day somebody asked, "Beloved Master, I love it when you say: AES DHAMMO SANANTANO, but what exactly does it mean?" It means the harmony of existence, it means the melody of existence, it means the ultimate dance that is going on and on. It means the celebration that is everywhere. The trees are celebrating and the birds and the animals and the rivers and the mountains...this whole existence is made of the stuff called bliss.

That's what Buddha means when he says: AES DHAMMO SANANTANO -- this is the ultimate law, inexhaustible. You can go on eating out of it, but you cannot exhaust it. And the more you eat, the more soul you will have. The more you eat it, the more divine you become. Buddha is saying: I am not teaching fasting -- I am teaching you a new way of indulgence, a higher kind of indulgence. He is not saying it exactly in that way, but I am saying it. I am teaching you a higher way of love, a higher way of rejoicing, a higher way of dance, a higher way of absorbing God's energy into yourself -- becoming more and more receptive and feminine so you can be pregnant with God.

He calls the man a fool who goes on fasting. But those fools are worshipped in India, and not only in India -- almost all over the world. In fact, the majority of the crowd consists of fools; hence, whenever a fool starts following the rotten, trodden path, the traditional path of the crowds,

the crowds are very much thrilled. Their egos are very much satisfied. This man proves that they have been right, their parents have been right, their heritage is proved right: "Look, this man is fasting!" And spiritual people have always been fasting -- that is their idea.

Yes, sometimes it has happened that a spiritual person HAS fasted, but the reason is totally different from what you think. Mahavira fasted, and fasted for twelve years, and for long long periods. It is said that in those twelve years he took food for only three hundred and sixty-five days -- that means only one year. One month he would fast and he would take food for one day; in twelve years, one year means that mostly after twelve days he ate on one day -- average. That was his way of fasting.

But Mahavira never became tired and Buddha became tired after six years. What was the matter? And he attained as much as Buddha attained. Buddha attained by dropping his fasting and austerity; Mahavira never dropped it. Now, both cannot be right -- and I say to you both are right. But the reasons are so different, almost inconceivable.

Mahavira's fast has a totally different quality. He is not an ascetic, he is not fasting -- in fact, he is eating so much of God that he does not feel the need to eat. His soul is so overflowing with subtle energies that his body feels satisfied. He does not feel the need to eat. In fact, to say that he fasts is not right. If I am allowed then I will say: he cannot eat. And you have also sometimes observed it.

When I used to come to Poona, I used to stay with Sohan, and she was very much puzzled. One day she asked me, "What is the matter? Once or twice a year you come to Poona. I wait the whole year long -- you will be coming,

you will be coming -- and then for three or four days you come. For these three or four days I cannot eat at all. What is the reason why I can't eat? I am not fasting," she told me. "I want to eat, but I simply can't eat. I feel so full."

I told her, "Whenever you are tremendously happy, you will not be able to eat. Your blissfulness is so overflowing it leaves no appetite, it leaves no emptiness in you. Not only is your soul overflowing, your body starts being affected by the soul. Your body is a shadow to your soul."

You will be surprised: miserable people eat more, happy people less. A miserable person feels so empty that he wants to fill himself, stuff himself with something or other. The miserable person goes on eating, he goes on stuffing this and that inside. He feels so utterly empty and lost that he does not know what to do. It seems easy to go to the fridge and eat something more; maybe that will give you a feeling of fullness. And certainly it does give, on the very gross level, a feeling of fullness.

Now, America suffers most from overeating, and the reason is simple: America is now suffering from great inner emptiness. The reason is spiritual, hence no dieting can help. And how long can you diet? You can diet for a few days with great willpower; you have to force yourself. Then after a few days you become tired of making the effort and then you jump upon the food with a vengeance; and you will gain more weight than you had lost by dieting.

In America this is a problem. In all rich countries this is going to be a problem, because you have food and you have emptiness both available. Only food is left to fill yourself with, sex is left to fill yourself with. Go on purchasing new gadgets, new things; if you cannot have anything else you

can at least go on accumulating furniture. You can fill the house if you cannot fill your being. Just a vicarious way of feeling full. Just the opposite happens when you are really happy, joyous, when you are flying, when you are feeling weightless.

I told Sohan, "This is perfectly logical. This is real fasting!"

In Sanskrit, the word for 'fast' has a beauty of its own. The English word does not have that quality. The English word 'fast' simply means starving through willpower. The Sanskrit word is UPAWAS -- it means 'being close to God'. Literally it means being close to God; it has nothing to do with fasting. It means being so close to God, so full of God, that you forget all about your body, that you forget all about your body nourishment. You are so nourished by the subtle food, the subtle energy, that goes on showering on you.

Mahavira was not fasting in the same way that Buddha was; Mahavira was eating God, and Buddha was simply fasting. Mahavira's fast was upawas -- being close to God. His fast was what it means in Sanskrit; Buddha's fast was what it means in English -- just starving. Hence Mahavira attained without dropping his fast. It was not fasting in the first place -- there was no need to drop it. Buddha had to drop it, it was just the opposite of indulgence. He was simply starving himself with the motive that by starvation one can attain.

How can you attain God by starving the body? What logic is this? What scientific reasoning is there in it? Do you think God is someone like Adolf Hitler who enjoys your tortures? who enjoys seeing his children hungry and dreaming of food? who enjoys seeing people becoming

ugly, ill? God is compassion, God is love. He would like you to be full of him. And when you are full of him you may not feel the need to eat. Mahavira was not fasting, he was simply not feeling like eating, that's all. And that's a great difference.
Buddha says: FOR MONTHS THE FOOL MAY FAST, EATING FROM THE TIP OF A GRASS BLADE. STILL HE IS NOT WORTH A PENNY BESIDE THE MASTER WHOSE FOOD IS THE WAY.
One day he discovered that there is another kind of food: one can eat out of the harmony of existence, one can become part of the harmony, one can become part of the celebration, the festivity that goes on and on, with no beginning and no end. Then you are full and fulfilled.

FRESH MILK TAKES TIME TO SOUR.
SO A FOOL'S MISCHIEF
TAKES TIME TO CATCH UP WITH HIM.
LIKE THE EMBERS OF A FIRE
IT SMOULDERS WITHIN HIM.

If you do something, it takes time for its result to come. And you may not even be able to connect the two, the cause and the effect.
Do you know that in Africa, still there are primitive tribes which have no conception that the birth of a child has anything to do with intercourse -- because the gap is so big, nine months. And not only is the gap so big...and they have no way of calculating time, so for them nine months is really a long time; they cannot keep track of time. They have no calendar, no watches, no idea of time at all. They

live in a really primitive world where time has not been invented yet, so how can they conceive that the intercourse between a man and a woman can be the cause of the birth of a child?

And then there are other reasons: it doesn't always happen. You may make love to a woman and there may come no child, so it is not an inevitable thing. Then how is the child born? The child is born not by intercourse, not by sexual relationship, it has no biology behind it -- it comes as a gift from God, whomsoever he chooses. If you follow the tribe's religion, you will be blessed with children; otherwise there is no possibility.

When Christian missionaries for the first time discovered this tribe, they could not believe that these people for centuries have lived, given birth to children, and have no idea at all of cause and effect. And that's how we all are, in so many ways -- primitive.

Today suddenly you start feeling sad for no reason at all; you cannot find any reason in close proximity -- nothing has happened. In the night when you had gone to bed, everything was good; you were flowing, glowing, and in the morning you are suddenly sad. Nobody has insulted you, nothing has happened, no bad news has arrived...why? From where has this sadness come? You must have done something; maybe there is a time gap, maybe three months' gap or three years. And those who have gone deep into this phenomenon, they say maybe even in the past life...sometimes a few seeds take very long to sprout.

And because of this, the fool goes on living in the same way, in the same foolish way, because he cannot see that his life's suffering is caused by his own choices. Those

choices may have been made long before. You may have thrown the seeds a year before, and then you have completely forgotten about those seeds. Rains come, the seeds start sprouting, and you are surprised -- from where? From where are these plants coming up? And, of course, the seeds that we go on sowing in our souls are very very invisible. You may have been angry, violent, jealous, and it has remained inside you.

Buddha says: LIKE THE EMBERS OF A FIRE IT SMOULDERS WITHIN HIM. It goes on inside you, getting ready, waiting for the spring to come, and then it explodes suddenly. Man is responsible for whatsoever happens to him. The wise man becomes aware of it and stops sowing seeds of misery and starts sowing seeds of joy. Sooner or later you will be ready to reap the harvest. That's what heaven is: a wise man sowing seeds of bliss, love, compassion. And one day the garden is ready. Do you know? -- the word 'paradise' comes from Persian, has a beautiful meaning. In Persian it is FIRDAUS; from 'firdaus' it has become 'paradise' in English. 'Firdaus' means a walled garden of truth. If you go on sowing seeds of joy, beauty, dance, song, meditation, prayer, soon you will create a walled garden of truth -- that is paradise. Otherwise, you are bound to create hell. Live unconsciously, live mechanically, live foolishly, and hell is going to be the outcome of it.

WHATEVER A FOOL LEARNS,
IT ONLY MAKES HIM DULLER.
KNOWLEDGE CLEAVES HIS HEAD.

The fool is not very much interested in becoming intelligent, because intelligence is dangerous. Intelligence is rebellious, hence it is dangerous. Intelligence brings individuality to you, and the moment you become an integrated individual the crowds start turning against you; they cannot tolerate an individual. They cannot forgive a Jesus or a Buddha. They are very happy with the fools, because the fools are just like them -- in fact, a little more magnified, a little more decorated, a little more sophisticated. They are very happy with the fools. They are happy with politicians, they are happy with professors, they are happy with pundits but they are not happy with a Jesus or a Socrates or a Buddha. Why? -- because the presence of a buddha makes them look stupid. The very presence of a buddha and they start feeling silly. How can they forgive him?

And they don't want to be intelligent themselves, because it is a long journey and there is no shortcut to it. It is hard, arduous. To become intelligent means to sharpen your consciousness continuously; to become intelligent means to be full of love. Love is the center of intelligence, logic the center of intellectuality.

The fool becomes intellectual; then he can brag that he knows. He is interested in knowledge. He will read the Bible and the Vedas and the Koran, he will cram information. He turns his mind into a computer, he becomes a walking ENCYCLOPAEDIA BRITANNICA. That is easy, that is simple, that can be done by a machine; it does not need any intelligence. And your schools, colleges and universities only make people computers.

We have yet to create universities where intelligence is sharpened. Our universities only dull the intelligence because they prepare slaves for the society. The universities are in the service of the vested interests; they are agents of the established status quo. They don't serve the future of humanity, they serve the past, they serve the dead. They are not interested in creating people who are intelligent, creative, alert, aware; they are interested in people who are dull, stupid, but efficient. Clerks, deputy collectors, stationmasters -- efficient! They can just do their work very efficiently. And remember, machines are more efficient than men, so they are not interested in men; they are interested in reducing men to machines.

Buddha says: WHATEVER A FOOL LEARNS, IT ONLY MAKES HIM DULLER. The more knowledge he gathers, the more dull he becomes, the more stupid he becomes. And that is my observation too. I have seen ignorant villagers far more intelligent than the so-called Ph.D.'s and D.Litt.'s and professors of the universities, deans, vice-chancellors and chancellors. They seem to be the dullest people in the world.

A villager, a woodcutter, seems to be far more intelligent. He has no information, of course; he is not knowledgeable -- but he is innocent, and innocence is part of intelligence. To be knowledgeable is to be machinelike -- and machines are dull. Have you ever seen any machine which is intelligent? Just look at the machine, and look at the dean and the vice-chancellor...!

In fact, the duller you are, the greater is the possibility that you will become a vice-chancellor -- because the politicians will not like a Buddha to become a vice-chancellor, they

will not allow Socrates to become a vice-chancellor. This was the crime Socrates was accused of: that he was corrupting youth. Socrates, and corrupting youth? And these fools -- the magistrates and the vice-chancellors and the prime ministers and the presidents -- these fools are not corrupting? Socrates is corrupting the youth -- what do they mean by it?

In a way, they are right: he is corrupting the youth because he is preparing them for the future. He has to destroy the past, he has to create doubt, inquiry, he has to create seekers, not believers. And the society wants believers, and the dull people are good believers. A Mohammedan, a Christian, a Hindu, a Jaina -- the duller they are, the more they believe, the better they believe...because the dull person cannot inquire, he cannot risk. He is afraid:he knows that he is not capable of knowing the truth on his own, he has to believe somebody else.

KNOWLEDGE CLEAVES HIS HEAD, says Buddha. Knowledge does not help him but becomes a burden, a Himalayan weight on his being.

FOR THEN HE WANTS RECOGNITION,
A PLACE BEFORE OTHER PEOPLE,
A PLACE OVER OTHER PEOPLE.

His whole knowledge becomes an ego trip, and the ego is the greatest bondage there is. To be free of ego is to be redeemed. But the fool learns just to become famous, to be recognized as an authority, to be an expert. The fool accumulates knowledge so that he can brag and exhibit, so that he can show people how intelligent he is. And

intelligence is not of the ego; intelligence comes only when you are in a deep egoless state. Intelligence is the disappearance of ego, meeting and merging with the whole, forgetting your separation, becoming a wave in the ocean of God -- then you are intelligent.

"LET THEM KNOW MY WORK,
LET EVERYONE LOOK TO ME FOR DIRECTION."
SUCH ARE HIS DESIRES,
SUCH IS HIS SWELLING PRIDE.

ONE WAY LEADS TO WEALTH AND FAME....

Buddha says: But let me make you aware that if you want wealth and fame, then follow the way of the fool -- because the foolish person is capable of becoming famous more easily than the intelligent person. If the intelligent person becomes famous, that is just accidental -- he never tries. If the intelligent person is well known, that is not because of his effort. His fragrance may have reached people, but there is no positive effort on his side to be recognized. He knows his being, he does not depend on others' recognition. He knows who he is, he does not need anybody else's certificate.

When I came out of the university I went to see the education minister. I told him, "These are my qualifications. If you can give me some place anywhere, any place will be okay." He looked at my qualifications, was very much impressed -- people are impressed by nonsense -- because I was a gold-medallist, first-class, first.

He was very much impressed. He said, "Immediately I will appoint you as a lecturer. But one thing you will have to do: have you got a character certificate?"
I said, "I have got a character, but no character certificate. Look into my eyes, hold my hand! I can hug you...!"
He said, "But that...that is not the point. Where is the character certificate?"
I said, "I have got no character certificate."
He said, "You can go to the vice-chancellor, or the head of your department -- just one character certificate. It is a formality."
I said, "I cannot ask the vice-chancellor, because I don't believe that he has any character at all! What weight will his certificate carry? And the head of my department? -- I know him more than he knows himself. I cannot give him a character certificate!"
He was very much puzzled. He really wanted to help. In fact, he became really interested in me also. He had never come across such a man -- so many people must have approached him, but nobody had said, "Look into my eyes, or hold my hand and feel! Or I can come and live with you for one week, in your house. Just see my character in every possible way. I will not even lock the door of my bathroom. I will keep everything open, so you can just go on watching...!"
He said, "These things are not needed at all! Just a simple character certificate."
So I said, "Then I can write a simple character certificate to myself" -- and that's what I did. I wrote a certificate, in front of him, and he said, "What are you doing? But this has never been done: you yourself giving a character

certificate to yourself? Somebody else's signature is needed!"
So I said, "Okay, then I will sign for the head of my department, on his behalf. This is a true copy," I told him, "and the original I will take from the head of my department."
So I went to the head of my department. I said, "I have given this character certificate in your name -- you please give the original."
He said, "This is strange! The original is needed FIRST." But he loved the idea and he gave me an original.

ONE WAY LEADS TO WEALTH AND FAME.... If you follow the fool's way, you can become very rich, you can become famous. You can become a president of a country, a prime minister of a country -- you can become anything. You can have as much wealth as you want -- just follow the fool's way. Don't be intelligent, remain stupid, because in fact, except for a stupid person who wants to run after money? Yes, sometimes it happens, money comes to the intelligent person, but it comes running after him, he does not go.... Fame also sometimes comes to the intelligent person. It comes on its own; he is not interested at all.

...THE OTHER TO THE END OF THE WAY.

But if you want to end this whole nonsense that has persisted down the ages for so many lives, the same repetitive wheel of birth and death moving; if you want to stop it, then the other, the way of the intelligent person, the way of the wise...be a light unto yourself.

LOOK NOT FOR RECOGNITION
BUT FOLLOW THE AWAKENED
AND SET YOURSELF FREE.

Don't be bothered, don't desire recognition. If millions of fools recognize you, what does it matter? Millions of fools recognizing you simply proves that you are a greater fool than them. Nothing else is proved.
BUT FOLLOW THE AWAKENED.... What does Buddha mean when he says FOLLOW THE AWAKENED? He does not mean imitate. He simply means become awakened as the awakened has become awakened. Be awake -- that is following the awakened. Not following in the details: how he lives, what he eats, when he goes to sleep -- that is stupidity. Follow the awakened in becoming awake.
AND SET YOURSELF FREE -- because it is only awareness, the state of an awakened consciousness that brings freedom. Intelligence is freedom. Meditation is freedom. Awareness is freedom. And those who live mechanically, unconsciously, unintelligently, they live in prisons. And to live in a prison is to suffer.
Freedom is the ultimate value of life.
FOLLOW THE AWAKENED AND SET YOURSELF FREE.
AES DHAMMO SANANTANO....
Enough for today.
The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 2
Chapter #10
Chapter title: The law -- ancient and inexhaustible
10 July 1979 am in Buddha Hall

The first question:
Question 1
BELOVED MASTER,
PLEASE TELL US MORE ABOUT WHAT YOU MEAN BY THE DIMENSION OF MUSIC.

Yoga Chinmaya, life can be lived in two ways -- either as calculation or as poetry. Man has two sides to his inner being: the calculative side that creates science, business, politics; and the noncalculative side, which creates poetry, sculpture, music. These two sides have not yet been bridged, they have separate existences. Because of this man is immensely impoverished, remains unnecessarily lopsided -- they have to be bridged.
In scientific language it is said that your brain has two hemispheres. The left-side hemisphere calculates, is mathematical, is prose; and the right-side hemisphere of the brain is poetry, is love, is song. One side is logic, the other side is love. One side is syllogism, the other side is song. And they are not really bridged, hence man lives in a kind of split.
My effort here is to bridge these two hemispheres.
Man should be as scientific as possible, as far as the objective world is concerned, and as musical as possible as far as the world of relationship is concerned.
There are two worlds outside you. One is the world of objects: the house, the money, the furniture. The other is the world of persons: the wife, the husband, the mother, the children, the friend. With objects be scientific; never be

scientific with persons. If you are scientific with persons you reduce them to objects, and that is one of the greatest crimes one can commit. If you treat your wife only as an object, as a sexual object, then you are behaving in a very ugly way. If you treat your husband only as a financial support, as a means, then this is immoral, then this relationship is immoral -- it is prostitution, pure prostitution and nothing else.

Don't treat persons as a means, they are ends unto themselves. Relate to them -- in love, in respect. Never possess them and never be possessed by them. Don't be dependent on them and don't make persons around you dependent. Don't create dependence in any way; remain independent and let them remain independent.

This is music. This dimension I call the dimension of music. And if you can be as scientific as possible with objects, your life will be rich, affluent; if you can be as musical as possible, your life will have beauty. And there is a third dimension also, which is beyond the mind. These two belong to the mind: the scientist and the artist. There is a third dimension, invisible -- the dimension of no-mind. That belongs to the mystic. That is available through meditation.

Hence, I say these three words have to be remembered -- three M's like three R's: mathematics, the lowest; music, just in the middle; and meditation, the highest. A perfect human being is scientific about objects, is aesthetic, musical, poetic about persons, and is meditative about himself. Where all these three meet, great rejoicing happens.

This is the real trinity, TRIMURTI. In the East, particularly in India, we worship a place where three rivers meet -- we call it a SANGHAM, the meeting place. And the greatest of all of them is Preyag, where the Ganges and Jamuna and Saraswati meet. Now, you can see the Ganges and you can see Jamuna, but Saraswati is invisible -- you cannot see it. It is a metaphor! It simply represents, symbolically, the inner meeting of the three. You can see mathematics, you can see music, but you cannot see meditation. You can see the scientist, his work is outside. You can see the artist, his work is also outside. But you cannot see the mystic, his work is subjective. That is SARASWATI -- the invisible river.

You can become a sacred place, you can hallow this body and this earth; this very body the Buddha, this very earth the Lotus Paradise. This is my slogan for the sannyasins. A sannyasin has to be the ultimate synthesis of all that God is. God is known only when you have come to this synthesis; otherwise, you can believe in God, but you will not know. And belief is just hiding your ignorance. Knowing is transforming, only knowledge brings understanding. And knowledge is not information: knowledge is the synthesis, integration, of all your potential.

Where the scientist and the poet and the mystic meet and become one -- when this great synthesis happens, when all the three faces of God are expressed in you -- YOU become a god. Then you can declare, "AHAM BRAHMASMI! -- I am God!" Then you can say to the winds and the moon and to the rains and to the sun, "ANA'L HAQ! -- I am the truth!" Before that, you are only a seed.

When this synthesis happens, you have bloomed, blossomed -- you have become the one-thousand-petaled lotus, the golden lotus, the eternal lotus, that never dies: AES DHAMMO SANANTANO. This is the inexhaustible law that all the buddhas have been teaching down the ages.

The second question:
Question 2
BELOVED MASTER,
IN THE WEST WE ARE CONSTANTLY DRILLED WITH THE APHORISM: DON'T JUST STAND THERE -- DO SOMETHING! YET, BUDDHA WOULD SAY: DON'T JUST DO SOMETHING -- STAND THERE! THE UNCONSCIOUS MAN REACTS WHILE THE WISE MAN WATCHES. BUT WHAT ABOUT SPONTANEITY? IS SPONTANEITY COMPATIBLE WITH WATCHING?

Buddha certainly says: Don't just do something -- stand there! But that is only the beginning of the pilgrimage, not the end. When you have learned how to stand, when you have learned how to be utterly silent, unmoving, undisturbed, when you know how to just sit...sitting silently, doing nothing, the spring comes and the grass grows by itself. But the grass grows, remember!
Action does not disappear: the grass grows by itself. The Buddha does not become inactive; GREAT action happens through him, although there is no doer anymore. The doer disappears, the doing continues. And when there is no doer, the doing IS spontaneous; it cannot be otherwise. It is the doer that does not allow spontaneity.

The doer means the ego, the ego means the past. When you act, you are always acting through the past, you are acting out of experience that you have accumulated, you are acting out of the conclusions that you have arrived at in the past. How can you be spontaneous? The past dominates, and because of the past you cannot even see the present. Your eyes are so full of the past, the smoke of the past is so much, that seeing is impossible. You cannot see! You are almost completely blind -- blind because of the smoke, blind because of the past conclusions, blind because of knowledge.

The knowledgeable man is the most blind man in the world. Because he functions out of his knowledge, he does not see what the case is. He simply goes on functioning mechanically. He has learned something; it has become a ready-made mechanism in him...he acts out of it.

There is a famous story:

There were two temples in Japan, both enemies to each other, as temples have always been down the ages. The priests were so antagonistic that they had stopped even looking at each other. If they came across each other on the road, they would not look at each other. If they came across each other on the road they stopped talking; for centuries those two temples and their priests had not talked.

But both the priests had two small boys -- to serve them, just for running errands. Both the priests were afraid that boys, after all, will be boys, and they might start becoming friends to each other.

The one priest said to his boy, "Remember, the other temple is our enemy. Never talk to the boy of the other

temple! They are dangerous people -- avoid them as one avoids a disease, as one avoids the plague. Avoid them!"
The boy was always interested, because he used to get tired of listening to great sermons -- he could not understand them. Strange scriptures were read, he could not understand the language. Great, ultimate problems were discussed. There was nobody to play with, nobody even to talk with. And when he was told, "Don't talk to the boy of the other temple," great temptation arose in him. That's how temptation arises.
That day he could not avoid talking to the other boy. When he saw him on the road he asked him, "Where are you going?"
The other boy was a little philosophical; listening to great philosophy he had become philosophical. He said, "Going? There is nobody who comes and goes! It is happening -- wherever the wind takes me...." He had heard the master say many times that that's how a buddha lives, like a dead leaf: wherever the wind takes it, it goes. So the boy said, "I am not! There is no doer. So how can I go? What nonsense are you talking? I am a dead leaf. Wherever the wind takes me...."
The other boy was struck dumb. He could not even answer. He could not find anything to say. He was really embarrassed, ashamed, and felt also, "My master was right not to talk with these people -- these are dangerous people! What kind of talk is this? I had asked a simple question: 'Where are you going?' In fact I already knew where he was going, because we were both going to purchase vegetables in the market. A simple answer would have done."

He went back, told his master, "I am sorry, excuse me. You HAD prohibited me, I didn't listen to you. In fact, because of your prohibition I was tempted. This is the first time I have talked to those dangerous people. I just asked a simple question. 'Where are you going?' and he started saying strange things: 'There is no going, no coming. Who comes? Who goes? I am utter emptiness,' he was saying, 'just a dead leaf in the wind. And wherever the wind takes me....'"
The master said, "I told you before! Now, tomorrow stand in the same place and when he comes ask him again, 'Where are you going?' And when he says these things, you simply say, 'That's true. Yes, you are a dead leaf, so am I. But when the wind is not blowing, where are you going? Then where can you go?' Just say that, and that will embarrass him -- and he has to be embarrassed, he has to be defeated. We have been constantly quarreling, and those people have not been able to defeat us in any debate. So tomorrow it has to be done!"
Early the boy got up, prepared his answer, repeated it many times before he went. Then he stood in the place where the boy used to cross the road, repeated again and again, prepared himself, and then he saw the boy coming. He said, "Okay, now!"
The boy came. He asked, "Where are you going?" And he was hoping that now the opportunity would come....
But the boy said, "Wherever the legs will take me...." No mention of wind! No talk of nothingness! No question of the nondoer! Now what to do? His whole ready-made answer looked absurd. Now to talk about the wind would be irrelevant.

Again crestfallen, now REALLY ashamed that he was simply stupid: "And this boy certainly knows some strange things -- now he says, 'Wherever the legs take me....'"
He went back to the master. The master said, "I have told you NOT to talk with those people -- they are dangerous! This is our centuries-long experience. But now something has to be done. So tomorrow you ask again, 'Where are you going?' and when he says, 'Wherever my legs take me,' tell him, 'If you had no legs, then...?' He has to be silenced one way or other!"
So the next day he asked again, "Where are you going?" and waited.
And the boy said, "I am going to the market to fetch vegetables."

Man ordinarily functions out of the past, and life goes on changing. Life has no obligation to fit with your conclusions. That's why life is very confusing -- confusing to the knowledgeable person. He has all ready-made answers: The Bhagavadgita, the holy Koran, the Bible, the Vedas. He has everything crammed, he knows all the answers. But life never raises the same question again; hence the knowledgeable person always falls short.
Buddha certainly says: Know how to sit silently. That does not mean that he says: Go on sitting silently forever. He is not saying you have to become inactive; on the contrary, it is only out of silence that action arises. If you are not silent, if you don't know how to sit silently, or stand silently in deep meditation, whatsoever you go on doing is reaction, not action. You react.

Somebody insults you, pushes a button, and you react. You are angry, you jump on him -- and you call it action? It is not action, mind you, it is reaction. He is the manipulator and you are the manipulated. He has pushed a button and you have functioned like a machine. Just like you push a button and the light goes on, and you push the button and the light goes off -- that's what people are doing to you: they put you on, they put you off.
Somebody comes and praises you and puffs up your ego, and you feel so great; and then somebody comes and punctures you, and you are simply flat on the ground. You are not your own master: anybody can insult you and make you sad, angry, irritated, annoyed, violent, mad. And anybody can praise you and make you feel at the heights, can make you feel that you are the greatest -- that Alexander the Great was nothing compared to you.
And you act according to others' manipulations. This is not real action.

Buddha was passing through a village and the people came and they insulted him. And they used all the insulting words that they could use -- all the four-letter words that they knew. Buddha stood there, listened silently, very attentively, and then said, "Thank you for coming to me, but I am in a hurry. I have to reach the next village, people will be waiting for me there. I cannot devote more time to you today, but tomorrow coming back I will have more time. You can gather again, and tomorrow if something is left which you wanted to say and have not been able to say, you can say it to me. But today, excuse me."

Those people could not believe their ears, their eyes: this man has remained utterly unaffected, undistracted. One of them asked, "Have you not heard us? We have been abusing you like anything, and you have not even answered!"

Buddha said, "If you wanted an answer then you have come too late. You should have come ten years ago, then I would have answered you. But for these ten years I have stopped being manipulated by others. I am no longer a slave, I am my own master. I act according to myself, not according to anybody else. I act according to my inner need. You cannot force me to do anything. It's perfectly good:you wanted to abuse me, you abused me! Feel fulfilled. You have done your work perfectly well. But as far as I am concerned, I don't take your insults, and unless I take them, they are meaningless."

When somebody insults you, you have to become a receiver, you have to accept what he says; only then can you react. But if you don't accept, if you simply remain detached, if you keep the distance, if you remain cool, what can he do?

Buddha said, "Somebody can throw a burning torch into the river. It will remain alight till it reaches the river. The moment it falls into the river, all fire is gone -- the river cools it. I have become a river. You throw abuses at me. They are fire when you throw them, but the moment they reach me, in my coolness, their fire is lost. They no longer hurt. You throw thorns -- falling in my silence they become flowers. I act out of my own intrinsic nature."

This is spontaneity. The man of awareness, understanding, acts. The man who is unaware, unconscious, mechanical, robotlike, reacts.

Curtis, you ask me, "The unconscious man reacts while the wise man watches." It is not that he simply watches -- watching is one aspect of his being. He does not act without watching. But don't misunderstand the Buddha. The buddhas have always been misunderstood; you are not the first to misunderstand. This whole country has been misunderstanding the Buddha; hence the whole country has become inactive. Thinking that all the great masters say: Sit silently, the country has become lazy, lousy; the country has lost energy, vitality, life. It has become utterly dull, unintelligent, because intelligence becomes sharpened only when you act.

And when you act moment to moment out of your awareness and watchfulness, great intelligence arises. You start shining, glowing, you become luminous. But it happens through two things: watching, and action out of that watching. If watching becomes inaction, you are committing suicide. Watching should lead you into action, a new kind of action; a new quality is brought to action. You watch, you are utterly quiet and silent. You see what the situation is, and out of that seeing you respond. The man of awareness responds, he is responsible -- literally! He is responsive, he does not react. His action is born out of his awareness, not out of your manipulation; that is the difference. Hence, there is no question of there being any incompatibility between watching and spontaneity. Watching is the beginning of spontaneity; spontaneity is the fulfillment of watching.

The real man of understanding acts -- acts tremendously, acts totally, but he acts in the moment, out of his consciousness. He is like a mirror. The ordinary man, the unconscious man, is not like a mirror, he is like a photoplate. What is the difference between a mirror and a photoplate? A photoplate, once exposed, becomes useless. It receives the impression, becomes impressed by it -- it carries the picture. But remember, the picture is not reality -- the reality goes on growing. You can go into the garden and you can take a picture of a rosebush. Tomorrow the picture will be the same, the day after tomorrow the picture will also be the same. Go again and see the rosebush: it is no longer the same. The roses have gone, or new roses have arrived. A thousand and one things have happened.

It is said that once a realist philosopher went to see the famous painter, Picasso. The philosopher believed in realism and he had come to criticize Picasso because Picasso's paintings are abstract, they are not realistic. They don't depict reality as it is. On the contrary, they are symbolic, have a totally different dimension -- they are symbolistic.
The realist said, "I don't like your paintings. A painting should be real! If you paint my wife, then your painting should LOOK like my wife." And he took out a picture of his wife and said, "Look at this picture! The painting should be like this."
Picasso looked at the picture and said, "This is your wife?"
He said, "Yes, this is my wife!"
Picasso said, "I am surprised! She is very small and flat."

The picture cannot be the wife!

Another story is told:
A beautiful woman came to Picasso and said, "Just the other day I saw your self-portrait in a friend's home. It was so beautiful, I was so influenced, almost hypnotized, that I hugged the picture and kissed it."
Picasso said, "Really! And then what did the picture do to you? Did the picture kiss you back?"
The woman said, "Are you mad?! The picture did not kiss me back."
Picasso said, "Then it was not me."

A picture is a dead thing. The camera, the photoplate, catches only a static phenomenon. And life is never static, it goes on changing. Your mind functions like a camera, it goes on collecting pictures -- it is an album. And then out of those pictures you go on reacting. Hence, you are never true to life, because whatsoever you do is wrong; WHATSOEVER you do, I say, is wrong. It never fits.

A woman was showing the family album to her child, and they came across a picture of a beautiful man: long hair, beard, very young, very alive.
The boy asked, "Mummy, who is this man?"
And the woman said, "Can't you recognize him? He is your daddy!"
The boy looked puzzled and said, "If HE is my daddy, then who is that bald man who lives with us?"

A picture is static. It remains as it is, it never changes. The unconscious mind functions like a camera, it functions like a photoplate. The watchful mind, the meditative mind, functions like a mirror. It catches no impression; it remains utterly empty, always empty. So whatsoever comes in front of the mirror, it is reflected. If you are standing before the mirror, it reflects you. If you are gone, don't say that the mirror betrays you. The mirror is simply a mirror. When you are gone, it no longer reflects you; it has no obligation to reflect you anymore. Now somebody else is facing it -- it reflects somebody else. If nobody is there, it reflects nothing. It is always true to life.

The photoplate is never true to life. Even if your photo is taken right now, by the time the photographer has taken it out of the camera, you are no longer the same! Much water has already gone down the Ganges. You have grown, changed, you have become older. Maybe only one minute has passed, but one minute can be a great thing -- you may be dead! Just one minute before you were alive; after one minute, you may be dead. The picture will never die.

But in the mirror, if you are alive, you are alive; if you are dead, you are dead.

Buddha says: Learn sitting silently -- become a mirror. Silence makes a mirror out of your consciousness, and then you function moment to moment. You reflect life. You don't carry an album within your head. Then your eyes are clear and innocent, you have clarity, you have vision, and you are never untrue to life.

This is authentic living.

The third question:

Question 3
BELOVED MASTER,
WHY IS IT THAT NOBODY LIKES TO BE CRITICIZED, AND YET EVERYBODY LOVES TO CRITICIZE OTHERS?

Gayatri, the ego is very sensitive and very fragile, and is very afraid of criticism. The ego depends on others' opinions. It has no reality of its own. It is not a real entity, it is not substantial -- it is just a collection of others' opinions.
Somebody says, "You are beautiful," and you collect it. Somebody says, "You are intelligent," and you collect it. And somebody says, "I have never come across such a unique person," and you collect it. And then one day a person comes and he says, "You are repulsive!" Now how can you accept criticism? It goes against the image that you have been creating of yourself. You will retaliate, you will fight tooth and nail. But whatsoever you do, the mind has taken the impression of this opinion too. Then somebody says, "You are ugly," and somebody says, "You are stupid." And there are millions of people in the world and they all have their own opinions, likes and dislikes.
Hence, your ego becomes a hodge-podge thing, a very contradictory phenomenon. One fragment says, "You are beautiful!" another fragment says, "Nonsense, you are ugly!" One fragment says, "You are intelligent," another fragment says, "Keep quiet! Shut your big mouth! You are just plain stupid and nothing else!" Hence people live in a confused state. They don't know who they are, whether they are intelligent or stupid, beautiful or ugly, good or bad,

saint or sinner -- because one person may call you a saint, another person may call you a sinner. There are different values and different criteria in the world, there are different moralities in the world.

Your neighbor may be a Christian and you may be a Jaina. Now the Christian has no problem with drinking wine; in fact, Christ himself loved to drink wine. But the Jaina cannot conceive, even in his dreams, of Mahavira drinking wine. That's impossible, the very idea is inconceivable. But to the Christian the greatest miracle that Jesus did was to turn water into wine. If Mahavira had been around, he would have done just the opposite miracle immediately! He would have turned the wine again into water.

Now, if you drink wine once in a while, are you a saint or a sinner? Different people will say different things. In Mahatma Gandhi's ashram tea was prohibited; what to say about wine! Tea, poor tea, innocent tea was prohibited! And all the Buddhist monks down the ages have been drinking tea. In fact they think that it helps meditation, and there may be a grain of truth in it, because it keeps you awake. And the Buddhist meditation is such that you tend to doze off: sitting for hours in a single posture.... Just try it. After ten minutes you will start dreaming. After one hour it is impossible to keep awake.

Tea may have helped. In fact, tea was discovered by Buddhists. One of the greatest Buddhist masters, Bodhidharma, discovered tea. The name comes from a monastery, Ta, in which Bodhidharma used to live in China. That monastery was on top of the hill, Ta. In China 'ta' can be pronounced in two ways: either it can be pronounced as 'ta' or as 'cha' -- hence the Hindi CHAI, the

Marathi CHA, and the English 'tea'. Bodhidharma, the great founder of Zen, discovered it.
And wine has been made in Catholic monasteries down the ages. You will be surprised to know that the best wine has been made by Catholic monks and nuns. The oldest wine is available only in the cellars of ancient monasteries in Europe, the oldest and the best. Wine, made in monasteries? What kind of monasteries are these? Who is going to decide?
In fact, again there is a grain of truth in it. Buddhist meditation means watchfulness, and tea has some chemicals in it which help watchfulness -- it has a stimulant. Now some day it is possible that another Bodhidharma will come and say, "Smoking is good," because tobacco also has a stimulant -- nicotine. Smoking can also help meditation if tea can help it. Smoking is still waiting for its Bodhidharma to appear. Then you will be more able to smoke and feel very virtuous: the more you smoke, the more saintly you will be!
It is not accidental that wine became part of the monastery's creativity. Jesus says: To be drowned in God is prayer. Jesus' path is that of love, Buddha's path is that of meditation; hence, Buddha will never agree to wine, but to tea he may agree. Jesus agrees to wine because wine gives you a taste of being utterly lost, of being drowned, of getting out of the ego, of forgetting the ego and all its worries. It gives you a taste, a glimpse of the unknown.
But who is going to decide about who is right and who is wrong? All these things are there in the atmosphere, and you catch them. Out of these things you make some kind of image; it is bound to remain hodge-podge, it can't be clear-

cut. Hence you are very much afraid of somebody criticizing you because he brings your hodge-podgeness to the surface. It is not his criticism that you are against; you are against the fact that he brings problems to the surface which you are somehow repressing within yourself. He makes you aware of the problems, and nobody wants to be aware of the problems, because problems then want to be solved, and it is a complex and arduous affair. It needs guts to solve problems. You may not like to solve problems in fact, because you may have some investment in your problems -- you MUST have, because you have lived with them for so long that you must have invested in them. You may not like to change your life-style. If you are miserable you may like to remain miserable -- whatsoever you say on the surface, that's another matter. Notwithstanding what you say, deep down you may still like to remain miserable. For example, a wife knows that the husband is loving towards her only when she is ill. Whenever she is healthy he simply forgets all about her, he never takes any care when she is healthy. When she is ill, out of sheer duty, responsibility, he comes, sits by her side, puts his hand on her head; otherwise he does not give her even a look. Ask husbands, "How long has it been since you have seen your wife's face, face-to-face?" You may be able to recognize your dog if it is lost, but if your wife is lost you will have to ask the neighbors because they will recognize her better -- just as you will recognize the neighbor's wife better. Who looks at his own wife?

Mulla Nasruddin had gone to see a play. A man was in such great love in the play, he was acting so romantically that Nasruddin said to his wife, "This man is a great actor."
The wife said, "And do you know? -- the woman he's acting with is really his wife in actual life."
Nasruddin said, "Then he is the greatest actor in the world!"

To show so much romance to one's own wife...it is next to impossible.
I was traveling for twenty years in this country. I was staying in thousands of homes, and I saw it continuously: when the husband is not in the house, the wife seems to be very cheerful, very happy. The moment the husband enters the house she has a headache, and she lies down on the bed. And I was watching, because I was just staying in the house. Just a moment before, everything was okay -- as if the husband has not entered but a headache has entered. Slowly slowly, I understood the logic. There is a great investment in it. And remember, I am not saying that she is simply pretending. If you pretend too long it can become a reality, it can become an autohypnosis. I'm not saying that she is NOT suffering from a headache, remember. She may be suffering: just the face of the husband is enough to trigger the process! It has happened so many times that now it has become an automatic process. So I am not saying that she is deceiving the husband; she is deceived by her own investments.
You have a certain image and you don't want it to be changed, and criticism means again a disturbance.

You surely know the story of Little Red Riding Hood: This little girl had gone to see her grandmother who lived in the woods. The bad wolf, who wanted to eat her up, took the grandma's place in the bed after having devoured her in one gulp. So he was under the blankets with grandma's nightie and nightcap on.
When Little Red Riding Hood arrived, she noticed something different, and looking the grandmother in the eye, she asked:
"But, granny, what big eyes you have!"
"It is to see you better, my dear."
"But granny, what a big nose you have!"
"It is to smell you better, my dear."
"But granny, what big arms you have!"
"It is to hug you better, my dear."
"But granny, what hairy hands you have!"
"Hey! Have you come around just to criticize?"

There is a limit. Beyond that nobody likes to be criticized. But the other side of the story is that everybody likes to criticize others; that gives you a good feeling. If others are bad, vicariously it helps you to feel good. If everybody is a cheat, a hypocrite, dishonest, cunning, it gives you a good feeling: you are not THAT bad, you are not THAT dishonest. The comparison relaxes you. It helps you to remain dishonest, because people are more dishonest than you are. In this dishonest world how can you survive? You have to play the game.
Every morning, early in the morning when you read the newspapers, it always gives you a good feeling -- so much happening all over the world, so many ugly things, so much

violence, murder, suicide, rape, robbery, that compared to all this you are a saint. Hence people don't like to read the Bible in the morning, or the Gita, but the newspaper! Reading the Gita you feel like a sinner, reading the Bible you start feeling a trembling, that hell is bound to happen to you, that you are on the way. And the scriptures depict hell so vividly, with such color that it can make anybody afraid. And one thing seems to be certain: that you cannot reach heaven. It seems to be impossible, it demands impossibilities.

Nobody likes to read the scriptures, nobody likes to listen to the scriptures. That's why if you go to the temple you will find almost everybody fast asleep. There are physicians I know who send people to religious discourses if they suffer from insomnia. If no tranquilizer works, don't be worried: go to a religious discourse. It is the ultimate in tranquilizers -- up to now nothing has been able to defeat it. Listening to religious scriptures one starts falling asleep. It is a protection, it is to avoid; otherwise, it becomes absolutely certain that heaven is not for you, you are meant for hell. And it stirs your heart, raises great fear, and there seems to be no way to escape from it.

Hence, everybody likes to criticize, and not only to criticize -- everybody likes to magnify others' faults. You try to make others' faults as big as possible because then, in comparison, your faults are negligible. And God is compassionate: RAHIM, REHMAN! God is compassion! You have only small faults, and looking at the world where so many sinners exist....

When the Day of Judgment comes you can be perfectly certain that your number is not going to be called, you will

not be called. The queue will be too long, and it has to be decided within twenty-four hours. One Day of Judgment, and millions and millions of people -- Tamerlane and Genghis Khan and Alexander the Great and Adolf Hitler and Mussolini and Joseph Stalin and Mao Zedong...these will be the people standing in front. You will be the last in the queue. Your number is not going to come. You can be certain of it if you look at people with a magnifying glass.

After running into a wild crowd at a basketball game one evening, the referee picked up his wife and told her it might be better if she stayed away from the remaining games to which he was assigned. "After all," he said, "it must have been pretty embarrassing to you when everyone stood up and booed me."
"It was not so bad," she replied. "I stood up and booed too."

Ego does not want to be criticized AND wants to criticize everybody. Become aware of the strategy of the ego, how it nourishes itself, how it protects itself. Unless you become absolutely aware of all the cunning devices of the ego, you will never be able to get rid of it. And to get rid of it is the beginning of a religious life, is the beginning of sannyas. Then you are no longer worried what others say about you. Just look at me.... The whole world goes on saying things about me. I don't even read them. Every day Laxmi brings hundreds of reports appearing in different languages from different countries. Who cares? If they are enjoying rumors, let them enjoy; they don't have anything else to enjoy in their lives. Let them have a little fun. Nothing is wrong in it, they cannot harm me. They can destroy my body, but

they cannot harm ME. And I have no image of my own; they cannot destroy that either. And I don't react, I act. My action springs out of my self, it is not to be manipulated by others. I am a free man, freedom. I act of my own accord. Learn the art of acting of your own accord. Don't be worried about criticisms and don't be interested in praises. If you are interested in being praised by others, then you cannot be unconcerned about criticism. Remain aloof. Praise or criticism, it is all alike. Success or failure, it is all alike. AES DHAMMO SANANTANO.

The fourth question:
Question 4
BELOVED MASTER,
ALTHOUGH I WANT TO SURRENDER MYSELF TO YOU AND TAKE SANNYAS, I FEEL HELPLESS TO DO SO. WHY IS IT SO? PLEASE CLARIFY THIS.

S.D. Prasad, it is very simple, there is nothing to clarify. You are afraid of people, you are afraid of the society. You are afraid of the established church, the established religion, the priests, the politicians -- you are simply afraid. It is fear that is preventing you. Sannyas needs courage, sannyas needs guts, particularly my sannyas.
The old sannyas no longer needs guts, because it is already part of the status quo. It is accepted, respected. If you become an old-style sannyasin people will worship you. If you become MY sannyasin you will be in constant danger. People will think you are mad, people will think you are hypnotized. People will think that something has gone wrong -- that you have gone nuts. People will say, "Such a

good man! We had never ever thought, dreamed that this was going to happen to you."

People will laugh, rumor about you, gossip about you, will create a thousand and one kinds of troubles for you. And you have to exist with people, you have to live with them. On each step they will create barriers and they will put rocks in your path. And not only those who are part of the greater society, but even those who are very close: your wife may create so much trouble for you...your children, your parents. From every nook and corner you will have to face difficulties.

You are afraid. Just try to understand your fear, and then it is very easy. Once you see that it is fear, drop it. In spite of all fears, jump into sannyas, because to remain in fear is to become a coward, to remain in fear is to miss the whole joy of life. Life belongs to those who know how to risk. Life belongs to the adventurous, and sannyas is the greatest adventure there is. And because I am bringing a totally new concept of sannyas into the world -- a sannyas that is not escapist, a sannyas that does not believe in renunciation, a sannyas that believes in rejoicing, a sannyas that wants to live in the world and yet not be of it....

The old sannyas is easy: you escape from the world, you leave the opportunities where temptation is possible, you escape to the Himalayan caves. Sitting there you will be a saint, because you don't have any other opportunity. You HAVE to be a saint. What else can you do there?

In the world all kinds of temptations exist. To be a saint in the world is something superb, something extraordinary. If there is no woman in the Himalayan caves...and I don't think there is. Women have never been so foolish; they are

more earthly, they are more intuitive, they are not intellectuals. They are very realistic, they don't go after words and theories and philosophies. It is man who becomes very much attracted by abstractions. Woman does not bother much about the other world, she wants a beautiful sari HERENOW! You are a fool if you are waiting for some beautiful woman in heaven.

The feminine mind does not bother much about the other world. The feminine mind says, "We will see. If we can manage here, we will manage there too. If we can find a fool here, the same fools will be available there too. So why be worried about the other world?"

But man lives in abstractions. That is the masculine mind's greatest flaw. It lives in theories. It becomes so much hypnotized by words that it is ready to sacrifice life itself. It is ready to go to the caves, to renounce this life in order to attain the other life. It lives in the past, it lives in the future. Woman lives more in the present. Hence, there have been no women in the Himalayan caves. You can go and sit there and dream all kinds of dreams, but no opportunity is there. Money is not there, power is not there, beauty is not there -- nothing is there! Sitting in your cave you become more and more dull, slowly slowly; it is a kind of gradual suicide.

My sannyas is not dropping out of the world but getting deeper into it, getting to the very core of it, because God is at the very core of the world. God is the soul of the world. You cannot find him by escaping from the world. You can find him only by going deeper and deeper into the world. When you reach the very center of existence, you will find him. He is hidden in the world, the whole world is

permeated by him. He is in the trees and in the rocks and in the birds and in the people. Yes, he is in your wife, in your husband and in your children. He is in you! And the best possibility to find him is in the world, not out of the world. To go out of the world has been a great attraction; that too because of fear. The escapist is a coward; he cannot be watchful enough to live in the world and yet be unaffected by it. He cannot be so watchful -- he does not have that much intelligence, he cannot make that great effort to be awake -- hence he escapes. He is a coward.
So the old sannyas, S.D. Prasad, may fit you perfectly, but it is not going to help. You will remain a coward, and you will remain fear-oriented. On the surface it appears that the sannyasin who is leaving the world is very brave. It is not so. Don't be deceived by the appearances. The soldier who is going to war looks so brave -- don't be deceived by the appearances -- deep down he is trembling, he's afraid.

Adolf Hitler was preparing his wardrobe for a second dismal winter on the frozen front in Russia.
"Mein Fuhrer," suggested one of his suite, "remember what Napoleon did when he was in Russia. He wore a bright red uniform so that in case he was wounded his men would not notice the fact that he was bleeding."
"Excellent idea! Excellent idea!" ruminated Adolf. "Just throw me my brown pants."

Don't be deceived by the appearances. Even people like Adolf Hitler are tremendously afraid, trembling. And your so-called sannyasins who have escaped from the world have escaped out of fear.

I teach you the way of fearlessness. It is simply fear and nothing else that is preventing you, although you will not feel very happy with my answer. You must have been expecting that I would say something very gratifying to your ego. Excuse me, I cannot speak any untruth. I can only speak the true, and if it hurts, it hurts. It is only through truth that light starts entering into your being. So if you feel wounded...because your name seems unfamiliar to me, you must be new. And with new people I am never so rude, but I see a possibility in you, hence I am so hard.
Whenever I see a possibility in a man, I become hard. Whenever I see no possibility I remain very polite. If I am polite, that simply means I want to get rid of you. If I am hard, if I hammer hard on your head, that means I have already started respecting you.

The fifth question:
Question 5
BELOVED MASTER,
I AM VERY GREEDY FOR MONEY. DO YOU THINK I HAVE BEEN A JEW IN MY PAST LIFE?

Suresh, why in a past life? You are a Jew right now! Just by being born in India, just by being born in a Hindu family, does not make any difference. 'Jew' does not mean a race, it is a psychology, it is a metaphysics. The MARWARI is a Jew -- the Indian Jew. In fact, anybody who is greedy is Jewish -- greed is Jewish.
Jesus is not a Jew although he was born a Jew -- he is not Jewish at all. When I use words like 'jew', remember always that I'm not talking about races. I'm not interested in

blood. The Jewish blood and the Christian blood and the Hindu blood are all alike. You can take a few samples -- you can get all kinds of samples here -- you can take a few samples to the doctor and ask him which blood is Jewish and which blood is Hindu and which blood is Buddhist, and he will be at a loss. He cannot find any way to figure it out -- blood is blood! Of course there are types in blood, but they are not Jewish and Hindu and Buddhist. 'Jew' is nothing but another name for greed. In that sense the whole world consists of Jews, except for a few exceptional people. Almost everybody is a Jew! Either you are a Jesus or you are a Jew -- these are the only alternatives. If you don't want to be a Jew then be a Jesus. And don't try to console yourself that in a past life.... Those are tricky inventions of the human mind: "In the past life maybe I was a Jew." You are a Jew right now. Throwing the responsibility on the past life keeps you intact; then you can continue as you are.

An old Jew offers to pay a prostitute double her demanded fee if she will keep both hands on his head during love-making. Afterwards she asks him what special thrill he got out of this.
"No thrill," he says, taking a large roll of bills out of his pocket, "but for two bucks extra I know your hands are on my head and not in my pockets!"

Another story for you, Suresh:
A retired Jewish businessman is nearly ruined by his sons' demands for money to pay off the girls whom they have

seduced and made pregnant. But he pays in order to keep from seeing the family name disgraced.
A few days later his daughter comes to him and confesses, "Papa, I am pregnant."
"Thank God, business is picking up," says the old man.

And the third story:
A room full of Jews are discussing which business is best. Finally one bearded old man says, "Let us stop lying to each other. The whorehouse business is the best: they got it, they sell it, they still got it."
"What are you saying?" cries another horrified old man. What am I saying? I'm saying: no overhead, no upkeep, no inventory -- who can beat it? And yes, it is all wholesale."

Greed is Jewish, and everybody is a Jew in that sense. And remember that greed is a projection of fear. It is because of fear that man becomes greedy. He is so much afraid, that he wants to accumulate for the future. He is so afraid, that he sacrifices his today for tomorrow, and the tomorrow never comes. The greedy man is the most foolish man in the world. "The fool" Buddha calls him -- the fool par excellence, because he goes on sacrificing the present for the future which never comes. He accumulates money but he cannot use it; he remains poor.
The greedy man never becomes rich. He may have the whole world at his disposal, but he remains poor. He cannot enjoy it, his greed won't allow that. He remains miserly. He always remains in such fear of the future that he cannot part from his money. He accumulates, accumulates, wastes his whole life and one day dies. He was a poor man his whole

life -- empty-handed he had come, empty-handed he has gone, and his whole life went down the drain with no significance.

Don't try to console yourself that in the past life you were a Jew. Look into your being! You ARE a Jew. And then there is a possibility that you will see it: "I am a Jew, I am greedy. From where is my greed coming?" Go deeper into greed, analyze greed and you will find fear. And when you find fear you have come to a very fundamental thing.

There are only two ways to live life: one is that of fear and the other is that of love. The man who lives out of fear becomes greedy, becomes aggressive, becomes violent, becomes egoistic. And the man who lives out of love is out of necessity nongreedy, because love knows how to share. Love enjoys sharing, love knows no greater joy than sharing. Whatsoever love has, love shares. And love comes to know a great secret: that the more you share, the more love energy goes on reaching you, welling up from some unknown, inexhaustible source -- AES DHAMMO SANANTANO.

The more you love, the more you are prayerful. The more you love, the more God gives you, because you are giving. Whatsoever you do to people, God goes on doing to you. If you are miserly, God becomes miserly towards you. If you are sharing, God is sharing. Existence is only a mirror, it reflects your face, it echoes your being. Live through love and you will be a Jesus.

Jesus says: God is love. Live through fear and you are a Jew. You may be a Hindu Jew or a Mohammedan Jew or a Christian Jew -- it doesn't matter. Adjectives don't matter.

The last question:
Question 6
BELOVED MASTER,
WHY DON'T I UNDERSTAND YOU?

Ram Gopal, understanding is a second step. The first is hearing. You don't hear me. You miss the first step; then the second is not possible.

While you are listening to me, a thousand and one thoughts are roaming in your mind. They keep you deaf. My words never reach you intact, in their purity. They are distorted, they are colored by your thoughts, by your prejudices, by your already arrived at conclusions. You listen to me through your knowledge -- that's why you really DON'T listen. And whatsoever reaches you is something totally different than what was conveyed. I'm saying one thing, you go on hearing something else; hence the misunderstanding. That's why you don't understand me; otherwise, I am using very simple words.

I'm not using any intellectual jargon, I'm using the day-to-day language. I never use big words -- my words are simple, as simple as they can be. If you don't understand, that simply means that somehow you are inwardly deaf. A great clamor of words and thoughts and conclusions and theories and prejudices and knowledge and experience -- the Hindu, the Mohammedan, the Christian, the Jew -- they are all there inside. It is very difficult for me to find a way to you. It is almost impossible to reach you.

It is not a question of understanding. Understanding will flower of its own accord if you can do one thing: if you can LISTEN, if you can allow me to reach you, if you can open

your heart, if you are not deaf -- then understanding is bound to happen. Truth heard is understood, is bound to be understood. Understanding needs no other effort, it simply needs an opening, a vulnerability. Just open a window to me, just a window will do, and I can steal into you. Just a window will do. If you cannot open the front door, don't be worried, the back door will do. But open some door to me, let me come in, and then it is impossible not to understand, it is impossible to misunderstand.
Truth has such clarity that once understood, it transforms your life. Once heard, it is understood. Truth has a very simple process: once heard, it is understood; once understood, it transforms your life. If rightly heard you never ask how to understand. If rightly understood you never ask, "Now what should I do to transform my life according to it?" Truth transforms, truth liberates.

Meditate over this small anecdote:
A man walked into a New York bar and ordered two whiskies, one for himself and one for his friend. The barman produced the whiskies and the man poured some whisky into a thimble which he placed on a perfect miniature grand piano, which he took from his briefcase. He also took from his briefcase a twelve-inch-high man in evening dress, who sat down in front of the piano and commenced playing "The Moonlight Sonata."
The barman was incredulous and demanded to know where the little man has come from. The man explained, "I was just looking through a junk shop when I found an old oil lamp. I rubbed it with my sleeve a little in order to examine it better when there was a flash and a genie appeared saying

he was the slave of the lamp and any wish of mine was his task to fulfill. So I told him I wanted a twelve-inch penis, and this is what the deaf sonofabitch gave me!"

He heard "a pianist" and missed the whole point.
You go on hearing what you can hear. You go on hearing things which are not said at all. And then you interpret them and all interpretations are misinterpretations. And whatsoever you will do will feel frustrating, because your misinterpretations cannot bring you to truth. Truth is a communion.
Buddha says: Find a friend, find a master and be in communion with the master. What is communion? Communion means withdrawing all conditions, withdrawing all prejudices, becoming innocent with somebody who has arrived, becoming a child again in front of one who has become awakened. Listen like a small child: alert, full of awe, wonder, and your heart will immediately be penetrated. I will reach you like an arrow. Yes, there will be a little pain too, but very sweet...so sweet that you have never known anything more sweet than that. Yes, when for the first time the truth penetrates your heart like an arrow, it kills you -- it kills you as an ego. It is a crucifixion, but immediately there is a resurrection. On the one hand you die as you have been up to now, on the other hand you are born again. You become a twice-born, a DWIJ; you become a brahmin, you become one who knows.
But knowing needs a great love affair between the disciple and the master. Knowing is possible only when the love affair is total, when the commitment is total, when the

involvement is total. If you listen just like a spectator, you will go on missing. If you listen only out of curiosity, you will go on missing. If you listen with all your ideas and philosophies, you will hear something else which has not been said.

It is not a question of understanding my words, it is a question of understanding my presence. Only the disciple is blessed.

Ram Gopal, you are still not a disciple. You are curious. You have come to see what is happening. You are not yet committed. You listen to me, but you keep a distance, so that if things become too much you can escape easily. You remain on the periphery, you have not entered into the circle.

Enter the circle -- I give you the invitation. Become my guest, let me be your host. Drink out of me and you will be drowned, and you will be transformed. It is a promise.

Enough for today.

The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 3

Talks given from 11/08/79 am to 21/08/79 am
English Discourse series
10 Chapters
Year published: 1990
The original tape and book title was "The Book of the Books, Vols 1 - 6". Later reissued as twelve volumes under the present title.

The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 3
Chapter #1
Chapter title: Knowledge is not knowledge
11 August 1979 am in Buddha Hall

THE WISE MAN TELLS YOU
WHERE YOU HAVE FALLEN
AND WHERE YOU YET MAY FALL --
INVALUABLE SECRETS!
FOLLOW HIM, FOLLOW THE WAY.

LET HIM CHASTEN AND TEACH YOU
AND KEEP YOU FROM MISCHIEF.
THE WORLD MAY HATE HIM
BUT GOOD MEN LOVE HIM.

DO NOT LOOK FOR BAD COMPANY
OR LIVE WITH MEN WHO DO NOT CARE.
FIND FRIENDS WHO LOVE THE TRUTH.

DRINK DEEPLY.
LIVE IN SERENITY AND JOY.
THE WISE MAN DELIGHTS IN THE TRUTH
AND FOLLOWS THE LAW OF THE AWAKENED.

THE FARMER CHANNELS WATER TO HIS LAND.
THE FLETCHER WHITTLES HIS ARROWS.
AND THE CARPENTER TURNS HIS WOOD.
SO THE WISE MAN DIRECTS HIS MIND.

THE WIND CANNOT SHAKE A MOUNTAIN.
NEITHER PRAISE NOR BLAME MOVES THE WISE MAN.

HE IS CLARITY.
HEARING THE TRUTH,
HE IS LIKE A LAKE,
PURE AND TRANQUIL AND DEEP.

Knowledge is not knowledge. It has the appearance of knowledge, hence it deceives many. Knowledge is only information. It does not transform you; you remain the same. Your accumulation of information goes on growing. Rather than liberating you, it burdens you, it goes on creating new bondages for you.

The so-called man of knowledge is far more foolish than the so-called fool, because the fool at least is innocent. He is ignorant, but he has no pretensions of knowing -- that much truth is his. But the man of knowledge is in a far greater mess: he knows nothing but he thinks he knows. Without knowing, to believe that one knows is to remain forever rooted in ignorance.

Knowledge is a way for ignorance to protect itself -- and it protects itself very cunningly, very efficiently, very cleverly. Knowledge is the enemy although it appears as the friend.

This is the first step towards wisdom: to know that you don't know, to know that all knowledge is borrowed, to know that it has not happened to you, it has come from others, that it is not your own insight, your own realization.

The moment knowledge is your own realization, it is wisdom.

Wisdom means that you are not a parrot, that you are a man, that you are not repeating others but expressing yourself, that you are not a carbon copy, that you have an original face of your own.

Knowledge makes you a carbon copy, and to be a carbon copy is the ugliest thing in the world. That is the greatest calamity that can happen to a man -- because knowing not and yet believing that you know, you will remain always ignorant and in darkness. And whatsoever you do is going to be wrong. You may be able to convince even others that you know, you may be able to strengthen your ego, you may become very famous, you may be known as a great scholar, a pundit, but deep down there is nothing but darkness. Deep down you have not yet encountered yourself, you have not yet entered in the temple of your being.

The ignorant is in a far better situation. At least he has no pretensions, at least he is not deceiving others and himself. And ignorance has a beauty -- the beauty of simplicity, the beauty of uncomplicatedness. To know that "I don't know" immediately brings a great relief. To know, to experience, one's utter ignorance fills one with great wonder -- the existence is transformed into a mystery.

And that's what God is all about. To know the universe as a miracle, as a mystery, as something unbelievable, as something impenetrable -- as something before which you can only bow down in deep gratitude, you can only surrender in awe -- is the beginning of wisdom.

Socrates is right when he says: I know only one thing -- that I don't know at all.

To be wise is not to be knowledgeable. To be wise means to realize something of your consciousness -- first within and then without; to feel the pulsation of life within you and then without. To experience this mysterious consciousness that you are, first one has to experience it in the innermost core of one's being, because that is the closest door to God.

Once you have known it within, it is not difficult to know it without. But remember: the wise man never accumulates knowledge -- his wisdom is spontaneous. Knowledge always belongs to the past, wisdom belongs to the present. Remember these distinctions. Unless you understand the difference very clearly between knowledge and wisdom, you will not be able to understand these sutras of Gautama the Buddha. And they are tremendously important.

Knowledge comes from the past, from others, from scriptures. And Buddha has said: My transmission of truth is beyond the scriptures. What I am saying, what I am imparting, what I am communing, is not written anywhere, has not been spoken anywhere -- in fact, cannot be spoken at all, cannot be written at all. It is transferred in deep silence between the master and the disciple: it is a love affair. Wisdom is contagious. It is not taught, remember; you can receive it but it cannot be given to you. You can be open and vulnerable to it, you can be in a state of constant welcoming, and that's how a disciple sits by the side of the master -- ready to drink, ready to allow the master to penetrate his very heart. In the beginning it is painful, because the master's consciousness penetrates you like a

sharp arrow -- only then it can reach to your very core. It hurts.

Knowledge satisfies the ego; wisdom destroys the ego completely; hence people seek knowledge. It is very rare to find a seeker who is not interested in knowledge but is interested in, committed to, wisdom. Knowledge means theories about truth; wisdom means truth itself. Knowledge means secondhand; wisdom means firsthand. Knowledge means belief: others say and you believe. And all beliefs are false! No belief is ever true. Even if you believe in the word of a buddha, the moment you believe it is turned into a lie.

Truth cannot be believed; either you know or you don't know. If you know, there is no question of belief; if you don't know, there is again no question of belief. If you know, you know; if you don't know, you don't know. Belief is a projection of the tricky mind -- it gives you the feeling of knowing, without knowing. The Hindu, the Mohammedan, the Christian, the Jew, the Jaina, the Buddhist -- they all believe.

To believe is cheap, it is very easy -- nothing is at stake. You can easily believe in God, you can easily believe in immortality of the soul, you can easily believe in the theory of reincarnation. In fact, they remain just superficial; deep down you are not affected by them, not at all. When death will knock at your door you will know your beliefs have all disappeared. The belief in the immortality of the soul will not help you when death will knock at your door -- you will cry and weep and you will cling to life. When death comes you will forget all about God; when death comes you will not be able to remember the theory -- and the complicated

implications of it -- about reincarnation. When death knocks you, it knocks down all the structure of knowledge that you had built around yourself -- it leaves you absolutely empty... and with the awareness that the whole life has been a wastage.

Wisdom is a totally different phenomenon: it is experience, not belief. It is existential experience, it is not "about." You don't believe in God -- you know. You don't believe in the immortality of the soul -- you have tasted it. You don't believe in reincarnation -- you remember it; you remember that you have been here many times. And if this has been so in the past, this is going to be so in the future. You remember you have been in many bodies: you have been a rock, you have been a tree, you have been animals, birds, you have been man, woman... you have lived in so many forms. You see the forms changing but the inner consciousness remaining the same; so you see only the superficial changes but the essential is eternal.

This is seeing, not believing. And all the real masters are interested to help you to see, not to believe. To believe, you become a Christian, Hindu, Mohammedan. Belief is the profession of the priest.

The master first has to destroy all your belief -- theist, atheist, Catholic, communist. The master has to dismantle all your structure of belief so that you are left again as a small child -- innocent, open, ready to inquire, ready to plunge into the adventure of truth.

Wisdom arises within you, it is not a scripture. You start reading your own consciousness -- and THERE are hidden all the Bibles and all the Gitas and all the Dhammapadas.

A great scholar once bought a parrot. When he got it home he told it, "I am going to teach you to talk."
"Don't bother," answered the bird. "I can talk already."
He was so amazed that he took it to the university. "Look! I have got a fantastic talking parrot here...." But the parrot would not talk, even though the scholar kept insisting that it could.
People bet him ten-to-one that it could not, and he lost the bet. Nothing would induce the parrot to speak. On the way home, followed by the jeers of his friends, the man cuffed the parrot and said, "You fool -- look at the amount of money you lost me!"
"It is you who are the fool," said the parrot. "Take me back to that university tomorrow and you will get one hundred-to-one and win!"

Yes, parrots are far more intelligent than your professors. Parrots have more insight than your pundits, scholars, academicians. If you want to know the real fools you will have to visit a university -- all kinds of pretenders, full of gibberish. Not knowing what they are really doing, but they go on doing things. Not knowing what they are teaching, but they are teachers; they go on writing great treatises.

Mulla Nasruddin had a nameplate on his home. Everybody wondered about his degrees that he had put on the nameplate. On the nameplate he had written: Mulla Nasruddin, B.S., M.S., Ph.D. Everybody was intrigued! Finally the neighborhood people gathered and they said, "Nasruddin, as far as we know you have never been to any university. What to say about any university? -- you have

never been to any school. In fact, you cannot read and you cannot write! From where have you got these degrees?"
He said, "Do you know what these degrees mean? B.S. is a short form."
"Short form of what?" they asked.
He said, "Think it over...!" Then they understood. "B.S. is a short form of something which is unmentionable," he said. "And M.S. means 'more of the same.' And Ph.D. means...."

Think over it, meditate over it. Can you infer what Ph.D. means? You remember B.S., its meaning, you remember M.S., more of the same, and then what about Ph.D.? I leave it to you! If you meditate you will find, and that will make you a little wise. If you cannot find it, tomorrow you can ask in the questions!

Following more than fifty years of atheism, scientists in Russia began to be curious about what religion might be. A group of them took a book of holy quotations and decided to have it decoded by an analogical computer. They opened the book and took the first phrase they saw, typing it out onto the keyboard. The phrase was: "The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak." They crowded around the printout as the words began to appear.
As they read the message their astonishment increased: "The vodka is ready, but the meat is devitalized."
"No wonder religions used to mystify people," they muttered to one another.
Then one of them had an idea. He tapped out the book's title, UNCONSIDERED TRIFLES, onto the decoder. Out came the translation: "Neglected puddings."

"You see!" he shouted. "You have got the wrong book -- this is one about the abuses of cookery."

They are still seeking an authentic religious text. The mind of the knowledgeable man is like a computer. He goes on interpreting things not knowing exactly what he is doing; he is not conscious enough to do it.... But I cannot continue further because I see you are all thinking about Ph.D.! Ph.D. means "piled high and deep" -- now be finished with it so we can go further on....

The Buddha says:

THE WISE MAN TELLS YOU
WHERE YOU HAVE FALLEN
AND WHERE YOU YET MAY FALL --
INVALUABLE SECRETS!
FOLLOW HIM, FOLLOW THE WAY.

THE WISE MAN TELLS YOU WHERE YOU HAVE FALLEN.... The first lesson in a mystery school is the original fall of man. It has nothing to do with Adam and Eve and their original fall. That story is simply a condensed parable about the whole humanity. Each child falls in the same way. It is not something that happened in the past, in the old biblical days; it is not something that happened in the Garden of Eden. That is a poetic expression. It happens whenever a child is born. It happens again and again. It is happening every day.
The parable is that God has prohibited Adam and Eve to eat from the tree of knowledge. It is one of the most beautiful

parables ever invented by the masters, by the real knowers -- not to eat from the tree of knowledge. And what are your universities? -- trees of knowledge. And what is your education? -- a tree of knowledge.

God had prohibited them to eat from it, so that you can remain innocent, because only the innocent heart can know. The moment you become full of knowledge, knowing stops. In fact, you have found a substitute for knowing -- your knowledge becomes the substitute. Then there is no need to know! You go on clinging to the knowledge and it goes on giving satisfaction to your ego.

But the moment Adam and Eve ate from the tree of knowledge, they fell -- they fell from their original innocence, they fell from their childlike life. Before that there was poetry in their life, before that there was beauty in their life, before that there was ecstasy in their life -- before that there was wonder and awe. Before that each and everything was extraordinary, because the whole existence was full of mystery; they were surrounded by a mysterious universe. The rainbow and the sun and the moon and the stars... it was all unbelievable. They were in constant surprise.

The moment they became knowledgeable all that wonder disappeared. Knowledge kills wonder, and in killing wonder it destroys your spirit of knowing, inquiry. Knowledge demystifies the universe -- and a universe demystified is a universe without God. A universe demystified is a universe without poetry, without love, without music. Then the sound of the raindrops does not come to your heart as a message from the other shore. Then the wind passing through the pine trees leaves you

unmoved, and the fragrance of the flowers does not create poetry in you. The colors of a butterfly are ignored. A rainbow remains unseen. You become too much attached to very mundane things: money, power, prestige. You become ugly because your whole existence becomes ordinary; it loses sacredness, it becomes profane. You transform the temple of God into a marketplace.

That is the original fall -- but it happens every day, remember. Don't believe the Christians who say that it happened only once -- it happens with each child. The moment you start the child on the journey of becoming knowledgeable, you are helping him again towards the original fall.

The function of a wise man is to tell you where you have fallen. You have fallen because of knowledge; that is the original fall. You can rise back to those clear, innocent moments; you can enter into paradise again -- but you will have to renounce knowledge.

There are people who renounce the world but they don't renounce their knowledge; there are people who go to the mountains, who renounce the marketplace, but they carry the mind with themselves -- and the mind is the marketplace. The marketplace exists in the mind! It exists nowhere else. They may move to the Himalayas, they may sit in beautiful silent caves, but their mind goes on and on in the same old pattern.

A man who has gone to the caves in the Himalayas still remains a Christian, a Buddhist, a Hindu. Now, to be a Hindu is to remain attached to a certain knowledge that has been given to you -- that is one of the ways of falling. To

be a Mohammedan is another way of falling, to be a Christian still another way of falling.
Christianity is a certain kind of knowledge, so is Hinduism, and so are the three hundred other religions of the earth. They all claim to know, they all claim their scriptures are divine, written by God himself -- and only their scriptures are divine and all other scriptures are false.
Buddha says scriptures AS SUCH are false, knowledge AS SUCH is false. Jesus is right, but Christianity is not right. Mahavira is right, but Jainism is not right. With Mahavira there is knowing; Jainism is knowledge. Knowledge is the fall of knowing. Knowing is individual: knowledge is a commodity, a social phenomenon -- you can sell and purchase it, it is available in the libraries, in the universities. Soon you will be able to carry small pocket computers with you; you will not need to go through all the tortures of the schools and colleges and universities. You can have a small computer full of all the knowledge available in the world. A small computer can contain all the libraries of the world and is always at your service: just push a button and whatsoever you want to know the computer will tell you.
That's what your mind has been doing in the past; now machines can do it in a far better way. Your mind is also nothing but a machine, it is a biocomputer. Remember, it is not your soul; remember, it is not your consciousness; remember, it is not your reality, your authentic individuality. It is a social by-product.
If you are born in a Hindu family you attain to Hindu knowledge, and it is certainly different from Christian knowledge. If you are born in Russia you will have

communist knowledge -- DAS KAPITAL and the COMMUNIST MANIFESTO, Marx, Engels, Lenin: the unholy trinity. If you are born in China you will have the red book of Mao Zedong -- that's the Bible. Now the whole of China is being fed with stupid statements of Mao Zedong. He is not a wise man, he is not enlightened. He has not even known himself -- what revolution does he know? what rebellion does he know? -- because even the first rebellion, the basic rebellion, has not happened.

The basic rebellion, the basic revolution, consists in dropping knowledge so that you can again enter into the Garden of Eden.

THE WISE MAN TELLS YOU WHERE YOU HAVE FALLEN AND WHERE YOU YET MAY FALL.... Not only does he tell you about the past, where you have been falling again and again, he makes you aware of the future also. There are many pitfalls, you can go astray any time. For example, I am telling you that all knowledge is stupid, that you need not cling to the Bible or to the Vedas or to the Koran. You love me, you trust me -- you may drop your clinging to the Koran, to the Bible, to the Gita, but you can start clinging to MY statements, you can start making a Bible out of my ideas. You are back in the same trap; you are back, from the back door. Again you are the same person. Now you don't have the Bible but now you have me.

THE WISE MAN TELLS YOU... WHERE YOU YET MAY FALL.

The last statement of Gautama the Buddha to his disciples was: Be a light unto yourself. They were crying and weeping, naturally -- the master was leaving and they had

lived with the master for almost forty years; a few older disciples had lived with him the whole time. These forty years were of tremendous joy, of great experiences. These forty years had been the most beautiful time possible, humanly possible. These forty years had been days of paradise on earth. And now the master is leaving! It was natural, they started crying and weeping.

Buddha opened his eyes and said, "Stop crying and weeping! Have you not listened to me yet? Why are you crying?"

His chief disciple, Ananda, said, "Because you are leaving, because our light is leaving. We see, we feel darkness descending upon us. I have not yet become enlightened and you are leaving. If I could not become enlightened while you were alive, what is the hope for me now when you will be gone? I am in great despair, my anguish is incalculable, I have wasted these forty years. I have been following you like a shadow, it was tremendously beautiful to be with you, but now you are leaving. What is going to happen to us?"

Buddha said, "You are crying because you have not heard me yet. I have been telling you again and again: Don't believe in me -- but you have not listened. Because you have believed in me, and now I am dying, your whole structure is falling apart. Had you listened to me, had you created a light into your being rather than becoming knowledgeable through me, if you had experienced your own self there would have been no need to cry.

"Look at Manjushree!" he said -- Manjushree was another disciple of Buddha, one of the greatest. He was sitting under a tree just close by, with closed eyes, so serene, so

quiet, so utterly blissful, that Buddha said, "Look at Manjushree! Go and ask him why he is not crying."
They asked Manjushree. He laughed and said, "What reason is there to cry? Buddha has helped me to know my own light. I am thankful, I am grateful, but there is no darkness descending. And how can Buddha die? I know I cannot die -- how can Buddha die? He will be here. Just as a river disappears in the ocean he will disappear into the cosmos. But he will be here! He will be spread all over the cosmos. It is going to be something tremendously beautiful. Buddha was confined to a small body; now his fragrance will be released, he will permeate the whole of existence. I am tremendously happy that now Buddha will be spread all over space. I will be able to see him rising in the sun and I will be able to see him flying in a bird and I will be able to see him in the waves of the ocean... and I will be able to see him everywhere.
"He is simply leaving his body. It was a confinement. And how do I know it? I know it because I have known my own soul. I listened to him and you have not listened to him -- that's why you are crying."
Buddha said, "Let me repeat again: APPA DIPO BHAVA -- be a light unto yourself." Then he closed his eyes and disappeared into the cosmos. But his last statement was also his first statement. In fact that was his whole message -- the whole of his life he was repeating the same message again and again and again.
THE WISE MAN TELLS YOU WHERE YOU HAVE FALLEN AND WHERE YOU YET MAY FALL -- INVALUABLE SECRETS! FOLLOW HIM, FOLLOW THE WAY.

When Buddha says, "Follow me," he does not mean imitate him. When he says, "Follow me," he does not say let him be a model to you; make your life according to his life -- no, not at all. "Following" him has a totally different meaning.

There is a Zen story:
A Zen mystic was celebrating a certain festival which is celebrated only on your master's birthday. But people were puzzled. They asked him, "As far as we know you have never had any master. We have also heard rumors that you had approached a great master, Bokuju, many times, but he always refused to accept you as a disciple. Not only that, he used to chase you out of his hut. We have also heard that because of your continuous persistence, he had beaten you a few times, and once he had thrown you, physically, out of the window of his hut. He never accepted you, he never initiated you -- why are you celebrating this day? This is to be celebrated only on your master's birthday."
And the mystic said, "Yet, he was my master. His refusal, his throwing me out, his constant rejection, was his initiation. He was saying, 'Be a light unto yourself -- there is no need to follow me.' Because of his continuous refusal I became enlightened sitting under a tree. There was nobody to cling to.
"The only beautiful man that I have known was Bokuju. If he had allowed, I would have become a shadow to him. If he had allowed, I would have become another Bokuju. I have loved the man, I would have imitated him in detail: I would have eaten the same things, I would have walked the

same way, I would have said the same things... I would have been a carbon copy of him.
"But he was great, he was my master -- he refused. He knew where the pitfall is. The moment he looked into my eyes he knew my future, that if he allows I am going to be a pseudo phenomenon, I will never be an authentic individual. Knowing this he was very hard on me. But now I know his hardness was because of his compassion. It is because of him that I became enlightened. Hence I am celebrating this day -- it is my master's birthday."
Somebody asked him, "But your life-style does not show any indication of Bokuju. Your statements are utterly different -- not only different but sometimes contradictory to his statements. How can you say that he was your master and you are his follower?"
And the mystic said, "Yes, I say he was my master although he never initiated me formally. But formal initiation is immaterial, irrelevant. And I still say that I am his follower, though I cannot prove it by any documents -- but there is no need to prove to anybody. I know, that's all. I am his follower!"
The people insisted, "How can you say that?"
And the mystic said, "He never followed his master; I never follow him. That was his basic characteristic: he never followed his master. And I never follow him -- that's how I follow him. I am a follower and he was my master."

INVALUABLE SECRETS! Yes, these are invaluable secrets. The life of a real seeker is not an ordinary life. It cannot be confined to a certain pattern, it cannot be confined to a certain style of life -- Christian, Hindu,

Mohammedan. The life of a real seeker is the life of freedom.
And when Buddha says: FOLLOW HIM, FOLLOW THE WAY... he does not mean to become a carbon copy, he simply means: try to understand his life. Watch, analyze, meditate, and then let your meditation, your watchfulness, your witnessing, become the way.
And following the wise man is really not following the wise man himself, but the way -- the way that has made him wise.
What is that way that makes one wise?
Two things... first the negative: drop knowledge. And second the positive: enter into meditation.

A whole band of saints was being admitted to heaven, and the doors swung open just enough to let each one in.
As soon as one was in, without any ceremony the doors closed and then opened for the next who went in without any hesitation, as if he was quite expecting to be admitted.
Right at the end came a scholar with a reverend beard and majestic gait, large turban and confident look. As he stepped forward, the gates swung open and trumpets sounded while tremendous applause broke out from an assembled multitude. A shining figure came forward to escort him within.
"This is most gratifying," said the scholar to himself, "to know that the learned no longer will have to give themselves airs and graces. Here, at least, our importance is recognized."
To the apparition he said, "Why all this ceremony?"

"Well," said the angel, "it is something of an occasion -- you see, this is the first time that we have had an academic among us."

It is almost impossible for the knowledgeable to enter into heaven. It must have been an occasion! Hence saints were not received with great ceremony, but the academician, the scholar, the pundit, was received with great ceremony. It was so rare.
It is very rare, in fact it is impossible.... This story must be an invention. Scholars are not known to enter into heaven; to be a scholar is to be in the original fall. And to follow a life pattern from the scriptures is bound to be erroneous, because who is going to interpret? Your stupid mind will go on interpreting, and you will follow your own interpretation. You will be going in circles, you will remain the same.

A man was limping as he walked down a street, and wincing with pain.
A doctor stopped him and said, "If I were you I would get yourself seen to -- you need your appendix out."
So he had his appendix out. Presently he went to another doctor claiming that he still had the same trouble, so he was put on a course of tranquilizers. This did not help and he went to a hospital where they prescribed him a diet and remedial exercises.
Some weeks later he had to go to another surgeon because those medicines were not helping at all. The surgeon said, "Your tonsils have to be removed..." so the tonsils were removed. And this way he went on going from one doctor

to another, from one surgeon to another, and parts of the body were slowly slowly disappearing. But the problem remained the same!
Then one day he was strolling in the marketplace and one of the doctors saw him. He said, "Glad to see you -- you look better! You look perfect!" said the physician. "How did it happen? Who helped you finally? -- because we had all failed. Was it my service that helped you?"
"Service my eye!" said the patient. "Both the pain and the limp went away the moment I took that nail out of my shoe!"

Sometimes things are very small, but if you go to knowledgeable people they look with magnifying glasses; they magnify everything. They are clever and efficient in creating problems, because they know the solutions. Their solutions are useful only if they create problems.
Go to any expert, and immediately he will tell you so many problems that you were never aware of. He has to, because his whole expertise depends on your having many problems, and the more complicated they are, the more happy he is because now he has an opportunity to show his knowledge, his skill.
The real problem may be very small. The real problem is REALLY small! The problem is that you live in the head. Come down from the head to the heart. The head can become knowledgeable, the heart can never become knowledgeable. The heart can become wise. The heart knows in a totally different way. Its knowing is direct, immediate -- it is not logical, it is intuitive. It is not

inference, it is not a conclusion after a long argumentation. It is a simple vision! One simply knows....
The heart is not a process of knowing: it is the opening of an eye.

LET HIM CHASTEN AND TEACH YOU
AND KEEP YOU FROM MISCHIEF.

The mind is mischievous. It goes on befooling you; it plays so many mischiefs upon you that you are not aware of. The first mischief is: the wise man shares his wisdom and you immediately jump upon it and reduce it into knowledge.
The second mischief is: the wise man helps you to be yourself and you start hard work in imitating the wise man -- you try to be like him.
The wise man wants you only to have insight into things so that you have your own light. But you don't want insight, you want clear-cut instructions. You don't want to see yourself, you want to be guided. You don't want to accept your responsibility towards yourself; you want to throw the whole responsibility on the shoulders of the master, on the shoulders of the wise man. Then you feel at ease. Now he is responsible; if something goes wrong, he is responsible. And everything is going to be wrong, because unless you take your responsibility nothing is ever going to be right. Nobody can put you right except you yourself.
The master simply teaches you to be a master of yourself -- that is the true function of a master. He does not want you to depend on him. But the mind goes on playing these mischiefs. The mind wants you to depend. The mind is always in search of a father figure or a mother figure; you

want somebody to hold your hand. You want somebody to guide, to lead.

The master can only indicate. He is a finger pointing to the moon. But the mind plays a mischief: it clings to the finger -- you may even start sucking the finger.

A Zen master, Nan Yin, used to say to his disciples, "Please don't bite my finger -- look at the moon!"

But people are childish. Just like small children suck on their thumbs and believe that they are getting nourishment, grown-up children suck on the fingers of the masters and think they are being nourished. Beware of the mischief of the mind!

And the mind always tells you, "This is simple, to believe in the master. You need not work hard -- what is the point of working hard? Just look: Albert Einstein discovered the theory of relativity, now nobody else needs to discover it again and again. Once he has discovered you can read it in the books. It took years for him; for you it may take only hours to understand it. Why bother to discover it again?"

That is true about outer knowledge, that is true about the outside, objective world; but it is not true abut the subjective, inner world. There one has to discover again and again. Buddha discovered, but that discovery is of no use to you. Jesus knew, but that cannot become your knowing. Mohammed understands, but there is no way to transfer it to you. These people can only indicate how they have attained; they can share their whole journey with you. But then you have to move on your own.

The mind is always for the shortcut; and the mind is always for the easier, for the cheaper way. And those are the things which drive you again and again into wrong paths. Beware!

Mind always gives you sugarcoated poison. But it tastes sweet only in the beginning; in the end it is going to poison you. Wisdom may not taste so sweet in the beginning -- it in fact never tastes so sweet, it is bitter -- but it purifies you. Knowledge is sweet in the beginning, wisdom is sweet in the end. And whatsoever proves sweet in the end is the true thing.

The story is told about a man who died and was met by an angel who said to him, "During your life you were always of a mind to believe that things over here could not really be as bad as you thought. Would you like to see heaven and hell and choose your own destination, just as you have always chosen in your earthly life?"
Of course he agreed, and the angel opened a door marked "Hell." Inside there were revelers and people dancing and drumming; a constant debauch seemed to be going on, men and women cavorting, demons and spirits prancing about. It all seemed very active and interesting.
Then the angel threw open the door marked "Heaven." Inside it were rows of saintly people sitting and lying around in a state of aseptic bliss. But it all seemed rather cold, dull and dead.
"I will take the first one," said the man, because he did not want to spend all eternity doing nothing.
They went back to the first door and the angel opened it. He found himself pitchforked into a cavern full of flames and grime, soot and fumes, with demons lashing the inmates and a constant roar of thunder. Painfully and breathlessly he struggled to his feet and stopped a passing

devil: "I was taken on a tour and opted for hell, but it was not anything like this!"
The demon grinned: "Oh, but you were only visiting at the time. That was simply for the tourists!"

The mind can allure you, it can give you sweet dreams in the beginning -- but only in the beginning. Once you are trapped, once you are in it, once you have chosen, you will suffer. That's how millions of people are suffering.
Buddha says: LET HIM CHASTEN AND TEACH YOU AND KEEP YOU FROM MISCHIEF.

THE WORLD MAY HATE HIM
BUT GOOD MEN LOVE HIM.

And remember: a wise man is always hated by the world, is bound to be hated by the world. His presence is a disturbance to those who are fast asleep and snoring, because he goes on shouting "Wake up!" He goes on telling you that whatsoever you are doing is all illusory. He goes on shaking you, shocking you into awareness, and you may be dreaming sweet dreams, beautiful dreams. He goes on pulling you out of your dreams and your sleep, and your sleep may be comfortable, safe, secure. And he does not allow you rest; he gives you great work to do upon yourself.
The ordinary humanity has always hated a wise man -- he may be a Buddha or a Socrates or a Zarathustra or a Lao Tzu, it doesn't matter who, but down the ages the wise man has been hated by the ordinary people, by the masses, by the crowds. The wise man has been loved only by a few

seekers of truth, a few lovers of truth, a few good men. Remember it!

DO NOT LOOK FOR BAD COMPANY
OR LIVE WITH MEN WHO DO NOT CARE.
FIND FRIENDS WHO LOVE THE TRUTH.

That is the meaning of a spiritual commune: FIND FRIENDS WHO LOVE THE TRUTH -- because alone you may not be able to gather that much courage to go into the uncharted sea. But when you see many are going, a great courage may arise in your heart. It is there, lying dormant; it may become active. Hence a commune is needed -- Buddha created a SANGHA, a commune -- where seekers can gather together, where lovers of truth can hold hands with each other, where meditators can share their experiences with each other, where people can feel that they are not alone, where they can create an alternative society.

And that's exactly what I am trying to do here: create an alternative society -- the society of the friends of truth, the society of the seekers, the society of people who can feel a deep communion with each other, of love, of trust, because this is going to be an arduous journey and a long journey, and you will have to pass through many deserts and many mountains and many oceans.

Alone you may not be able to gather that much courage, alone you may feel hopeless. But when you see many people dancing, singing, rejoicing in their journey, great courage arises in your heart, great trust arises in yourself.

You become confident that it is possible in this life to be a buddha.
DO NOT LOOK FOR BAD COMPANY.... What is "bad company"? People who are not interested in truth. ... OR LIVE WITH MEN WHO DO NOT CARE. And avoid people who are indifferent to truth, because they are going to waste their life. To be with them you will have to be like them. To be with them you will have to behave in their ways. Find people who are in a love affair with existence. That will help your search tremendously; you will be immensely benefited.
DRINK DEEPLY.... And when you have found a wise man, a master, a buddha, when you have found a community of seekers of truth, a sangha, then drink deeply, then don't be miserly, then don't hold back. You have been thirsty for lives and lives. When the time arrives, don't allow your old habit patterns to prevent you -- drink deeply, unhesitatingly, courageously. Go ahead!

DRINK DEEPLY.
LIVE IN SERENITY AND JOY.

To be with a master is really to be a drunkard. A master is sharing his wine! A master is sharing some inner juice that has started flowing in his being. The source is inexhaustible; you can drink as much as you want -- you cannot exhaust it. To be with a master is to learn how to drink him, how to eat him, how to digest him. To be a disciple is really to be a cannibal! The master has to be eaten, drunk, digested, so he starts flowing in your blood, in your bones, in your marrow... so that he becomes part of

your being. DRINK DEEPLY. LIVE IN SERENITY AND JOY.

And when you are around a master, don't be sad and don't be serious. That is not the way to commune with a master. You are bridged only by rejoicing. Of course, your joy has to be very serene, calm, cool. Real joy is not feverish, it is cool, it is very silent. It sings a song, but the song is that of silence. It does not shout, it whispers.

LIVE IN SERENITY AND JOY -- because the more serene you are, the more you are available to the master. And the more joyous you are, the more you are close to the master. These are the ways of being closer.

Many sannyasins ask me, "How to be close to you, Beloved Master?" Be serene, be joyous... and you are close! Be sad, be serious, and you are far, far away. Physically you may be close, but if you are sad you are not close. Physically you may be thousands of miles away, but if you are in joy, rejoicing that you have a master, rejoicing that you have found a buddha, rejoicing that the earth is not yet abandoned by God, that he goes on sending his messengers, rejoicing that Christ still walks on the earth, that Mohammed is not dead but is born in another form, rejoicing that consciousness still blooms and becomes a lotus like a buddha... and you have found a lotus!

You are fortunate, you are blessed. Rejoicing in it brings you closer and closer to the master. It is a spiritual closeness; it has nothing to do with physical closeness.

THE WISE MAN DELIGHTS IN THE TRUTH
AND FOLLOWS THE LAW OF THE AWAKENED.

And if you live joyously, in deep serenity, if you drink without holding yourself in any way back, if you go wholeheartedly with the master, you start becoming wise.
THE WISE MAN DELIGHTS IN THE TRUTH.... Then whenever you hear truth, whenever you see truth, you delight. Your delight is immense. Your delight is not of this earth, it is something of the beyond.
... AND FOLLOWS THE LAW OF THE AWAKENED. And slowly slowly you become aware of the law of the awakened. AES DHAMMO SANANTANO! The world is not a chaos, it is a cosmos. The universe is not accidental; there runs through and through in it a certain law. Buddha calls that law dhamma -- he calls that law God. His approach is tremendously scientific. He does not preach any God who sits on a golden throne in the sky and dominates and controls the world, and gets jealous and gets angry -- if you don't follow him he throws you into hell; if you follow him, if you praise him, if you bribe him through prayers and priests, then he rewards you in heaven with beautiful women who never age, who are stuck at the age of sixteen. Buddha does not believe in any God who rewards or punishes. His approach is scientific.
He says God means the ultimate law that keeps the whole universe together. The universe is a garland -- you see the flowers but you don't see the thread running through the flowers; it is hidden. That thread is God, and that God is known only by the awakened, by the buddhas.
Drink deeply from the master, absorb his being, absorb his presence... melt into his presence. Let his warmth and compassion help to melt the ice of your ego. Become one with him. Drop duality. Be bridged.

This is the meaning of disciplehood, this is what sannyas is all about, and slowly slowly you will start seeing what is true and what is false. To know the false as false is to know the truth as the truth; to know darkness as darkness is the beginning of knowing light as light. And when love for truth arises in you, it is not far away when you will become enlightened in your own light, when you will be awakened. Before that happens, follow the law of the awakened, be in tune with the awakened, be in harmony with the awakened -- because it is a synchronicity.

Listening to beautiful music you feel like dancing. It is not caused by music, because all those who are hearing the music may not feel like that; so it is not the law of cause and effect, it is a totally different law. Carl Gustav Jung has called it the law of synchronicity; he has given it a beautiful name. It has been known down the ages, but he is the first who has rediscovered it in the West.

In the East we have called it SATSANG: to be in tune with the master, to be so attuned that his being starts sinking in you, that you start overlapping. Then something starts happening in you which has never happened. The master is not doing it, you are not doing it -- there is nobody who is doing it -- it is simply happening. Just like listening to music you feel like dancing; being in tune with the master you feel an awakening happening to you.

THE FARMER CHANNELS WATER TO HIS LAND.
THE FLETCHER WHITTLES HIS ARROWS.
AND THE CARPENTER TURNS HIS WOOD.
SO THE WISE MAN DIRECTS HIS MIND.

Once some fragments of wisdom have happened to you, direct your mind towards the awakened. The disciple is continuously directing his mind towards his master -- even after the disciple becomes enlightened he continues to direct his mind.

Sariputta became enlightened -- he was one of the great disciples of Buddha. When he became enlightened he was very afraid to go in front of Buddha. Why? -- because he knew now Buddha will tell him to go and spread the word; he will have to leave the master.

It is said that for many days he was hiding from the master, but finally Buddha inquired, "Where is Sariputta? -- because he has become enlightened, and you cannot hide a light. Bring him, fetch him wherever he is!"

He was hiding in a cave. He was brought forcibly. He said, "I don't want to go. I know what he is going to do to me. He will say, 'Now you go, roam, wander, preach. Now you have become awakened, wake up others!' And I don't want to leave the master. How will I live without his constant presence?"

But he had to leave. When he came to Buddha, Buddha said, "Now go to the east and spread the word. You have attained, now share it." And when the master orders, it has to be followed.

With tears in his eyes he touched the master's feet, went towards the east. But every morning the first thing he would do, he would get up, bow down towards the west where the master was dwelling.

People would ask him, "Sariputta, you are now yourself a buddha in your own right -- what are you doing? Why do you go on bowing down every morning towards the west?" He said, "It doesn't matter whether I am enlightened or not. It is irrelevant, it is not the point. My master is dwelling in the west; although I am far away, I am still nourished by his presence. I can drop my enlightenment but I cannot drop my master. Enlightenment is nothing compared to the attunement with the master."

... THE WISE MAN DIRECTS HIS MIND -- to truth, to the ultimate law of existence, to the awakened people. And when you direct your mind towards the awakened people, or towards the law of existence, slowly slowly the old mad mind starts settling, the old chattering disappears. You become more and more silent and serene and tranquil. You become a silent lake, all waves gone, not even ripples to be found. Only then is truth reflected in you.

THE WIND CANNOT SHAKE A MOUNTAIN. NEITHER PRAISE NOR BLAME MOVES THE WISE MAN.

And then you are like a mountain: nothing can shake you. And then praise or blame are not in any way different to the wise man -- they are all alike. Whether the ignorant person, the unawakened person, praises you or blames you, what difference does it make? Both come from his sleep. It is like a man in a dream shouts -- blames, or praises you. Will you take any note of it? Will you differentiate between the two? A man in a dream may condemn you or may praise

you -- you know he is dreaming, he is asleep. It doesn't matter! There is no difference. What he is saying is all nonsense. When he wakes up he will laugh at it all himself, it will look so ridiculous.
Hence, you can praise the buddha, you can condemn him -- millions will condemn him, very few will praise him -- but it makes no difference to him. He remains like an unmoving mountain, an immovable mountain.

HE IS CLARITY.
HEARING THE TRUTH,
HE IS LIKE A LAKE,
PURE AND TRANQUIL AND DEEP.

He is not only clear -- Buddha says he is clarity, clarity itself. To be clear is a very ordinary thing; once in a while you are also clear. Once in a while you can rise to a certain clarity. But the mind is always there to play mischief again; again you will fall. You can jump for a moment and you are beyond the law of gravitation -- but for how long? A few seconds at the most, and you are back again under the same law of gravitation.
To be clear is a momentary phenomenon.
The wise man, the awakened man, is not only clear -- he is clarity. You cannot take it away from him. He is clear through and through. He is utterly clear. All the weeds have been taken out of him -- he is only roses and roses, a row of roses. He has become pure light, pure capacity to see. His vision is no longer clouded, his sky is without clouds.
HE IS LIKE A LAKE, PURE AND TRANQUIL AND DEEP. His consciousness becomes a lake, and in that lake

are reflected all the stars and all the suns and all the moons and the whole sky... and the whole truth, the whole existence. In his silent lake of consciousness is reflected that which is, and that is another name for God -- that which is.

Meditate over these sutras; not only meditate -- imbibe their spirit. Buddha is sharing his invaluable treasures with you, invaluable secrets.... FOLLOW HIM, FOLLOW THE WAY.

Enough for today.

The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 3

Chapter #2

Chapter title: A watcher on the hills

13 August 1979 am in Buddha Hall

The first question:

Question 1

BELOVED MASTER,

COULD YOU TALK ABOUT TRUST? WHENEVER I TRUST, WHATEVER HAPPENS IS BEAUTIFUL; WHEN DOUBT ARISES, I AM IN PAIN. JUST THE FACT OF TRUSTING YOU, OR LIFE, OR SOMEBODY, IS ENOUGH TO MAKE ME FEEL LIGHT, HAPPY. WHY THEN DO I STILL DOUBT?

Prem Isabel, it is one of the most fundamental questions of life. The question is not only about trust and doubt: the question is rooted in the duality of the mind. It is so with love and hate, it is so with body and soul, it is so with this world and the other world.

Mind cannot see the one. The very process of mind divides reality into polar opposites -- and reality is one, reality is not two, reality is not many. It is not a multiverse, it is a universe.

It is an organic whole, this existence. But the mind basically functions by dividing, the mind functions like a prism; immediately it is divided into seven colors. Before passing the prism it was simply white, pure white; after the prism it is the whole rainbow.

Mind divides reality into two. And those two are bound to be always together, because in existence itself they are indivisible. Only in mind, only in your thought, the division exists.

Prem Isabel, you say, "Could you talk more about trust? Whenever I trust, whatever happens is beautiful...."

But your trust is nothing but the other pole of doubt; it cannot exist without doubt. Your trust is simply an antidote to doubt. If doubt really disappears, where will your trust be? What need will there be of trust? If there is no doubt then there is no trust either. And you are afraid to lose trust, you cling to trust. In clinging to trust you are clinging to doubt too, remember. You can have both, but you can't have one. Either you have to drop both or you have to go on keeping both; they are indivisible, two sides of the same coin. How can you avoid the other side? It will always be there. You may not look at it, that makes no difference. But sooner or later you will have to look at it.

Another part of mind is: it gets bored with anything very soon. So if you are in trust, soon it gets bored with it. Yes, it is beautiful, but only in the beginning. Soon the mind starts hankering for something new, for something

different, for a change. Then there is doubt, and doubt hurts; again you start moving towards trust, and trust becomes boring, and you have to fall into the trap of doubt.... This way one goes on like a pendulum of a clock: right, left, right, left, one goes on moving. You will have to understand that there IS a trust totally different from what you have known up to now about trust. I am talking about that trust. The distinction is very delicate and subtle, because both the words are the same. I have to use the language that you use. I cannot create a new language; it will be useless because you won't understand it. I cannot go on using your language in the same sense you use it, because then it will also be useless: I will not be able to express my experience, which is beyond your language. So I have to find a middle point; I have to use your language, your words, with new meanings. That compromise is bound to be there. All the buddhas had to do that much.

I use your words with my meanings. Hence, be very alert: when I say 'trust' what I mean is totally different from what YOU mean when you use the same word. When I say 'trust' I mean absence of the duality of doubt and trust. When I say 'love' I mean absence of the duality of love and hate. When you use the word 'trust' it means the other side of doubt; when you use 'love' it means the other side of hate. But then you are caught in a duality, in a double bind. And you will be crushed between the two; your whole life will become a life of anguish.

You know trust is beautiful, but doubt arises because your trust is not beyond doubt. Your trust is AGAINST doubt, but not beyond. My trust is a transcendence; it is beyond. But to be beyond you have to remember: both have to be

left behind. You can't choose. Your trust is a choice against doubt; my trust is a choiceless awareness. In fact, I should not use the word 'trust'; it confuses you. But then what to do? What other word to use for it? All words will confuse you.

I should not be speaking really, but you will not be able to understand the silence either. I am speaking in order to help you to become silent. My message can be delivered only in silence. Only in silence, the communion.... But before it becomes possible, I have to communicate to you, persuade you for it. That can be done only through your words. But one thing, if remembered, will be of immense help: I use your words, but with my own meanings -- don't forget my meanings.

Go beyond doubt and trust, then you will have a new taste of trust -- which knows nothing of doubt, which is absolutely innocent. Go beyond both, then simply YOU are left, your consciousness, without any content. And that's what meditation is all about. Trust is meditation.

Don't repress your doubt! That's what you go on doing. When you listen about the beauties of trust, the wonders of trust, the miracles of trust, a great longing, a great desire, a great greed arises in you to attain it. And then you start repressing doubt; you go on throwing doubt deep into the unconscious so that you need not encounter it. But it is there. And the deeper it is, the more dangerous it is, because it will manipulate you from the background. You will not be able to see it, and it will go on influencing your life. Your doubt will be more potent in the unconscious than in the conscious. Hence, I say it is better to be a doubter, it is better to be skeptical knowingly, consciously,

than to be a believer and unknowingly, unconsciously remaining a doubter.

All believers doubt, hence they are so much afraid of losing their trust. Their trust is poor, their trust is impotent. Hindus are afraid of reading the scriptures of the Buddhists, the Buddhists are afraid of reading the scriptures of the Christians, the Christians are afraid of reading the scriptures of other religions. The atheist is afraid to listen to the mystic, the theist is afraid of listening to the atheist. From where does all this fear come? Not from the other: it comes from your unconscious. You know perfectly well -- how can you avoid knowing it? You may like to forget, but you cannot -- it is there! Vaguely you always feel it, the doubt is there, and anybody can provoke it. It may have become dormant, it can become active again; hence the fear of listening to something that goes against your belief.

All believers live with closed eyes and closed ears and closed hearts -- they have to, because the moment they open their eyes there is fear. Who knows what they are going to see? It may affect their belief. They cannot listen, they cannot AFFORD to listen, because something may go deep into the unconscious and the unconscious may be stirred. And it is with great difficulty that they have been able to control it. But this controlled doubt, this repressed doubt, is going to take vengeance, it is going to take revenge sooner or later. It will wait for an opportunity to assert itself. And it is growing stronger and stronger inside you. Soon it will throw your conscious belief systems. That's why it is so easy to change people from Hindus to Mohammedans, from Mohammedans to Christians, from Christians to Hindus -- it is so easy.

Before the Russian revolution, just sixty years ago, the whole of Russia was religious -- in fact one of the most religious countries. Then what happened? Just the revolution! The communists came in power, and within ten years all that religiousness evaporated. People became atheistic because now they were taught in the schools, colleges, universities, everywhere, that there is no God, that there is no soul.

They used to believe in God, now they started believing in no-God! They used to believe before, they are STILL believing. Before doubt was repressed, now trust is repressed. Sooner or later Russia is going to go through another revolution -- when trust will come up again and doubt will be thrown back into the unconscious. But it is all the same! You are moving in circles.

In India, you are great religious people. It is all rubbish. Your so-called religion is nothing but repressed doubt. And that is so in other countries too.

This is not the way of inner transformation -- repression is never the way of revolution. Understanding, not repression: try to understand your no, and try to understand your yes, and then you will see they are not separate, they are inseparable. What meaning can yes have if the word no disappears from languages? What meaning can no have if you don't know anything about yes?

They are bound together, married together, they cannot be divorced. But there is a transcendence. There is no need to divorce them, there is no need to separate them -- don't try the impossible. Go beyond. Just watch both.

This is my suggestion, Isabel: Watch when doubt arises, don't get identified with it. Don't get disturbed, there is

nothing to be disturbed about! Doubt is there -- you are watching it, you are not it. You are just a mirror reflecting it. And when trust arises there will be a little more difficulty in watching because you say, "Trust makes me so happy, trust makes me feel so beautiful." You will jump upon it, you would like to become identified with it. You would like to be known as one who trusts, as one who has faith. But then you will never get out of the vicious circle. Watch trust too.

And the deeper your watching becomes... you will be surprised: looking deep into doubt you will find the other side is trust -- as if the coin becomes transparent and you can see this side and you can also see the other side. Then watching trust you will be able to see doubt hiding behind it. That moment is of great realization: when seeing that doubt is trust, that trust is doubt, you become free from both. Suddenly a transcendence! You are no longer attached to either, your bondage is finished. You are no longer caught in the duality, and when you are no longer caught in duality, you are not part of the mind at all -- mind is left far behind. You are simply a pure consciousness. And to know pure consciousness is to know real beauty, real blessing, real benediction.

If you want to call that state "trust," then you will be understanding my language. I call that state trust which knows nothing of doubt, not even a shadow of doubt.

But of course I am using language in such a way that no linguist will agree with. But that's how it has always been. The mystic has something to say to you which cannot be said. And the mystic has to communicate to you something which is incommunicable. The problem for the mystic is:

what to do? He has something, and it is so much that he would like to share it -- he has to share it. Sharing is inevitable, it cannot be avoided. It is like a cloud full of rainwater: it has to rain, it has to shower. It is like a flower full of fragrance: the fragrance has to be released to the winds. It is like a lamp in the dark night -- the light has to dispel the darkness.

Whenever someone becomes enlightened, he becomes a cloud full of rainwater. Buddha has called the man of enlightenment one who has attained MEGHASAMADHI -- MEGHA means cloud, SAMADHI means the ultimate consciousness: one who has attained the cloud of ultimate consciousness. Why does he use the word 'cloud'? -- because of this intrinsic necessity to shower. A man who is enlightened becomes a flower which has opened. The mystics in the East have called the ultimate opening of your heart, of your being, of your consciousness, SAHASRAR -- one-thousand-petaled lotus. When this one-thousand-petaled lotus opens, how can you avoid sharing your fragrance? It is natural, spontaneous; it starts spreading into the winds.

A buddha is a man whose heart is full of light; a buddha is one who has become a flame, an eternal flame which cannot be extinguished. Now it is bound to dispel darkness. But the problem is: how to give the message?

You have a language which is based on duality and he has an experience which is rooted in nonduality. You are on the earth, he is in the sky. The distance is infinite... but it has to be bridged. And you cannot bridge it, only a buddha can bridge it. You know nothing of the sky, you know nothing of that inexpressible experience, that ineffable experience.

But he knows both! He knows your darkness because he has lived in that darkness himself. He knows your misery because he has passed through it and he knows now the bliss of ultimate attainment. Now he knows what God is. Only he can manage to bridge, only he can manage to create some links between you and him.

Language is the most important link between humanity and the buddha. In fact, language is the most distinctive characteristic of human beings; no other animals use language. Man is man because of language. Hence, language cannot be avoided, it has to be used -- but it has to be used in such a way that you are constantly reminded that it has to be dropped, and the sooner the better.

Isabel, drop both doubt and trust, belief and unbelief, skepticism and faith -- drop both! And then see something new arising in you which is not trust in the old sense -- because it has no doubt in it -- which is trust in a totally new meaning, with a totally new texture. That's what I am talking about, that's what I call trust -- trust which is beyond doubt and your trust, beyond both, whatsoever you have known up to now.

There is a light which is neither your darkness nor your light, and there is a consciousness which is neither your unconscious nor your conscious. What Sigmund Freud and Carl Gustav Jung called conscious, unconscious, are parts of your mind. When Buddha talks about consciousness he is not talking in the same sense as Freud and Jung -- his consciousness is the witnessing consciousness, which witnesses the consciousness of Freud and the unconsciousness of Freud.

Learn to become more of a witness, create more watchfulness. Let each act, each thought, be seen. Don't become identified with it; remain aloof, distant, far away, a watcher on the hills. Then one day you will be showered with infinite bliss.

The second question:
Question 2
BELOVED MASTER,
STRONGER AND STRONGER THE FEELING ARISES IN ME THAT THERE IS AN ABSOLUTE CONNECTION BETWEEN EGO AND NO, AND BETWEEN LOVE AND YES, AND THAT LOVE CANNOT SAY NO; ONLY PSEUDO LOVE WHICH IS FROM THE EGO CAN SAY NO; AND THAT EGO CANNOT SAY YES -- EGO CAN ONLY SAY A PSEUDO YES WHICH IS HYPOCRISY. YET MY MIND DOUBTS, OBJECTS TO THE SIMPLICITY OF THIS UNDERSTANDING.

Veet Chitten, the first thing to be understood is that truth is always simple. It has no complexity in it. That's why the knowledgeable person goes on missing it.
Jesus says: Unless you are like small children you will not enter into my kingdom of God.
Truth must be very simple. If only children can understand it, then it can't be complex. Truth simply is. That "isness" may create a great wonder in your heart, it may mystify you -- but it mystifies you because of its simplicity, because of its obviousness. It may create great awe in you but that awe is not of complexity.

If truth was complex then philosophers would have discovered it long before, because they are experts in complexity. They have not been able to discover it yet. And they will never be able to discover it. Their very search is in a wrong direction. They have assumed that truth is complex from the very beginning -- they never doubt the basic assumption -- and they are rushing behind their own complex minds. And the more they go into the mind and think and argue, the more complex the whole thing appears to be.

Science cannot find truth because science also wants things to be complex. Why do science and philosophy want things to be complex? Science is only an offshoot of philosophy. Even today in the university of Oxford, the department of physics is called the "Department of Natural Philosophy." Science is an offshoot of philosophy; that's why we still go on giving Ph.D.s to scientists -- Ph.D. in chemistry, Ph.D. in physics, Ph.D. in mathematics -- but Ph.D. means doctor of philosophy.

In the ancient days there was only philosophy, then slowly slowly a part of philosophy became more and more experimental, and that part became science.

Science can function only if something is complex. Why? -- because the complex can be divided, analyzed, dissected. The greatest difficulty with the simple is it cannot be dissected, it has no parts to dissect. If you ask a complex question the scientist can answer it; but if you ask a simple question, a very simple question, then the trouble arises. If you ask, "How many stars are there?" the scientist can answer. But if you ask, "Why does arithmetic have only basically ten numbers, from the first to the tenth, then again

the same thing is repeated: eleven, twelve, thirteen...? The basic digits are ten. Why? Why ten? Why not seven? Why not five? Why not three?" Then the scientist is at a loss. He will shrug his shoulders. He cannot answer it -- because the answer is so simple that to say it looks absurd.

Arithmetic has ten digits because you have ten fingers! And primitive people used to count on the fingers, so ten digits became the fundamental thing. It has nothing scientific about it -- just a coincidence. If you had eight fingers, or twelve fingers, the whole mathematics would have been different. It is not a necessity!

A great mathematician, Leibnitz, used only three digits: one, two, three... then four never comes. Then comes ten, eleven, twelve, thirteen... then fourteen never comes: twenty. And it worked well, perfectly well. Albert Einstein even reduced it to two. He said, "Ten is superfluous -- only two are necessary: one, two... that will do! You can count all the stars!"

The number ten is accidental, but so are our many assumptions only accidental. They don't depend on any fundamental law. And if you ask a very simple question.... For example, G.E. Moore has asked, "What is yellow?" Now, no scientist can answer it, no philosopher can answer it. You can say at the most, "Yellow is yellow" -- but that is a tautology. You are not saying anything new in it! If yellow is yellow, what kind of answer is this? We know yellow is yellow -- but what IS yellow? You can point to the yellow. You can take the person and you can show him these yellow flowers, but he will say, "That I know! They are yellow flowers. My question is: what IS yellow?"

G.E. Moore, a great philosopher and logician of this age, concedes that it cannot be answered. Why? -- because it is so simple! A simple question cannot be answered. The simpler it is, the more impossible it is to answer it.
Hence, Chitten, the first thing to be remembered is: truth is simple. That's why nobody has yet been able to say anything about it, and all that has been said about it is superficial.
Lao Tzu insisted his whole life that he would not write anything about truth. When finally he was forced to write -- he was really forced to write... that is the only great scripture which has been written at the point of a bayonet! Lao Tzu was leaving China in his very old age... and you can think of his old age, because when he was born the story is he was eighty-two -- when he was born! So you can imagine how much older he must have been when he died. He was already eighty-two when he was born! A beautiful story, which simply says that he was so mature when he was born that he was a child but never childish. And remember the distance and difference between a child and the one who is childish.
When Jesus says, "Those who are like children..." he is not talking about childish people; he is talking about innocent people. Lao Tzu must have been so innocent that the people who wrote about him could not write that he was only nine months old. His innocence was so deep and so profound that it cannot be attained in only nine months; hence they thought he was at least eighty-two years old. He was born with white hair. You can look at Paritosh: he must have been born like Paritosh -- pure white hair!

So when he was old -- nobody knows how old, people must have lost track of his age -- when he felt, "Now it is time to leave the body," he started moving towards the Himalayas, because there is no other place more beautiful to die.
Death should be a celebration! Death should be in nature, under the trees and the stars and the sun and the moon. The whole life he had lived with people; now he wanted to go back to nature, and before he entered into the ultimate he wanted to die amidst trees and mountains and virgin peaks.
But the king of the country ordered all the guards on all the boundaries, "Don't allow Lao Tzu to escape. Wherever he is caught, force him to write down his experiences, because he has something invaluable and we cannot allow this man to escape taking it with him."
He was caught at one of the posts and the policeman insisted, "You have to write it down; otherwise I will not allow you to leave the country."
So sitting in the policeman's hut, and the policeman with his bayonet, Lao Tzu wrote TAO TEH CHING.
The first sentence is: "Truth cannot be said, and that which can be said is not truth anymore."
No great scripture begins with such a beautiful sentence. He is saying, "If you have understood this sentence, please don't read on." He deceived the policeman. How can a policeman understand what he is writing? But he deceived. The first statement simply states that there is no need to read any more: if you have understood this you have understood all.
"The tao that can be said is no longer tao." The moment you say it you falsify it. Truth is so simple it cannot be uttered, words are complex, languages are complex. Truth

is so simple it can be indicated. Hence Buddha says, "Buddhas can only show you the way," and Zen masters say, "Don't cling to our words -- our words are nothing but fingers pointing to the moon." And remember, the fingers are not the moon! The moon has nothing to do with fingers, but you can only indicate.

Truth is so simple, that's why the whole problem arises. Chitten, you say, "Yet my mind doubts, objects to the simplicity of this understanding."

Yes, this happens: when you start understanding simple truths -- and ALL truths are simple -- the mind doubts. The mind says, "Things cannot be so simple." The mind is really a very strange phenomenon.

You have a proverb -- almost all the languages of the world have such proverbs -- which says: It is too good to be true. Too GOOD to be true? As if truth and goodness are enemies! You can't believe in the good, you can't believe in the true. You should change the proverb: Too good to be untrue.

In the same way the mind says, "Too simple to be true." Change it: "If it is not simple, it CANNOT be true."

Truth is simple; hence innocence is needed, not knowledge. Hence a pure heart is needed, not a mind full of information. Hence love is needed, not logic. Truth IS simple.

The second thing to understand: as a general statement your understanding is very close to the truth.

You say, "Stronger and stronger the feeling arises in me that there is an absolute connection between ego and no."

Never use the word 'absolute', avoid it as much as possible -- because it is the word 'absolute' that creates fanatics.

Nobody has the absolute truth. Truth is so vast! All truths are bound to be relative. It is the word 'absolute' that has dragged the whole of humanity into misery. The Mohammedan thinks he has the absolute truth in the Koran; he becomes blind. The Christian thinks the absolute truth is in the Bible. The Hindu thinks the absolute truth is in the Gita, and so on, so forth. And how can there be so many absolute truths? Hence the conflict, quarrel, war, religious crusades, jihad: "Kill others who are claiming that their truth is absolute -- OUR truth is absolute!" Down the ages, more murders, more rapes, more lootings, have been done in the name of religion than in the name of anything else. And the reason? The reason is in the word 'absolute'.

Always remember: whatsoever we know and whatsoever we can ever know is bound to remain relative. To remember it will give you compassion. To remember it will make you liberal. To remember it will make you more humane. To remember it will help you to understand other viewpoints.

Truth is vast -- simple but vast, as vast as the sky. The whole universe contains it, and the universe is unlimited, infinite. How can you conceive of the whole truth? How can you have the absolute truth in your hands? But that is how the ego functions.

The ego is very tricky. The moment you start feeling something true, the ego immediately jumps in and says, "Yes, this is the absolute truth." It has closed your mind; now no more truth will be available. And the moment you assert, "This is absolute," you have falsified it.

A man of truth is always relative.

If you had asked Mahavira, "Is there a God?" he would have said, "Yes -- but that is my first statement. The second, no; that is my second statement. And the third, yes and no both; that is my third statement." And he would make seven statements, and each statement would start with 'perhaps': perhaps yes, perhaps no, perhaps both, perhaps both not, and so on, so forth. Sevenfold logic!
What Mahavira did in the world of religion, Albert Einstein did in the world of physics: the theory of relativity. These two names are very important, their contribution is great.
Jainism could not spread for a single reason: because you cannot create a religion on the base of 'perhaps'. People want absolute truths, people want to be fanatics, people want to be believers. They want to depend on somebody, they want somebody authoritative. Now, the moment you say perhaps, they become disinterested in you. Their mind says, "This man does not know; otherwise why should he say 'perhaps'? If he knows, he knows; if he does not know, he does not know. What place is there for 'perhaps'?"
But Mahavira will not say yes or no, because if you say yes it becomes absolute, if you say no it becomes absolute. The 'perhaps' is always there. Why? -- not because he does not know but BECAUSE HE KNOWS, hence the 'perhaps'.
Chitten, never use the word 'absolute' -- avoid it. It has been a calamity in the past; in the future we have to avoid it. Use 'perhaps' more.
Your statement would have been closer to the truth if you had said, "Perhaps there is a connection between ego and no." Of course it would not have sounded so strong; 'perhaps' makes it very diluted. With 'absolute' it is more allopathic; with 'perhaps' it becomes homeopathic, very

dilute. With 'perhaps' it can appeal only to people who understand. With 'absolute' it is very appealing to fools, stupids, mediocres, the insane, pathological... it is very appealing!

Doctor Harisingh Gaur, one of the great legal experts of the world, used to say to his students that, "If you have the law in your favor, speak very silently, slowly, be mild, polite -- because the law is in your favor, don't be worried. But if the law is not in your favor, then beat the table, speak loudly, with a strong voice. Use words which create an atmosphere of certainty, absoluteness, because the law is not in your favor. You have to create an atmosphere as if the law is in your favor."

Whenever a man of truth speaks, he speaks in a humble way, he speaks in a simple way.

Avoid the word 'absolute'; it has been in the service of lies, it has never served truth. It has been murderous with truth, poisonous as far as truth is concerned. Better learn to use the word 'perhaps'.

Yes, with a 'perhaps' there is a connection between ego and no. The ego feeds on no, it is its nourishment. The ego avoids saying yes as far as it can avoid. If it has to say yes, it says it very reluctantly, because when you say no you assert your power; no means you are somebody. When you say yes you are no longer powerful, you have surrendered -- yes means surrender. Hence we go on saying no even when it is not needed at all.

A child is asking his mother, "Can I go outside and play on the lawn?" and she says "No!" Now, there is no need, not at all! It is sunny, it is green outside, and flowers and butterflies... and what is wrong for the child in going

outside and playing in the sun? Why should he remain in the closed room? But the mother says no -- not that knowingly she is saying no; it is unconscious. No comes easy. No seems to be very natural, habitual, automatic. And the children become very, very alert about it -- children are very perceptive, they watch everything. He will start creating a nuisance, he will go into a tantrum. He may start crying or he may start throwing things or he may start shouting or he may do something which annoys the mother. And sooner or later the mother is bound to say, "Go out and play!" And that's what he had asked in the first place!

And this is so with everybody: the first thing that comes to your tongue is no. It comes so immediately that there has not been time enough to ponder over it. Yes you say only when you are forced to say it. It comes very hard, it is so difficult -- as if something is being snatched from you. In a natural state, things will be just the opposite: yes will come easy and no will be difficult.

A man who goes deep in meditation will find the change happening: yes will become easier and easier and easier, and one day yes will be a simple response, spontaneous. And no will become more and more difficult, harder to say, and even if one has to say no, he will say it in such a way that it sounds like yes. He will formulate it in such a way that it doesn't hurt the other's ego -- because it is by hurting the other's ego that your ego feels good.

The ego IS violent. The more you hurt others' egos, the better you feel -- you are higher, you are superior. With yes, all superiority disappears. With yes, you simply dissolve.

So it has a truth in it, a very simple truth in it: there IS a connection between ego and no, and between love and yes. But remember the 'perhaps'; if you make it absolute you may go wrong. With 'absolute' everything goes wrong... because sometimes love knows how to say no. It is not an absolute thing that love will always say yes -- no. Love can say no, too. But the no that comes out of love is totally different from the no that comes out of ego. Their qualities are different, they exist on different planes.
When love says no, it is not to hurt you, it is to help you. When love says no it is full of love, it has a poetry around it, not violence. It is suffused with love. And a man who always says yes and has become incapable of saying no -- even when it is needed, his yes is mechanical -- his yes has lost all meaning. It is like a gramophone record. He simply says yes as a matter of course. He need not even listen to what you are saying, his yes is inevitable.

A man had come to see Sigmund Freud. Those were the days when Sigmund Freud was too much obsessed with the idea of sex; everything was to be reduced to sex. Just as Christianity for two thousand years had been repressing sex and was obsessed with sex, so was Sigmund Freud. He was almost a saint! If obsession with sex makes a person a saint, Sigmund Freud is a saint.
All the Christian saints have been obsessed with sex; they have created a very repressive society, ugly, sick, nauseating. Sigmund Freud is a revenge, a revenge of the unconscious; he becomes the mouthpiece of the unconscious. Now he was doing the same thing from the opposite end: everything had to be reduced to sex.

A camel passed. Freud and the man who had come to see him both looked outside the window. Sigmund Freud asked the man -- as he was always asking people -- "What are you reminded of, seeing the camel?"

And the man said, "Sex." Freud was of course very happy. Whenever your theory is supported, a new evidence that even a camel reminds a person of sex....

Then to be more clear and on more certain ground he asked, "Do you see these books on the rack? What do they remind you of?"

And the man said, "Sex."

Now even Freud was a little puzzled, and he asked, "What do I remind you of?"

And the man said, "Sex."

And Freud said, "How is it possible? The camel reminds you of sex, the books remind you of sex, I remind you of sex...."

The man said, "EVERYTHING reminds me of sex!"

Everything can remind you of sex if it is too much repressed, and everything starts taking a sexual color.

Sigmund Freud was of course very happy seeing this man. He noted down the whole story. He used to tell this story again and again to his students.

Once it happened, when he was telling it to a new class of students, one of the students who had also been in his class before said, "But sir, you have told this story last year too."

Sigmund Freud waited for a moment and then said, "Then you need not laugh, but let others laugh. If you have laughed last year, that's okay, no need to laugh anymore. But I have to tell this story because it has a point."

There are people, millions of people, who are in this situation. There are people who are reminded of food by each and everything; they have been repressing food. And anything, if you repress too much, creates pathology.
For example: if this idea settles in your mind that love always says yes and ego always says no, then ego means no, love means yes. They have become equivalent, they have become synonymous. Now there is a danger: you will start repressing all no's just to be loving. And so many no's repressed in your unconscious will not allow you to be really loving. Love will remain on the surface, it will be a facade, a pseudo face; it will not be your original face.
So please, Chitten, avoid the word 'absolute'; it can create difficulties for you. Yes, there is a connection, but the connection is not absolute. There are moments when love can say no, and ONLY love can say no, and there are moments when the ego can say yes.
The ego is not innocent, it is very cunning. It can use yes too, when needed. It can use yes as a stepping-stone, it can use yes as a lubricating agent. You cannot go on saying no to each and everything; otherwise life will become impossible for you. You have sometimes to say yes -- you may not like to say it, but you HAVE to say yes. But you will say it in such a way that the ultimate result is no. You will say it only as a polite gesture, but you will not mean it; you may mean just the opposite.

I have heard:
There was once a Sufi who found himself in a large mass of people milling about outside the palace of the king of his country. The king had ordered that all the famous people of

his realm were to be assembled and odes recited in their honor. The court poets had been working for months to get their verses ready, and this was the day of the great gathering of honor.

The royal guards separated the guests from the onlookers but the Sufi began to say, "I don't want to be praised, I don't want to be honored, I don't want an ode in homage to me to be recited...."

This, however, was to no avail, for the guards hustled him into the audience-chamber. He was struggling so hard -- others only resisted from locally conventional modesty -- that the king ordered him to be seated next to the throne.

Then the king ordered the king of poets to recite the ode in honor of this most modest man. The poem was nowhere to be found. They asked the sage his name, but nobody could remember who he was, if anyone. Finally the king asked him to say something. He said, "I do not want to be praised!"

"Why not?" demanded the king. "If you don't want to be praised you should not have come to the reception!"

"But I did not come -- your guards picked me up in the street. I was not invited even. All I was doing was saying that I did not want to be praised!"

But why should you say that? He was shouting outside the palace, "I do not want to be praised! I do not want to be praised!" And he was making such a nuisance. Why? The ways of the ego are very cunning. It can play the role of being humble. It can shout from the housetops that, "I don't want to be praised!" It can even decline Nobel Prizes.

That's what George Bernard Shaw did. He refused to accept the Nobel Prize on the grounds that, "Now it is below me. It is for young people -- they will be happy. I have gone beyond all this praise, it is childish for me!" But it is an insult to the Swedish Academy and the king. So he was pressed from all over the world, from kings and queens and prime ministers and presidents. Those who had never written to him, they all wrote letters to him, "Please accept it -- it is insulting to the king and to the country."
For two or three days he created much noise, and then he accepted -- on the grounds that because so many presidents and prime ministers and kings and queens were asking him, just to make them happy, he would accept it. Again he created a great news, front page news. He accepted the Nobel Prize and then immediately donated it to the Fabian Society. Later on it was found that he was the president of the society and he was the only member! But he kept the world for seven or eight days continuously in his grip, and when he was asked he said, "What is the point -- just getting a small corner in the newspapers that a Nobel Prize has been awarded to George Bernard Shaw? I used the opportunity as much as possible; I exploited the opportunity as much as possible."
It was not humbleness, it was the way of the ego. And he knew -- he was clever at it, at the game.

Remember: the ego can sometimes say no, sometimes yes, whichever suits. It can use no too -- it is so cunning. And love also can say sometimes yes and sometimes no, because if the yes is going to hurt the other.... If the child is asking to go outside and play in the sun it is one thing, but

if the child is asking to play with some electric gadget which can be dangerous or the child wants to drink poison, then you have to say no -- and love will be ready to say no. Love can say no out of love. Ego can say yes out of its own projections. There is no necessary connection, so don't make it absolute, that's all. Perhaps there is a certain connection -- and there is -- but that 'perhaps' has never to be forgotten.

Mahavira used to look very strange to people, because he would not start any sentence without 'perhaps'. It looks a little odd. I am not saying that you have to start using 'perhaps' before every sentence. I am not saying that when you fall in love with a girl you have to say, "Perhaps I am in love with you, perhaps not... who knows? Nothing is absolute, everything is relative." I am not telling you to become an exhibition of stupidity. But let that 'perhaps' become part of your being, let it be an undercurrent.

In fact it is so. When you are in love it is only perhaps, there is no need to say it, but it IS only perhaps. You are not even certain about your own self, how can you be certain about your love? You have not even loved yourself, how can you love somebody else? You don't know what love is -- because love is known only at the highest peaks of consciousness.

What you call love is lust, it is not love. It is using the other as a means, and to use the other as a means is the most immoral act in the world; it is exploitation. But the other will not allow you to exploit if you can't create the atmosphere in which the other falls a prey and becomes a victim easily. So you have to talk about love, and you have to talk about love which will remain forever. And you don't

know even about tomorrow, you don't know even about the next moment!

A lover was saying to his beloved, "I am ready to die for you! Just say! I love you so much that just a hint from your side and I can commit suicide, I can sacrifice my life. I am going to get you -- no power in the world can prevent me! Even if fire showers from the skies I am going to find you!" And so on, so forth.
And when he was departing the girl asked, "Will you be coming tomorrow?"
He said, "If it doesn't rain."

It is all perhaps! One should be aware of it -- it helps to bring sanity to you, it helps you to be more healthy and whole.
But there is a simple truth in it: that yes somehow is part of love and no part of ego, but not necessarily connected. Sometimes no can be found with yes, with love; yes can be found with no, with ego.
Your approach to life should be that of yes, that of love; and if no is needed at all, it has to serve yes, it has to serve your love. Let the no be the servant and yes be the master -- that's enough! I am not saying destroy no completely. If you destroy your no completely, your yes will become impotent. Let yes be the master and no the servant. No as a servant is beautiful; as a master it is ugly.
And that's what has happened: no has become the master and yes has been reduced to the state of a slave. Free your yes from that slavery and dethrone your no from its mastery, and you will find a right synthesis of your being,

of the negative and the positive. You will find a right harmony between the dark side and the light side, between day and night, between summer and winter, between life and death.

The third question:
Question 3
BELOVED MASTER,
I HAVE JUST ARRIVED FROM THE WEST -- PARIS -- WHERE I HAD HEARD ABOUT YOU AND READ SOME OF YOUR BOOKS. THEY TOUCHED ME VERY DEEPLY AND ONE QUESTION AROSE IN ME:
HOW IS YOUR SPIRITUAL DIMENSION AND THE WORK YOU DO ON A SPIRITUAL LEVEL CAPABLE OF CONDUCTING AND ENLIGHTENING THE BEHAVIOR OF A MAN INVOLVED IN ACTION ON A MATERIALISTIC LEVEL -- FOR INSTANCE, URBANISM, STRUGGLE AGAINST HUNGER, THIRST AND ALL OTHER DISTRESSES?

Jacques Daumal, I do not divide existence into these old dichotomies, the materialistic plane and the spiritual plane. There is only one reality: matter is its visible form and spirit its invisible form. Just like your body and your soul -- your body cannot be without your soul and your soul cannot be without your body.
In fact, the whole split of the past has been a heavy burden on the human heart -- the split between body and soul. It has created a schizophrenic humanity. As I see it, schizophrenia is not a disease that happens once in a while to a person. The whole humanity up to now has been

schizophrenic. It is very rarely, only once in a while, that a man like Jesus, or Buddha, or Mahavira, or Socrates, or Pythagoras, or Lao Tzu, has been able to escape from this schizophrenic pattern of our living.

To divide reality into antagonistic, inimical realism is dangerous because it is dividing man. Man is a miniature universe; if you divide the universe the man is divided, if you divide the man the universe is divided. And I believe in the undivided, organic unity of existence.

To me there is no distinction between the spiritual and the material. You can be spiritual and function on the materialistic plane -- and your functioning will be more joyous, your functioning will be more aesthetic, more sensitive. Your functioning on the materialistic plane will not be tense, will not be full of anguish and anxiety.

Once a man came to Buddha and asked, "The world is in such a distress, people are in so much misery -- how can you manage to sit silently and so joyously?"

Buddha said, "If somebody is suffering from fever, has the doctor also to lie down by his side and suffer? Has the doctor out of compassion to get the infection and lie down by the side of the patient and be feverish? Is that going to help the patient? In fact, whereas there was only one person ill, now there are two persons ill -- the world is doubly ill! The doctor need not be ill to help the patient; the doctor has to be healthy to help the patient. The healthier he is, the better; the healthier he is, the more help is possible through him."

I am not against working on the material plane. Whatsoever work you are doing -- urbanism, struggle against hunger, struggle for ecological balance, struggle against poverty,

exploitation, oppression, struggle for freedom -- whatsoever your work on the material plane, it is going to be benefited, tremendously benefited, if you become more spiritually rooted, centered, calm, quiet, cool, because then the whole quality of your work will be changed. Then you will be able to think in a more cool manner, and you will be able to act more gracefully. Your understanding of your own inner being will be of tremendous help to help others.
I am not a spiritualist in the old sense and I am not a materialist either in the old sense. The Charvakas in India, Epicurus in Greece, Karl Marx and others, they are materialists. They say only matter is true and consciousness is only an epiphenomenon, a by-product; it has no reality of its own. And then there are people like Shankara, Nagarjuna, who say just the same thing in a reverse manner. They say the soul is real and the body is unreal, MAYA, illusion, an epiphenomenon, a by-product; it has no reality of its own.
To me, both are half right, half wrong. And a half-truth is far more dangerous than a whole lie -- at least it is whole. A whole lie has a certain beauty, but a half-truth is ugly -- ugly and dangerous too -- ugly because it is half. It is like cutting a man into two parts.

Just the other day I was reading a story:
It was very hot, and a man with his young daughter was passing by the side of a swimming pool of an intercontinental hotel. It was so hot, the girl said, "I would like to go in the pool and cool myself."
The father said, "Okay, I will sit underneath the tree, and you go ahead."

But she was stopped immediately by the guard and he said, "This pool is restricted. It is not allowed here for Jews... and you look Jewish."
The father said, "Listen: I am Jewish. My daughter's mother is not Jewish, she is a Christian, so my daughter is half Jew, half Christian. Can you allow her to take a bath only up to the waist?"

Dividing man is dangerous, because man is an organic unity. But this is how down the ages it has been done, and now it has become almost a routine thinking, a conditioning.
Daumal, you are still thinking in the old categories. I don't belong to any school -- the school of the materialists or the school of the so-called spiritualists. My approach is total, it is holistic. I believe that man is both together, spiritual and material. In fact, I have to use the words 'spiritual' and 'material' just because they have always been used. In fact man is psychosomatic, not material AND spiritual, because that 'and' creates duality. There is no 'and' between the material and the spiritual, not even a hyphen. Man is materialspiritual -- I use it as one word, materialspiritual. And both the sides....
Spiritual means the center of your being and the material means the circumference of your being. The circumference cannot be there if there is no center, and the center cannot be there if there is no circumference.
My work here is to help your center become a clarity, a purity. Then that purity will be reflected on the circumference too. If your center is beautiful your circumference is bound to become beautiful, and if your

circumference is beautiful your center is bound to be affected by that beauty.
My sannyasin is a total man, he is a new man. The effort is that he will be beautiful from both the sides.

There were once two mystics talking. The first one said, "I had a disciple once, and in spite of all my efforts I was unable to illuminate him."
"What did you do?" asked the other.
"I made him repeat mantras, gaze at symbols, dress in special garb, jump up and down, inhale incense, read invocations, and stand up in long vigils."
"Didn't he say anything which might give you a clue as to why all this was not giving him higher consciousness?"
"Nothing. He just lay down and died. All he said was irrelevant: 'When am I going to get some FOOD?'"

Of course, to a spiritual person it is irrelevant, talking about food -- what has that to do with spirit?
I am not that kind of a spiritual person. I am as hedonist as Charvaka, as materialist as Epicurus, as spiritualist as Buddha, Mahavira. I am the beginning of a totally new vision.
In the new commune, just as there will be a Buddha Auditorium, a Mahavira Meditation Hall, a Jesus House, a Krishna House, a Lao Tzu House, there are going also to be gardens dedicated to Epicurus -- because his school was called "The Garden." There are going to be lakes dedicated to Charvakas. In the new commune the spiritualists and the materialists all have to be respected. We are trying to create a harmony, a new synthesis.

The last question:
Question 4
BELOVED MASTER,
WHY ARE ALL THE SO-CALLED INDIAN GURUS RUSHING TO AMERICA?

Nirmal, in the very ancient scriptures there is a story. Meditate over it.
This is the story: that when destiny was being planned, the archetypal representatives of various peoples and schools were offered their choice of gifts.
The Japanese asked to be given the Zen koan so that people would always be attached to the power of perplexity. The Hindu guru asked for the mantram and the assertion that everything was derived from his philosophy.
Then an American-to-be was asked for his choice. Since he was to be one of the last peoples to emerge, most of the more attractive things had been handed out. But he was not long in asking: "Give me the dollar -- then they all will come to me, sooner or later!"

Enough for today.
The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 3
Chapter #3
Chapter title: Be a buddha!
14 August 1979 am in Buddha Hall

WANT NOTHING.
WHERE THERE IS DESIRE,

SAY NOTHING.

HAPPINESS OR SORROW --
WHATEVER BEFALLS YOU,
WALK ON
UNTOUCHED, UNATTACHED.

DO NOT ASK FOR FAMILY OR POWER OR
WEALTH,
EITHER FOR YOURSELF OR FOR ANOTHER.
CAN A WISE MAN WISH TO RISE UNJUSTLY?

FEW CROSS OVER THE RIVER.
MOST ARE STRANDED ON THIS SIDE.
ON THE RIVERBANK THEY RUN UP AND DOWN.

BUT THE WISE MAN, FOLLOWING THE WAY,
CROSSES OVER, BEYOND THE REACH OF DEATH.

HE LEAVES THE DARK WAY
FOR THE WAY OF THE LIGHT.
HE LEAVES HIS HOME, SEEKING
HAPPINESS ON THE HARD ROAD.

FREE FROM DESIRE,
FREE FROM POSSESSIONS,
FREE FROM THE DARK PLACES OF THE HEART,
FREE FROM ATTACHMENT AND APPETITE,
FOLLOWING THE SEVEN LIGHTS OF AWAKENING,
AND REJOICING GREATLY IN HIS FREEDOM,
IN THIS WORLD THE WISE MAN

BECOMES HIMSELF A LIGHT,
PURE, SHINING, FREE.

Man lives in misery -- not because he is destined to live in misery but because he does not understand his own nature, potential, possibilities of growth. This nonunderstanding of oneself creates hell. To understand oneself is to be naturally blissful, because bliss is not something that comes from the outside, it is your consciousness resting in its own nature. Remember this statement: your consciousness resting in itself is what bliss is all about.

And to be relaxed in one's own being is to be wise. The English word 'wise' does not connote the same depth, profundity and significance as the word 'buddha'. Wherever you come across the word 'wise man', remember it is a translation for 'buddha'. 'Buddha' has a totally different meaning in the East. It is not just wise, it is far more than that. Wisdom is greater than knowledge, buddhahood is the ultimate. Buddhahood means awakening. Knowledge means objective knowledge -- knowing that which is outside you. It can never be more than information, because you cannot see things from their insides, you can only watch them from the outside; you will remain an outsider. Science is that kind of knowledge. The very word 'science' means knowledge -- knowledge from the outside. That which you are knowing is an object, you are separate from it. Knowing the other is knowledge.

You can go round and round, you can watch it in every possible way. You can weigh and calculate, and dissect and analyze, and you can come to logical conclusions, which will be useful, utilitarian. They will make you more

efficient, but they will not make you wise. Wisdom is subjective knowledge; not knowing the object but knowing the knower -- that is wisdom.

Buddhahood is a transcendence of both. In buddhahood there is no object, no subject; all duality has disappeared. There is no knower, no known; there is no observer and nothing as observed -- there is only one. Whatsoever you want to call it you can call it: you can call it God, you can call it nirvana, you can call it samadhi, satori... or whatever, but only one remains. The two have melted into one.

In English there is no word to express this ultimate transcendence. In fact there are many things which cannot be expressed in Western languages, because the Eastern approach towards reality is basically, fundamentally, tacitly different. Sometimes it happens, the same thing can be looked at in the Eastern and in the Western way, and on the surface the conclusions may look similar, but they cannot be. If you go a little deeper, if you dig a little deeper, you will find great differences -- not ordinary differences but extraordinary differences.

Just the other night I was reading the famous haiku of Basho, the Zen mystic and master. It does not look like great poetry to the Western mind or to the mind which has been educated in a Western way. And now the whole world is being educated in the Western way; East and West have disappeared as far as education is concerned. Listen to it very silently, because it is not what you call great poetry but it is great insight -- which is far more important. It has tremendous poetry, but to feel that poetry you have to be very subtle. Intellectually, it cannot be understood; it can be understood only intuitively.

This is the haiku:

WHEN I LOOK CAREFULLY,
I SEE THE NAZUNIA BLOOMING
BY THE HEDGE!

Now, there seems to be nothing of great poetry in it. But let us go into it with more sympathy, because Basho is being translated into English; in his own language it has a totally different texture and flavor.

The nazunia is a very common flower -- grows by itself by the side of the road, a grass flower. It is so common that nobody ever looks at it. It is not a precious rose, it is not a rare lotus. It is easy to see the beauty of a rare lotus floating on a lake, a blue lotus -- how can you avoid seeing it? For a moment you are bound to be caught by its beauty. Or a beautiful rose dancing in the wind, in the sun... for a split second it possesses you. It is stunning. But a nazunia is a very ordinary, common flower; it needs no gardening, no gardener, it grows by itself anywhere. To see a nazunia carefully a meditator is needed, a very delicate consciousness is needed; otherwise you will bypass it. It has no apparent beauty, its beauty is deep. Its beauty is that of the very ordinary, but the very ordinary contains the extraordinary in it, because all is full of God -- even the nazunia flower. Unless you penetrate it with a sympathetic heart you will miss it.

When for the first time you read Basho you start thinking, "What is there so tremendously important to say about a nazunia blooming by the hedge?"

In Basho's poem the last syllable -- KANA in Japanese -- is translated by an exclamation point because we don't have any other way to translate it. But kana means, "I am amazed!" Now, from where is the beauty coming? Is it coming from the nazunia? -- because thousands of people may have passed by the side of the hedge and nobody may have even looked at this small flower. And Basho is possessed by its beauty, is transported into another world. What has happened? It is not really the nazunia, otherwise it would have caught everybody's eye. It is Basho's insight, his open heart, his sympathetic vision, his meditativeness. Meditation is alchemy: it can transform the base metal into gold, it can transform a nazunia flower into a lotus.
WHEN I LOOK CAREFULLY.... And the word 'carefully' means attentively, with awareness, mindfully, meditatively, with love, with caring. One can just look without caring at all, then one will miss the whole point. That word 'carefully' has to be remembered in all its meanings, but the root meaning is meditatively. And what does it mean when you see something meditatively? It means without mind, looking without the mind, no clouds of thought in the sky of your consciousness, no memories passing by, no desires... nothing at all, utter emptiness.
When in such a state of no-mind you look, even a nazunia flower is transported into another world. It becomes a lotus of the paradise, it is no longer part of the earth; the extraordinary has been found in the ordinary. And this is the way of Buddha: to find the extraordinary in the ordinary, to find all in the now, to find the whole in this -- Buddha calls it TATHATA.

Basho's haiku is a haiku of tathata: THIS nazunia, looked at lovingly, caringly through the heart, unclouded consciousness, in a state of no-mind... and one is amazed, one is in awe. A great wonder arises, How is it possible? This nazunia -- and if a nazunia is possible then everything is possible. If a nazunia can be so beautiful, Basho can be a buddha. If a nazunia can contain such poetry, then each stone can become a sermon.

WHEN I LOOK CAREFULLY, I SEE THE NAZUNIA BLOOMING BY THE HEDGE! KANA.... I am amazed. I am dumb. I cannot say anything about its beauty -- I can only hint at it.

A haiku simply hints. The poetry describes, the haiku only indicates -- and in a very indirect way.

A similar situation is found in Tennyson's famous poetry; comparing both will be of great help to you. Basho represents the intuitive, Tennyson the intellectual. Basho represents the East, Tennyson the West. Basho represents meditation, Tennyson mind. They look similar, and sometimes the poetry of Tennyson may look more poetic than Basho's because it is direct, it is obvious.

FLOWER IN THE CRANNIED WALL
I PLUCK YOU OUT OF THE CRANNIES
HOLD YOU HERE, ROOT AND ALL, IN MY HAND,
LITTLE FLOWER -- IF I COULD BUT UNDERSTAND
WHAT YOU ARE, ROOT AND ALL, AND ALL IN ALL,
I SHOULD KNOW WHAT GOD AND MAN IS.

A beautiful piece, but nothing compared to Basho. Let us see where Tennyson becomes totally different. First: FLOWER IN THE CRANNIED WALL I PLUCK YOU OUT OF THE CRANNIES....

Basho simply looks at the flower, he does not pluck it out. Basho is a passive awareness: Tennyson is active, violent. In fact, if you have really been impressed by the flower, you cannot pluck it. If the flower has reached your heart, how can you pluck it? Plucking it means destroying it, killing it -- it is murder! Nobody has thought about Tennyson's poetry as murder -- but it IS murder. How can you destroy something so beautiful? But that's how our mind functions; it is destructive. It wants to possess, and possession is possible only through destruction. Remember, whenever you possess something or somebody, you destroy something or somebody. You possess the woman? -- you destroy her, her beauty, her soul. You possess the man? -- he is no longer a human being; you have reduced him to an object, into a commodity.

Basho looks carefully, just looks, not even gazes concentratedly; just a look, soft, feminine, as if afraid to hurt the nazunia.

Tennyson plucks it out of the crannies and says: ... I HOLD YOU HERE, ROOT AND ALL, IN MY HAND, LITTLE FLOWER.... He remains separate. The observer and the observed are nowhere melting, merging, meeting. It is not a love affair. Tennyson attacks the flower, plucks it out root and all, holds it in his hand. Mind always feels good whenever it can possess, control, hold. A meditative state of consciousness is not interested in possessing, in holding, because all those are the ways of the violent mind.

And he says: LITTLE FLOWER.... The flower remains little, he remains on a high pedestal. He is a man, a great intellectual, a great poet. He remains in his ego: LITTLE FLOWER....

For Basho, there is no question of comparison. He says nothing about himself, as if he is not. There is no observer. The beauty is such that it brings a transcendence. The nazunia flower is there, blooming by the hedge -- KANA -- and Basho is simply amazed, is struck to the very roots of his being. The beauty is overpowering. Rather than possessing the flower, he is possessed by the flower, he is in a total surrender to the beauty of the flower, to the beauty of the moment, to the benediction of the herenow.

LITTLE FLOWER, says Tennyson, IF I COULD BUT UNDERSTAND.... That obsession to understand! Appreciation is not enough, love is not enough; understanding has to be there, knowledge has to be produced. Unless knowledge is arrived at Tennyson cannot be at ease. The flower has become a question mark. For Tennyson it is a question mark, for Basho it is an exclamation point. And there is the great difference: the question mark and the exclamation point.

Love is enough for Basho -- love IS understanding. What more understanding can there be? But Tennyson seems to know nothing of love. His mind is there, hankering to know... BUT IF I COULD UNDERSTAND WHAT YOU ARE, ROOT AND ALL, AND ALL IN ALL.... And mind is compulsively perfectionist. Nothing can be left unknown, nothing can be allowed to remain unknown and mysterious. ROOT AND ALL, AND ALL IN ALL... has to be understood. Unless mind knows everything it remains

afraid -- because knowledge gives power. If there is something mysterious, you are bound to remain afraid because the mysterious cannot be controlled. And who knows what is hidden in the mysterious? Maybe the enemy, maybe a danger, some insecurity? And who knows what it is going to do to you? Before it can do anything it has to be understood, it has to be known. Nothing can be left as mysterious. That is one of the problems the world is facing today.

The scientific insistence is that we will not leave anything unknown, and we cannot accept that anything can ever be unknowable. Science divides existence into the known and the unknown. The known is that which was unknown one day, now it is known; and the unknown is that which is unknown today but tomorrow or the day after tomorrow it will be known. The difference is not much between the known and the unknown; just a little more endeavor, a little more research, and all unknown will be reduced to known. Science can feel at ease only when everything is reduced to the known. But then all poetry disappears, all love disappears, all mystery disappears, all wonder disappears. The soul disappears, the God disappears, the song disappears, the celebration disappears. All is known... then nothing is valuable. All is known... then nothing is of any worth. All is known... then there is no meaning in life, no significance in life. See the paradox: first the mind says "Know everything!" -- and when you have known it the mind says, "There is no meaning in life."

You have destroyed the meaning and now you are hankering for meaning. Science is very destructive of meaning. And because it insists everything CAN be known,

it cannot allow the third category, the unknowable -- which will remain unknowable eternally. And in the unknowable is the significance of life.

All the great values of beauty, of love, of God, of prayer, all that is really significant, all that makes life worth living, is part of the third category: the unknowable. The unknowable is another name for God, another name for the mysterious and the miraculous. Without it there can be no wonder in your heart -- and without wonder, a heart is not a heart at all, and without awe you lose something tremendously precious. Then your eyes are full of dust, they lose clarity. Then the bird goes on singing, but you are unaffected, unstirred, your heart is not moved -- because you know the explanation.

The trees are green, but the greenness does not transform you into a dancer, into a singer. It does not trigger a poetry in your being, because you know the explanation: it is chlorophyll that is making the trees green... so nothing of poetry is left. When the explanation is there the poetry disappears. And all explanations are utilitarian, they are not ultimate.

If you don't trust the unknowable, then how can you say that the rose is beautiful? Where is the beauty? It is not a chemical component of the rose. The rose can be analyzed and you will not find any beauty in it. If you don't believe in the unknowable, you can do an autopsy on a man, a postmortem -- you will not find any soul. And you can go on searching for God and you will not find him anywhere, because he is everywhere. The mind is going to miss him, because the mind would like him to be an object and God is not an object.

God is a vibe. If you are attuned to the soundless sound of existence, if you are attuned to one hand clapping, if you are attuned to what the Indian mystics have called ANAHAT -- the ultimate music of existence -- if you are attuned to the mysterious, you will know that only God is, and nothing else. Then God becomes synonymous with existence.

But these things cannot be understood, these things cannot be reduced to knowledge -- and that's where Tennyson misses, misses the whole point. He says: LITTLE FLOWER -- IF I COULD BUT UNDERSTAND WHAT YOU ARE, ROOT AND ALL, AND ALL IN ALL, I SHOULD KNOW WHAT GOD AND MAN IS. But it is all 'but' and 'if'.

Basho KNOWS what God is and what man is in that exclamation mark, KANA: "I am amazed, I am surprised... NAZUNIA BLOOMING BY THE HEDGE!" Maybe it is a full-moon night, or maybe it is early morning -- I can actually see Basho standing by the side of the road, not moving, as if his breath has stopped. A nazunia... and so beautiful. All past is gone, all future has disappeared. There are no more questions in his mind but just sheer amazement.

Basho has become a child: again those innocent eyes of a child looking at a nazunia, carefully, lovingly. And in that love, in that care, is a totally different kind of understanding -- not intellectual, not analytical.

Tennyson intellectualizes the whole phenomenon, and destroys its beauty. Tennyson represents the West, Basho represents the East. Tennyson represents the male mind,

Basho represents the feminine mind. Tennyson represents the mind, Basho represents the no-mind.

Let this become your basic understanding, then we can go into the sutras of Gautama the Buddha.

WANT NOTHING.
WHERE THERE IS DESIRE,
SAY NOTHING.

A simple statement, but the import is great: WANT NOTHING... because this is how all the awakened ones have come to know -- that the misery is created by desiring. Misery is not a reality, it is a by-product of desire. Nobody wants to be miserable; everybody wants to destroy misery, but everybody goes on desiring, and by desiring one goes on creating more and more misery.
You cannot destroy misery directly, you have to cut the very roots. You have to see from where it arises, from where comes this smoke. You have to go down deep into the soil, to the roots. Buddha has called it TANHA -- desiring.
The mind is constantly desiring. The mind never stops even for a single moment desiring; all day it desires, all night it desires, in thoughts it desires, in dreams it desires. Mind is the constant process of desiring... more and more.
Mind remains eternally in discontent. Nothing satisfies it, nothing at all. You may attain to whatsoever you wanted to attain, but the moment you attain it, it is finished. The very moment of attainment... and your mind is no longer interested in it. Watch and see the tricky mind. For years it

may have been thinking to purchase a certain house, a beautiful house; for years it may have worked hard. Now the house is yours -- and suddenly nothing is left in your hand. All those dreams, all those fantasies that you had about this house have flown away, and within hours, or at the most within days, you will be desiring another house again. The same trap, the same track, and you go round and round in circles.

You wanted to have this woman, now you have her; you wanted to have this man, now he is yours -- and what have you gained? All those fantasies have flown away. Instead you are frustrated! The mind only desires. It knows only how to desire; hence it cannot ever allow any contentment. Contentment is the death of the mind, desire is its life. Buddha says: WANT NOTHING. That means: be contented. That means: whatsoever is, is more than you need; whatsoever is, is already so profound, so beautiful... the nazunia flower by the hedge! You are living in such a tremendously beautiful world, with all the stars and the planets and the sun and the moon... with the flowers and the mountains and the rivers and the rocks and the animals, the birds and the people. This is the most perfect world possible, it cannot be improved upon. Enjoy its beauty. Relish the celebration that goes on around you. It is a continuous celebration.

The stars go on dancing, the trees go on swaying -- ecstatically. The birds go on singing. The peacocks will dance and the cuckoo will call... and all this goes on and you remain miserable -- as if you are determined to be miserable. You have decided, you have staked all that you have, to remain miserable; otherwise there is no reason to

be miserable. The THISness of existence is so beautiful, the NOWness of existence is so incredibly beautiful, that all that you need is just to relax, rest, be... let the separation between you and the whole disappear.
The separation is caused by desiring. Desiring means complaint. Desiring means all is not as it should be. Desiring means that you are thinking you are wiser than God. Desiring means you could have made a better world. Desiring is stupid. Nondesire is wisdom. Nondesire means a state of contentment, each moment living totally and contentedly.
WANT NOTHING. WHERE THERE IS DESIRE, SAY NOTHING. Buddha is not saying that just by not wanting anything desire is going to stop immediately. You have become habituated to it, it is an ancient habit -- for lives and lives you have desired. It has become autonomous. Even without you it goes on by itself, it has its own momentum. So just by understanding that desire creates misery, that there is no need for desire, that one can simply be and enjoy the sun and the wind and the rain, desire is not going to stop so easily.
Hence Buddha says: WHERE THERE IS DESIRE, SAY NOTHING. If desire arises in you just watch it, don't say anything. Don't express it, don't repress it. Don't condemn it, don't fight with it. Don't evaluate it, don't judge it. Just watch -- carefully. The nazunia by the hedge... just look at it, with no prejudice for or against.
If listening to buddhas you become anti-desire, then you have not understood them, because anti-desire is again desire. If you start desiring a state of no-desire, that is getting into the same rut from the back door. Nondesiring

cannot be desired; that will be a contradiction in terms. All that can be done is to WATCH desire, carefully. And in that very watching, slowly slowly, desire dies on its own accord.

This is the existential experience of all those who have become awakened. I am a witness to it -- I say to you not because Buddha says so: I say to you because this is my own experience too. Watching desire, slowly slowly desire dies on its own accord. You don't kill it, you don't fight with it, you don't condemn it, because if you condemn it slips, dives deep into your unconscious; then it starts residing there, and it controls you from there.

If you repress desire, you will have to constantly repress and you will have to be constantly on guard. In the day maybe you can succeed in repressing it, but in dreams it will surface again. That's why psychoanalysis has to study your dreams. It can't believe you when you are awake, it can't trust you when you are awake -- it has to look into your dreams. Why? -- because your dreams will say what you have been repressing. And whatsoever is repressed becomes very powerful, because it enters in your unconscious sources and from there it goes on pulling your strings. And when the enemy cannot be seen it is more powerful -- naturally, obviously.

Buddha is not saying fight desire, Buddha is not saying be against desire. He is simply stating a fact: that desire is stupidity, that desire creates misery, that desire will never allow you to be blissful. So watch desire. Say nothing about it! Simple, very simple watching. Don't sit like a judge.

HAPPINESS OR SORROW --

WHATEVER BEFALLS YOU,
WALK ON
UNTOUCHED, UNATTACHED.

And happiness WILL come and sorrow WILL come, because these are the seeds that you have sown down the ages, and whatsoever you have sown you will have to reap. So don't be disturbed. If happiness comes, don't become too much excited; if sorrow comes, don't become too much depressed. Take things easily.

Happiness and sorrow are separate from you; remain unidentified. That's what he means: WALK ON UNTOUCHED, UNATTACHED... as if they are not happening to you but happening to somebody else. Just try this small device, it is a valuable recipe: as if they are not happening to you but to somebody else, maybe to a character in a novel or in a movie, and you are just an onlooker. Yes, unhappiness is there, happiness is there, but it is THERE! -- and you are here.

Don't become identified, don't say, "I am unhappy," simply say, "I am the watcher. Unhappiness is there, happiness is there -- I am simply the watcher."

It will be of great importance if some day in the future we start changing the patterns of our languages, because our languages are very deeply rooted in ignorance. When you feel hungry, you immediately say, "I am hungry." That creates an identification and gives you a feeling as if YOU are hungry. You are not. Language should be such that it does not give you this wrong notion that "I am hungry." What is really the case is: you are watching that the body is hungry; you are a watcher that the stomach is empty, that it

desires food -- but this is not you. You are the watcher. You are always the watcher! You are never the doer. You always go on standing as a watcher far away.
Get more and more rooted into watching -- that's what Buddha calls VIPASSANA, insight. Just see with inner eyes whatsoever happens, and remain untouched, unattached.

A tough, old-time Indian fighter came straggling back into camp with seven Shoshone arrows piercing his chest and legs.
A doctor examined him and remarked, "Amazing stamina. Don't they hurt?"
The oldtimer grunted, "Only when I laugh."

In fact, they should not hurt even then -- and they don't hurt to a buddha. Not that if you pierce the buddha with an arrow there is no hurt; the hurt is there. He may feel it even more than you, because a buddha's sensitivity is at the optimum -- you are insensitive, dull, half dead. The scientists say that you only allow two percent of information to reach you; ninety-eight percent is prevented outside. Your senses don't allow it in. Only two percent of the world reaches to you; ninety-eight percent is excluded. To the buddha, a hundred percent of the world is available, so when an arrow pierces a buddha it hurts a hundred percent; to you it hurts only two percent. But there is a great difference: a buddha is a watcher. It hurts, but it does not hurt HIM. He watches as if it is happening to somebody else. He feels compassion for the body -- he feels

compassion, his compassion for his body -- but he knows that he is not the body.
So, in a way, it hurts him more than it hurts to you, in another way it hurts not at all. He remains aloof, unconcerned. It is a very paradoxical state. He CARES for the body, but yet remains unconcerned -- unconcerned about the consequences. He takes every possible care because he respects the body. It is such a beautiful servant, it is such a good house to live in -- he takes care but he remains aloof.
Even when the body is dying a buddha goes on watching that the body is dying. His watchfulness remains to the very last. The body dies and the buddha goes on watching that the body has died. If one can watch to such an extent, one goes beyond death.

DO NOT ASK FOR FAMILY OR POWER OR WEALTH,
EITHER FOR YOURSELF OR FOR ANOTHER.
CAN A WISE MAN WISH TO RISE UNJUSTLY?

The things of the world do not matter -- the wealth, the power, the prestige, they don't matter. The buddha cannot ask for them for himself or for another. That distinction has to be remembered. Ordinarily it is thought that a buddha will not ask for himself, but he can ask for others. No, he will not ask for others either. That's where Christianity and Buddhism have diametrically opposite visions.

There is a story:

A woman came to Buddha crying, weeping, carrying the dead body of her only son. People had told her that if she goes to the Buddha, he is such a compassionate man, he may do some miracle. Buddha asked the woman, "You do one thing: you go into town -- bring some mustard seeds. One condition has to be fulfilled: they should be brought from a house where nobody has ever died."

The woman was very happy; this was not a problem because their whole village was growing mustard seeds. So every house was full of mustard seeds. She rushed from one house to another, but in her excitement that her son is going to be revived again she forgot completely that the condition is impossible, it cannot be fulfilled.

By the evening she had knocked on all the doors, and everybody said, "We can give you as many mustard seeds as you want, but they will not help because we cannot fulfill the condition: somebody has died in our family -- not only one but many persons really. My father died, my father's father died... and thousands of others before." Somebody's wife has died, somebody's mother, somebody's brother, sister, somebody's son.... She could not find a single family where nobody had ever died.

By the evening when she came she was a totally different woman -- she came laughing. In the morning she had come crying and weeping; she was almost mad because the only son had died. Buddha asked her, "Why are you smiling?" She said, "Now I know -- you tricked me, you befooled me, but I could not see the point at that time. Everybody has to die, so it is not a question now that my son has died. He had to die one day or other. And it is good, in a way, that he has died before me: if I had died before him, he would have

suffered. It is better for me to suffer than for him to suffer. So it is good, perfectly good.
"Now I have come for initiation. Initiate me into sannyas, because I would like to know: is there anything beyond death or not? Is death all or does something survive? I am no longer interested in the son."
Buddha said, "That was the purpose of sending you, so that you can be awakened."

Now the same story you can visualize about Jesus Christ. What Christians say... because nobody knows what kind of man Jesus really was except what the Christians say about him, and they are saying wrong things about him. If he was really a buddha -- and he was -- then he would not have been interested in reviving people from death. He would not revive Lazarus from death -- what is the point? Lazarus is no longer alive. He must have died a few years later; even if he was revived he would have died a few years later. Death is going to happen; you can at the most postpone it.
A buddha is not interested in postponing! A buddha's whole effort is to make you alert, aware, that death is coming. He is not to protect you from death, he has to take you beyond death. And Jesus is a buddha. MY understanding of Jesus is totally different from the Christian interpretation. To me, this is a parable: Lazarus coming back to life simply means Lazarus reborn spiritually.
Buddha has said many times -- Jesus has said also -- Unless you are born again, you will not enter into my Kingdom of God. But "born again" does not mean that you have to be resurrected. "Born again" means a spiritual process of

awakening. Jesus must have awakened Lazarus from his sleep, from his metaphysical death.

When you come to me you are metaphysically dead -- you are Lazarus. The story says Jesus called Lazarus out of his tomb: "Lazarus, come out!" That's what every buddha has been doing down the ages: calling Lazaruses to come out of their graves. When I initiate you into sannyas, what am I doing? -- calling, "Lazarus, come out of your grave! Be reborn!"

Sannyas is a process of rebirth. Lazarus must have been initiated into the deeper mysteries of life which go beyond death. But to make this beautiful metaphor into an historical event is to destroy the whole poetry of it, the whole significance of it.

A buddha will not ask -- for himself or for his family or for anybody else -- for power, prestige, possessions, because they are utterly useless.

CAN A WISE MAN WISH TO RISE UNJUSTLY? That's impossible. Remember, the "wise man" is a translation of 'buddha'. An awakened man cannot do anything unjust -- it is impossible, it can't happen in the nature of things. The awakened one can do only the right, the just. And to ask for power, prestige, money, possessions, fame, is stupid. A wise man cannot ask for them, either for himself or for others.

And the buddha knows whatsoever is just is already happening; there is no need to ask for it, there is no need to desire it. Existence is very just and very fair. AES DHAMMO SANANTANO -- this is the inexhaustible, eternal law, that existence is very fair and very just. You simply remain natural and existence will go on bestowing a

thousand and one blessings on you without your asking for them.
The famous statement of Jesus is: Ask and it shall be given. If you ask Buddha he will say: Ask not and it shall be given. Jesus says: Knock and the doors shall be opened unto you. If you ask Buddha he will say: Knock not, because the doors are already open. Just look... the nazunia flower, and Basho looking at it carefully.

FEW CROSS OVER THE RIVER.
MOST ARE STRANDED ON THIS SIDE.
ON THE RIVERBANK THEY RUN UP AND DOWN.

Buddha says again and again that people are in such a hurry, not knowing where they are going, but in a great hurry they are going somewhere. And they simply go up and down, on THIS bank, hoping that by running and rushing and remaining occupied they will reach to the other shore.

I have heard that the pope in the Vatican received a phone call, a long-distance phone call, from New York. The bishop from New York phoned in a very nervous, excited, feverish state: "Sir, immediate instructions are needed: one man who looks like Jesus has entered into the church, and he says, 'I am Jesus Christ.' Now what am I supposed to do?"
The pope pondered over it for a moment and then said, "Look occupied."

What else can you do? If Jesus has come, at least look occupied, do something! Let him see that his people are very busy -- be busy. Even if there is no business, don't be worried.

That's what people are doing -- busy without business, looking very occupied. And all that they are doing is just rushing up and down the same bank. This way you cannot reach the other shore.

FEW CROSS THE RIVER. MOST ARE STRANDED ON THIS SIDE. What does he mean by "this side"? This side means death, time, this momentary existence. That side means deathlessness, timelessness, eternity, God, nirvana. One needs guts to cross the stream, because the other shore is not visible. In fact, only this shore is visible, the other shore is invisible. This shore is gross, the other shore is subtle. This shore is material, the other shore is spiritual -- you cannot see it, it cannot be shown to others.

Even those who have reached to the other shore can only call you, invite you, but they cannot give any proofs. I cannot give you any proof of God; Buddha has not given, Jesus has not given -- nobody who knows can give any proof of God. God cannot be proved. You can only be persuaded to come to the other shore and see on your own. Buddha says again and again: IHI PASSIKO! Come and see!

BUT THE WISE MAN, FOLLOWING THE WAY, CROSSES OVER, BEYOND THE REACH OF DEATH.

The only effort of any intelligent person in this world should be, first and foremost, how to know something

which cannot be destroyed by death -- because death can happen any moment, next moment, tomorrow. Because death can happen any moment, the intelligent person's first effort will be to know something that cannot be destroyed by death, and to be centered into that something which is deathless, to be rooted in that, so you are not destroyed.
BUT THE WISE MAN, FOLLOWING THE WAY, CROSSES OVER, BEYOND THE REACH OF DEATH.
Death is the most important phenomenon -- far more important than birth, because the birth has already happened; now you cannot do anything about it. But death has to happen -- something can be done about it, some preparation. You can be ready to receive it, you can be consciously in a state of welcome for it.
You missed the opportunity of birth, don't miss the opportunity of death. And if you can receive death in a meditative state, you may be able to receive your next birth -- which will be followed by death -- consciously. If you can die consciously, you will be born consciously. Your next life will have a totally different flavor. And a person can be born only once after he has died consciously -- only one more life.
The Christians, the Jews, the Mohammedans, believe in only one life. My interpretation is that when you have died once consciously -- and are reborn consciously -- THAT life is real life; only that is worth counting. All other lives before it were not worth counting. That's why these three traditions have not counted them. It is not that they don't know about them -- Jesus is perfectly aware of past lives -- but they are not worth counting. You were asleep, you were

dreaming, you were unconscious. It was not LIFE; you were somehow dragging yourself in sleep.
Buddha used to tell his disciples: Count your life only after you have taken sannyas.

Once it happened:
A great king, Bimbisara, had come to see Buddha. He was sitting at Buddha's side talking to him and an old man came, bowed down, touched Buddha's feet, an old sannyasin. And as it was the habit of Buddha to ask, he asked the old man, "How old are you?" And the old man said, "Just four years old, sir."
Bimbisara could not believe his eyes, could not believe his ears: "This old man who looks almost eighty, if not more, is saying he is four years old?" He said, "Pardon me, sir, can you repeat it again, how old you are?"
The old man again said, "Four years old."
Buddha laughed and said, "You don't know the way we count life: it is four years ago that he became a sannyasin, that he was initiated into the eternal, that he was taken into the timeless. It is only four years ago that he crossed from this shore and reached to the other shore. He has lived for eighty years, but those years are not worth counting; it was a sheer wastage."

Nobody has interpreted Christianity, Judaism, Islam, in the way I am interpreting. They all believe in one life, and Christians, Mohammedans and Jews think there is only one life. That is not the case; you have lived many times, but they are not worth counting. Only one life will be worth

counting: when you will be born consciously -- but you can be born consciously only if you die consciously.
So the first and the most important thing in life is to prepare for death. And what is the way to prepare for death? -- what Buddha calls "following the way." Meditate over this small anecdote.

Nan Yin, a great Zen master, was visited by Tenno, who, having passed his apprenticeship, had become a teacher. The day happened to be rainy, so Tenno wore wooden clogs and carried an umbrella.
After greeting him, Nan Yin remarked, "I suppose you left your wooden clogs in the vestibule. I want to know if your umbrella is on the left or on the right side of the clogs."
Tenno, confused, had no instant answer. He realized that he was unable to carry his Zen every minute. He became Nan Yin's disciple and he studied six more years to accomplish his every minute Zen.

This is the way. One has to be alert and aware of each and everything that one is doing. Now, Tenno has not done something very serious -- he had simply forgotten where the umbrella is, at the right side of the clogs or at the left side. You will think Nan Yin is too hard; it is not so. It is out of compassion that he asked this question.
Nan Yin's own master, when he had come for the first time to his master, had asked a similar question.
Nan Yin had traveled almost two hundred miles into the mountains to reach the master, and do you know what the master asked, the first question? Not very philosophical, not very metaphysical.... The moment Nan Yin bowed

down, the master asked, "What is the price of rice in your town?" The price of rice...!
But Nan Yin instantly said, "I am no longer there, I am here. I never look back, and I destroy all the bridges that I have crossed. So forget all about the rice and its price!"
The master was tremendously happy. He hugged Nan Yin, he blessed him, and he said, "If you had told me the price of rice in your town, I would have thrown you out of the monastery. I would not have allowed you here, because we are not interested in rice merchants."

Each master has his own way of seeing into disciples' inner beings. Now this was a simple question: Nan Yin said, "Where is your umbrella -- on the left or on the right side of the clogs?" Now, nobody can think of Immanuel Kant asking such a question to any of his disciples; nobody can imagine Hegel or Heidegger or Sartre asking such a question to one of his students -- impossible!
Only a man like Nan Yin, a man who is a buddha, can ask such a question -- so ordinary, yet with such extraordinary insight. He is saying, "When you were putting your umbrella, were you aware? -- or did you just do it mechanically?"

Once a man, another man, a professor in a university, came to see Nan Yin. He threw his shoes -- must have been angry or something -- slammed the door, came in. At least thirty other disciples were sitting there. Nan Yin looked at the professor; he was a very famous professor... must have expected that Nan Yin will stand up and welcome him. Instead, Nan Yin shouted at the professor and told him to

go back and ask forgiveness. "You have misbehaved with the door, you have misbehaved with the shoes! Unless they forgive you, unless I see that you have been forgiven, I will not allow you in -- you get out!"
Shocked, shattered -- but the professor could see the point. Still he tried; he said, "But what is the point of asking forgiveness from the shoes or the door? They are dead anyway, how can they forgive?"
Nan Yin said, "If you can be angry at them and they are dead, if to be angry is okay, then you should be ready to ask forgiveness too -- apologize!"
The professor went; for the first time in his life he bowed down to his shoes. And he remembers in his memoirs that "That moment was one of the most precious in my life, when I bowed down to my shoes. Such silence descended on me! For the first time I felt free of the ego, utterly open. The master has done the trick. When I came back, he received me with such joy. He said, 'Now you are ready to sit by my side, now you are ready to listen to me. Now you are finished; otherwise the thing was incomplete. And never leave anything incomplete, otherwise it goes on hanging around you. You will have a hang-up. If you misbehave with the door and you don't complete the whole process, you will remain angry somewhere.'"

Moment-to-moment awareness is the way of a buddha. If you can remain moment to moment aware, you will become perfectly clear that there is something in you which is beyond death, which cannot be burned, cannot be destroyed, which is indestructible. And to know that rock

of indestructibility within you is the beginning of a new life.

HE LEAVES THE DARK WAY
FOR THE WAY OF THE LIGHT.

The way of living unconsciously is called by Buddha the dark way. And the way of living consciously, attentively, moment to moment, bringing your consciousness to each act, each small act, each detail, is the way of light.

HE LEAVES HIS HOME, SEEKING
HAPPINESS ON THE HARD ROAD.

By 'home' is meant clinging to security, safety, the familiar, the known. By 'leaving the home' he does not mean leaving your family, your children, your wife, your husband -- that has been, down the ages, how the Buddhists have interpreted this line. That's not my interpretation. That is not real home. The real home is something inside your mind: the calculativeness, the intellect, the logic, the armor that you create around yourself against the whole world -- that is 'the home'. 'Leaving the home' -- that means leaving all security, going into the insecure, dropping the known, moving into the unknown, forgetting the comforts of the shore and going into the troubled waters, into the uncharted sea. That is the hard way -- but the other shore can be attained only through the hard way.
Those who are lazy, those who are always in search of some shortcut, those who want God cheap, those who are not ready to pay anything in return for the ultimate truth,

they are befooling themselves and wasting their time. We have to pay with our life, we have to pay with all that we have, we have to surrender totally, we have to become committed intensely and wholly. That is the hard way, and only through the hard way one can cross the stream of existence and can reach to the other shore, the deathless, the eternal.

FREE FROM DESIRE,
FREE FROM POSSESSIONS,
FREE FROM THE DARK PLACES OF THE HEART....

If you are ready to drop all armor of security and comfort, if you are ready to drop all calculative mind, clever mind, cunning mind, if you are ready to drop the mind itself, all dark parts of your heart will disappear. Your heart will become full of light, desire will disappear -- desire means future. And possessions will not be anymore your clingings -- possessions means the past.
When there are no more desires, no more clinging to the possessions, you are free from past and future. To be free from past and future is to be free in the present. That brings truth, God, freedom. That, only that, brings wisdom, buddhahood, awakening.

FREE FROM ATTACHMENT AND APPETITE,
FOLLOWING THE SEVEN LIGHTS OF AWAKENING,
AND REJOICING GREATLY IN HIS FREEDOM,
IN THIS WORLD THE WISE MAN
BECOMES HIMSELF A LIGHT,
PURE, SHINING, FREE.

And as you move more and more into the present, inside you will come across seven lights -- what Hindu yoga calls seven CHAKRAS, Buddhist yoga calls seven lights, seven lamps. As you become more and more detached from the body, detached from possessions, uninterested in desires, your energy starts moving upwards. The same energy that is contained at the lowest center, at the sex center.... Now, only at the sex center sometimes do you have the experience of light, which you call orgasm, but very rarely even there. Only very rarely, very few people have known that making love, a moment comes when lovers become full of light. Then the orgasmic experience is not only physical, it has something spiritual in it.

Tantra tries to create that space and context in which the sexual centers start radiating light. And when two lovers are not only exploiting each other's body but are really worshipping each other's body, when the other is a god or a goddess and lovemaking is like prayer and meditation -- with great reverence one goes into lovemaking -- it happens that both the centers meet, the male and the female energies, and great light starts flowing inside your being. The same can happen on six other, higher points; the higher the point, the greater and brighter the light. The seventh point is SAHASRAR, the one-thousand-petaled lotus. There the light is so much that Kabir says it is "as if one thousand suns have suddenly arisen" -- not one, but one thousand suns.

FREE FROM ATTACHMENT AND APPETITE, FOLLOWING THE SEVEN LIGHTS OF AWAKENING, AND REJOICING GREATLY IN HIS FREEDOM, IN

THIS WORLD THE WISE MAN BECOMES HIMSELF A LIGHT, PURE, SHINING, FREE.
He himself becomes a light to himself and he becomes a light unto others too. Be a buddha! Life is meaningless without it. Be a buddha! Only then you are fulfilled. Be a buddha! Then you have bloomed. Be a buddha and you will know God resides in you.
Enough for today.
The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 3
Chapter #4
Chapter title: I am a drunkard
15 August 1979 am in Buddha Hall

The first question:
Question 1
BELOVED MASTER,
IF THE JEALOUSIES, THE POSSESSIVENESS, THE ATTACHMENT, THE NEEDS AND EXPECTATIONS AND DESIRES AND ILLUSIONS DROP, WILL ANYTHING BE LEFT OF MY LOVE? HAS ALL MY POETRY AND PASSION BEEN A LIE? HAVE MY LOVE PAINS HAD MORE TO DO WITH PAIN THAN WITH LOVE? WILL I EVER LEARN TO LOVE? OR IS IT NOT A LEARNING BUT A GIFT, AN OUTGROWTH OF SOMETHING ELSE? A GRACE DESCENDING?

Satya, love cannot be learned, it cannot be cultivated. The cultivated love will not be love at all. It will not be a real rose, it will be a plastic flower. When you learn something, it means something comes from the outside; it is not an

inner growth. And love has to be your inner growth if it is to be authentic and real.

Love is not a learning but a growth. All that is needed on your part is not how to learn the ways of love but how to unlearn the ways of unlove. The hindrances have to be removed, the obstacles have to be destroyed -- then love is your natural, spontaneous being. Once the obstacles are removed, the rocks thrown away, the flow starts. It is already there -- hidden behind many rocks, but the spring IS already there. It is your very being.

It is a gift, but not something that is going to happen in the future: it is a gift that has already happened with your birth. To be is to be love. To be able to breathe is enough to be able to love. Love is like breathing. What breathing is to the physical body, love is to the spiritual being. Without breathing the body dies; without love the soul dies.

So the first thing to be remembered: it is not something that you can learn. And if you learn you will miss the whole point; you will learn something else in the name of love. It will be pseudo, false. And the false coin can appear as the real coin; and if you don't know the real, the false can go on deceiving you. Only by knowing the real, will you be able to see the distinction between the false and the real.

And these are the obstacles: jealousies, possessiveness, attachment, expectations, desires.... And Satya, your fear is right that, "If all these disappear, will anything be left of my love?"

Nothing will be left of your love. Love will be left... but love has nothing to do with "I" or "you." In fact, when all possessiveness, all jealousies, all expectations disappear,

love does not disappear -- you disappear, the ego disappears. These are the shadows of the ego.
It is not love that is jealous. Watch, look, observe again. When you feel jealous, it is not LOVE that feels jealous; love has never known anything of jealousy. Just as the sun has never known anything of darkness, love has never known anything of jealousy.
It is the ego that feels hurt, it is the ego that feels competitive, in a constant struggle. It is the ego which is ambitious and wants to be higher than others, wants to be somebody special. It is the ego which starts feeling jealous, possessive -- because the ego can exist only with possessions. The more you possess, the more the ego is strengthened; without possessions the ego cannot exist. It leans on possessions, it depends on possessions. So if you have more money, more power, more prestige, a beautiful woman, a beautiful man, beautiful children, the ego feels immensely nourished. When possessions disappear, when you don't possess anything at all, you will not find the ego inside. There will be nobody who can say "I."
And if you think THIS is your love, then certainly your love will also disappear. Your love is not really love. It is jealousy, possessiveness, hatred, anger, violence; it is a thousand and one things -- except love. It masquerades as love. Because all these things are so ugly, they cannot exist without a mask.

An ancient parable:
The world was created, and God was sending every day new things to the world. One day he sends Beauty and Ugliness to the world. It is a long journey from paradise to

the earth. The moment they arrive it is early morning, the sun is just rising. They land near a lake and both decide to have a bath because their whole bodies, their clothes, are so full of dust. Not knowing the ways of the world -- they are so new -- they take their clothes off; utterly naked, they jump into the cool water of the lake. The sun is rising, people start coming.

Ugliness plays a trick: when Beauty goes swimming far away into the lake, Ugliness comes on the bank, puts on the garments of Beauty, and escapes. By the time Beauty becomes aware that "People are arriving and I am naked," she looks around... her clothes are gone. Ugliness is gone and she is standing naked in the sun, and the crowd is coming closer. Finding no other way, she puts on the clothes of Ugliness and goes in search of Ugliness so that the clothes can be changed.

The story says she is still trying to find... but Ugliness is cunning and goes on escaping. Ugliness is still in the clothes of Beauty, masked as Beauty, and Beauty is moving in the clothes of Ugliness.

It is a tremendously beautiful parable.

All these things are so ugly that you cannot tolerate to be with them even for a single moment if you see their reality. So they don't allow you to see the reality. Jealousy pretends to be love, possessiveness creates a mask of love... and then you are at ease.

You are not befooling anybody else, Satya, but yourself.

Mulla Nasruddin was passing by the side of a cemetery. He saw a grave; on the grave there was a stone and on the stone was written: "I am not dead -- I am only fast asleep." Mulla had a belly laugh. He said, "You are befooling nobody but yourself."

Satya, these things are not love. So what you know as love, what you have known up to now as love, will disappear. It has nothing of poetry in it. Yes, passion is there, but passion is a feverish state, passion is an unconscious state. Passion is not poetry. The poetry is known only by the buddhas -- the poetry of life, the poetry of existence. Excitement, fever, are not ecstasies. They look alike, that is the problem. In life many things look alike and the distinctions are very delicate and fine and subtle. Excitement can look like ecstasy -- it is not, because ecstasy is basically cool. Passion is hot; love is cool, not cold but cool. Hatred is cold; passion, lust, is hot. Love is exactly in the middle. It is cool -- neither cold nor hot. It is a state of tremendous tranquility, calmness, serenity, silence. And out of that silence is poetry, out of that silence is song, out of that silence arises a dance of your being. What you call poetry and passion are nothing but lies -- with beautiful facades. Out of your hundred poets, ninety-nine are not really poets but only in a state of turmoil, emotion, passion, heat, lust, sexuality, sensuality. Only one out of your hundred poets is a real poet.
And the real poet may never compose any poetry, because his whole being is poetry. The way he walks, the way he sits, the way he eats, the way he sleeps -- it is all poetry. He

exists as poetry. He may create poetry, he may not create poetry, that is irrelevant.

But what you call poetry is nothing but the expression of your fever, of your heated state of consciousness. It is a state of insanity. Passion is insane, blind, unconscious, and it is a lie. It is a lie because it gives you the feeling as if it is love.

Love is possible only when meditation has happened. If you don't know how to be centered in your being, if you don't know how to rest and relax in your being, if you don't know how to be utterly alone and blissful, you will never know what love is.

Love appears as relationship but begins in deep solitude. Love expresses as relating, but the source of love is not in relating: the source of love is in meditating. When you are absolutely happy in your aloneness, when you don't need the other at all, when the other is not a need, then you are capable of love. If the other is your need you can only exploit, manipulate, dominate, but you cannot love.

Because you depend on the other, possessiveness arises -- out of fear. "Who knows? -- the other is with me today; tomorrow he may not be with me. Who knows about the next moment?" Your woman may have left you, your children may become grown up and will be gone, your husband can desert you. Who knows about the next moment? Out of that fear of the future you become very possessive. You create a bondage around the person you think you love.

But love cannot create a prison -- and if love creates a prison, then nothing is left for hatred to do. Love brings freedom, love gives freedom. It is nonpossessiveness. But

that is possible only if you have known a totally different quality of love: not of need but of sharing.
Love is sharing of overflowing joy. You are too full of joy; you cannot contain it, you have to share it. Then there is poetry and then there is something tremendously beautiful which is not of this world, which is something that comes from the beyond. This love cannot be learned, but obstacles can be removed.
Many times I say learn the art of love, but what I really mean is: learn the art of removing all that hinders love. It is a negative process. It is like digging a well: you go on removing many layers of earth, stones, rocks, and then suddenly there is water. The water was always there; it was an undercurrent. Now you have removed all the barriers, the water is available. So is love: love is the undercurrent of your being. It is already flowing, but there are many rocks, many layers of earth to be removed.
That's what I mean when I say: learn the art of love. It is really not learning love but UNlearning the ways of unlove.
The moment you are centered in your being, rooted in your being, you become full of grace, as if God has penetrated you. You are empty and God starts descending in you. He can descend only when you are not: your absence becomes his presence.
God is not a person but a presence. And two swords cannot exist in one sheath: either you can exist, or God. You have to disappear, evaporate. Your absence is what sannyas is all about.
The process of sannyas is the process of becoming absent more and more, so that one day there is only empty space left inside and nothing else. In that emptiness, whenever it

is total, instantly God is felt. God is felt as a presence -- and God is another name for love. And to know God is to know poetry, to know God is to know celebration, to know God is to know bliss -- SAT-CHIT-ANAND.

That's how the mystics in the East have defined God: SAT means truth, CHIT means consciousness, ANAND means bliss. If you are utterly empty, you will come to know these three things. For the first time you will have some taste of truth, some experience of consciousness, some flavor of bliss.

But, Satya, right now, although it will hurt you because it will be very destructive... what I am saying is going to shock you. You have believed in your poetry, in your passion, you have believed in your illusions and dreams and you have felt great because of all this. And I am saying: all this is simply nonsense. Although the majority of humanity lives in such illusions, all these are mirages. If you really want to encounter life you will have to be ready for many shocks, you will have to be ready to be shattered into pieces.

The function of the master is to destroy you, because only when you are destroyed the context is created in which God can be felt. Your death is the beginning of a divine existence.

Die! Die to the ego, die to your past, and you will be resurrected. That resurrection will make you go beyond death, beyond time, beyond misery, beyond the world -- what Buddha calls "beyond this shore."

The second question:

Question 2

BELOVED MASTER,
WHY DOES JESUS TELL HIS DISCIPLES: BE AS CUNNING AS THE SERPENTS AND AS INNOCENT AS THE DOVES?

Anand Jayesh, the serpent is the symbol of wisdom. In all the ancient cultures of the world -- Hebrew, Hindu, Chinese -- the serpent is the only symbol which is common.
By 'cunning' Jesus does not really mean cunning as you understand it. In the ancient Aramaic, the language that Jesus spoke, there is only one word for both 'wisdom' and 'cunning', hence the wrong translation.
But why have Christians chosen to translate it as 'cunning' and not as 'wisdom'? -- because of the biblical story that it is the serpent who seduced, corrupted the mind of Eve, persuaded her to go against God's commandment and to eat the fruit of the tree of knowledge. Because of this biblical story the serpent has become the original source of sin. It is the serpent who persuaded Eve, then Eve persuaded Adam and humanity fell from the grace of God. Adam and Eve were turned out of the Garden of Eden; hence the serpent became a condemned phenomenon.
But in reality the parable has a totally different meaning. Christians will not concede to that meaning. What meaning do I give to that immensely significant parable? It has many meanings. That is the beauty of ancient parables: they have many-dimensional richness. They are not one-dimensional, they are multidimensional. They can be interpreted in a thousand and one ways; that is their richness. They have many facets; they are like a diamond -- and the more facets a diamond has, the more valuable it is.

When the kohinoor was found for the first time it was a very big stone, the biggest diamond the world has ever known. Now it is only one third of its original weight, because down the ages the jewelers have been polishing, cutting, and polishing and cutting; they have been giving new facets to the diamond. Now it is one third of its weight but millions of times more valuable. So are ancient parables: they are kohinoors. But the problem with the so-called religions is that they become addicted to one meaning. Then they become afraid of other meanings, other possibilities.

The serpent is not cunning, the serpent is wise in the parable. It is because of his wisdom that humanity was born. If there had been no serpent, you would not have been here -- not even Jesus would have been, nor Buddha. The world would have lacked humanity. It is the serpent and his wisdom that creates this great journey of humanity -- and it has been of immense value; otherwise there would have been trees and animals and birds, but no Lao Tzu, no Zarathustra, no Krishna, no Buddha, no Mohammed, no Christ, no Kabir, no Nanak. Yes, trees would have been there and birds and animals, but the existence would have missed something of immense importance; it would have missed humanity, it would have missed human consciousness, which is the ultimate growth point up to now. It is the serpent and his wisdom! The serpent was far more wise than Eve and Adam, because he taught them rebellion.

Wisdom is always rebellious. In fact, if you ask me, God was giving an opportunity to Adam and Eve to rebel; hence the commandment not to eat from the tree of knowledge.

This is a simple psychological fact. The garden was so big that Adam and Eve, left to themselves, would never have discovered the tree of knowledge; it was only one tree and there were millions and millions of trees.

But God pointed out the tree and said, "Don't eat the fruit of THIS tree." By saying this he is provoking. In fact, the first seducer is God; the serpent is the second seducer. The serpent is simply an agent of God, a messenger of God. God must have waited for long after he prohibited.... Now Adam and Eve are bound to eat the fruit of knowledge.

You can try it. Prohibit the children, "Don't eat ice cream. Don't go near the fridge!" -- and then they are bound to go. They might not have gone if you had not told them NOT to go. Prohibition becomes invitation. You are challenging them; you are challenging them to assert themselves.

God has challenged Adam and Eve, and then he must have waited for long. The challenge didn't work; Adam and Eve must have been very obedient people. They were the first people on the earth; hence they may not have tasted of rebellion and the joys of rebellion and the growth that rebellion brings. The agony and the ecstasy of rebellion were unknown to them. Hence the serpent was used as a messenger; in the whole animal kingdom, the serpent was chosen to be the messenger of God. The serpent is a symbol of wisdom -- and it is because of the serpent that you are here. The serpent is really the father -- the father of humanity.

The original statement of Jesus means: Be as wise as the serpents and as innocent as the doves. But the word 'cunning' is also beautiful. Gurdjieff used to say that unless you are cunning you cannot escape from the bondage of the

world -- because the bondage is so complex that you have to be very sly. Gurdjieff used to say that if you want to learn from a master you have to be very sly, cunning. That's how he learned. He moved for at least twenty years from one master to another master -- but masters take their own time, they are not in a hurry. They don't live in time, they live in the eternal, so there is no hurry. But Gurdjieff was in a hurry, so rather than waiting until whenever the master feels the time is right and he will impart his knowledge, he will impart his wisdom, he started stealing wisdom from the masters.

Gurdjieff says he learned by stealing, by being cunning. It looks strange to use the words 'sly', 'cunning', in reference to spirituality, but Gurdjieff is a rare man. If you understand him rightly, what he means simply is: be clever, be intelligent, be utterly alert, be wise.

In the East, the serpent has become the symbol of the energy that is dormant in you. In yoga we call it KUNDALINI -- the serpent power. It is dormant in your sex center, like a coiled serpent, fast asleep, snoring. At the lowest center of your being your energy is asleep; it has to be awakened. And once the serpent starts rising in you, you will be surprised that you are not so small as you appear from the outside. From the inside you are as vast as the sky; even the sky is not the limit.

The serpent is a beautiful symbol. It has no legs, still it moves so fast; its movement is a miracle. Zen people say: God cannot be explained, truth cannot be defined.

To define truth is like putting legs on a snake. The snake moves without legs, there is no need of any legs. If you put

legs on the snake you may stop its movement totally; it may not be able to move at all.
So is the case with wisdom: it moves without legs. It moves without information, without knowledge. It moves without intellectuality; it moves intuitively.
The serpent dances listening to music. Scientists were very much puzzled in the beginning, because the snake has no ears at all, it cannot listen. But how can you deny it? -- everybody knows that the serpent becomes absolutely hypnotized by music; it sways, dances. How does it become possible? -- because it has no ears. Then after great inquiry and research it was found it has no ears but it hears from every cell of its body. Its whole skin functions as an ear; it is all ears.
And that's how a disciple has to be: all ears; not only listening from the ears but listening from the feet to the head, listening from each cell of one's being so that each fiber of your existence starts pulsating, falls in rhythm with the master.
The serpent is of great significance. Jesus is right. You became puzzled, Jayesh, because of the word 'cunning'. It simply means wise.

Sheikh Mustapha needed one more horse before setting off on a trip into the desert. Two steeds were brought to him from a nearby village, but the owner of each horse, not wanting to give up his animal, insisted his nag was worthless, brokenwinded, old and crippled.
"It is a simple thing to settle," said the sheikh. "We will stage a race. The winning horse will be taken."

An advisor stepped forward and whispered, "It won't work, Your Highness. Neither man will let his horse run fast." "They will," said Mustapha. "Let each man ride the other's horse."

You can call it cunningness, you can call it wisdom. The sheikh is wise, is cunning, is sly. He says, "Let each man ride the other's horse." Then there is not going to be any difficulty to decide who comes first, because each will try the hardest possible to bring the horse first -- it is the other's horse.

Jesus says: Be wise, be cunning, be sly -- because life is complex, very complex, and your bondage is very ancient. You have become accustomed to your slavery. Unless you behave very intelligently, there is no possibility of your ever getting out of this imprisonment. You will have to focus all your energy on a single point: how to attain freedom.

It is like a prisoner: if he wants to get out of the jail he will have to be really cunning, wise, sly. He will have to watch from where to escape, he will have to watch continuously what side of the prison is less guarded. He will have to watch very carefully which guards can be bribed. He will have to make some connection with outside people; only if he can get some help from the outside -- a rope, a ladder, certain informations: at what time of the night he should escape, at what time the guards are changed, at what time the guard falls asleep, how to get the rope, how to get a ladder.... If he behaves stupidly he will be caught, and he will be far more in danger than before. It is better not to try to escape if you are not intelligent enough.

Hence each master sharpens your intelligence. Wherever you find that your intelligence is being dulled, escape from that place as fast as possible.

And that's what is being done in almost all the so-called spiritual places. The so-called ashrams and the temples and the mosques and the churches, they dull you, they console you. They tell you that you are already free, there is no need to go anywhere. They tell you that the prison does not exist -- this is your home. They tell you the guard is not your enemy, he is your friend. He is not guarding you so that you cannot escape, no; he is guarding you so that nobody can enter in and harm you. They say decorate the prison. They give you all kinds of suggestions and advice how to decorate it and how to make it beautiful. They console you. And the more you are consoled, the more you are lulled into sleep, the less becomes the possibility of your ever becoming a buddha, ever becoming awakened, ever becoming really free.

Your so-called saints go on singing lullabies; they help you to sleep better. And you will be surprised that the so-called mantras are nothing but a way to fall deeply asleep. That's what Maharishi Mahesh Yogi's Transcendental Meditation is. If you repeat ANY word... it does not matter what word you repeat -- Rama, Rama, or Krishna, Krishna, or Christ, Christ, or Coca-Cola, Coca-Cola -- anything will do. If you go on repeating a certain word continuously it will help you to fall deep asleep, because the mind becomes bored with it. When the mind becomes bored it starts feeling dull, sleepy. When the mind becomes bored there is only one escape from the boredom -- to fall asleep.

Mothers have known it for centuries. Transcendental meditation has been used by all the mothers all over the world. Whenever the child is not going to sleep they start repeating a single line, a lullaby. Anything will do; just go on repeating the same again and again and the child starts falling asleep.

And that's how hypnosis functions: any repetition -- a mantra is not necessarily needed -- ANYTHING. You can make a black spot on the wall and go on looking at it, looking constantly at it, and within minutes you will be fast asleep, because consciousness needs flow, consciousness needs something new to keep alert, consciousness needs movement. Consciousness is a stream.

In fact it is because of this that Maharishi Mahesh Yogi's Transcendental Meditation -- which is neither transcendental nor meditation -- has become so significant in America. America is the country which suffers most from sleeplessness, the only country which can sleep only through tranquilizers, sleeping pills -- and even those are no longer working -- the only country which has become so restless that sleep has become almost impossible. New methods are needed, more subtle methods are needed.

But to fall asleep is not meditation, it is consolation. It will give you a little rest and tomorrow you will find yourself a little more fresh. It is good -- I am not against it. It is a nonmedicinal tranquilizer. If you use tranquilizers you can use transcendental meditation -- far better. At least you are not stuffing yourself with chemicals which may have any side effect. It will not harm you, but it is not meditation at all -- because meditation means sharpening of intelligence.

Meditation means becoming more alert, more bright, more brilliant, becoming more luminous, becoming more wise. Jesus is right when he says: Become as cunning as the serpents. Have you watched a serpent -- how alert he is, how watchful? A slight disturbance, just a dry leaf in the wind, and the serpent escapes. You walk, your footsteps are enough... just a little sound and the serpent is gone like the wind. He is so alert, so watchful.

Learn that watchfulness, learn that alertness. Learn that beautiful movement, that flexibility, that fluidity of a serpent. And be as innocent as doves.

Jesus is bringing both the polar opposites: be wise, intelligent, but not knowledgeable, and be innocent. You may misunderstand wisdom as knowledge; hence he adds: be innocent as doves. If you are innocent and wise you cannot be knowledgeable; you will be intelligent, but you will not be knowledgeable. You will not go on accumulating knowledge, you will not become a walking ENCYCLOPAEDIA BRITANNICA. Those kind of people are almost always stupid.

I have come across a man who was really a walking ENCYCLOPAEDIA BRITANNICA; that was all that he was reading. Now, the ENCYCLOPAEDIA BRITANNICA is not something to read; once in a while you can consult it. But this man was continuously reading it. You could have asked any question; if it is in the ENCYCLOPAEDIA BRITANNICA then that man was able to answer it exactly like that. For a few days he stayed with me; I have never seen such a stupid man -- very knowledgeable and very stupid.

This happens because his knowledge has not given him more consciousness, his knowledge has given him only information. Information becomes accumulated in the memory part of your brain -- and memory is not consciousness; consciousness is a totally different phenomenon. Consciousness is the witness in you, it can witness your memory.

Sometimes you see a person, you remember that you remember him, but still the name is not coming. You say it is just on the tip of the tongue, you KNOW it is just on the tip of the tongue, and still it is not coming. What is happening? Your consciousness says it is in the memory, but somehow the memory is blocked, somehow the memory is not in a state to deliver what you need. There may be some obstacle; maybe you are so much in a hurry that the memory has become tense. You try hard; the harder you try, the more difficult it becomes. Then in tremendous frustration you drop the whole project. You go into the garden, you sit under a tree, you start smoking... and suddenly it bubbles up, it surfaces.

Your consciousness is a totally different phenomenon. Your consciousness was saying, "It IS in the memory..." but somehow you have not been able to find it. And then sitting under the tree, smoking relaxedly, it surfaces. Now your consciousness watches it surfacing; now you know it has come in front of you. You are seeing it coming up; you are the seer, you are never the seen. You are never the content of consciousness, you are consciousness.

The knowledgeable person gathers content, and the meditative person sharpens consciousness. The meditative person becomes wise; the knowledgeable person remains

simply knowledgeable. But if some situation arises in which his knowledge is not applicable, he will behave very stupidly. He will not know what to do, he will be completely at a loss. If the answer is in the encyclopedia he will repeat it like a gramophone record, but if the answer is not there in the encyclopedia then he will be simply dumb; he will not be able to respond spontaneously.

Wisdom is a spontaneous response; knowledge is depending on the past. Knowledge is mechanical; it can be done by a computer. And sooner or later it is going to be done by computers, because memorizing is a wastage of time, an unnecessary wastage of time. A small portable computer can do everything: you can keep it in your pocket and it can remember the whole ENCYCLOPAEDIA BRITANNICA; just pushing a button any information can be available.

In the coming century the whole education system is going to be totally transformed and changed because of the computer. It will be stupid to teach children history, geography -- unnecessary, there is no need. All that can be done by a computer; the child can carry the computer.

And my own observation is: the less you depend on memory, the more intelligent you become. That's why it happens that in the universities you will not find very intelligent people. Professors, chancellors, vice-chancellors -- I have seen many, but it is very difficult to find some intelligent person there. You can find more intelligent people in the farmers, in the gardeners, in the villagers. And the reason is clear: because they are not knowledgeable they cannot depend on the memory. They have to respond to reality, they have to respond to

challenges, they have to bring their consciousness to respond -- their consciousness remains more sharp. A farmer, a villager, is far more wise than a professor in the university. The professor can depend on the memory, the farmer cannot depend on the memory.

I have heard:
A woman purchased some canned fruits, but it was a new type of can and she did not know how to open it. So she told the cook, "You wait. I will look in the literature -- the literature has come with the can. Let me see: they must say how to open it."
She went to look in the literature. After half an hour when she had studied the whole literature she came back, but the cook by that time had opened the can. She asked, "How did you manage? It was even difficult for me to find out in the literature how to open it! How did YOU manage?"
The cook said, "Because I can't read I have to depend on my intelligence. You can read; you need not use your intelligence."

Be wise -- that means be more conscious. And be innocent -- that means be more like a child, full of wonder and awe. If these two qualities are there, wonder and awe, intelligence and wisdom, you cannot miss God; it is impossible to miss God.
Then you will not ask where God is, you will ask where God is not. He is everywhere, within and without.

The third question:
Question 3

BELOVED MASTER,
WHY DO MEN HAVE HAIR ON THEIR CHESTS?

Well, Sahajanand, they can't have everything!

The fourth question:
Question 4
BELOVED MASTER,
L. RON HUBBARD'S WORK FOCUSES ON CLEARING THE MIND, WHEREAS YOU OFTEN SPEAK OF DROPPING THE MIND. WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE? PLEASE COMMENT.

Anand Salam, L. Ron Hubbard's work is psychological, it is not spiritual. To clear the mind is a psychological work: to drop the mind is a spiritual revolution. Clearing the mind you remain attached to the mind, and howsoever you clear it, it remains. Even if the glass wall is absolutely transparent and you can see outside as clearly as if you are outside, still you are not outside. The very clear, absolutely transparent glass wall still keeps you imprisoned. You can see the butterflies in the sun, you can see flowers, you can see birds flying in the sky, you can see clouds and the moon and the stars....
And if you don't try to get out you may remain in the deception that you are out in the open. But if you try to get out, you are in for a great surprise: there is a transparent wall that prevents you -- you are still a prisoner.
The mind can be made very clear, but the mind remains. In fact the more clear it is, the more you will be deceived by it -- because it will become more and more transparent. You

will not feel enclosed by it, you will become identified with it. And the clear mind will give you great insights, great visions -- of light, of love, of the beyond -- and you may start thinking that you are having spiritual experiences. NO experience is ever spiritual; ALL experiences are psychological. To go beyond your psychology is what I mean when I say drop the mind.

Hubbard's work is very ordinary; it should be part of the psychological literature. But in the West people have forgotten completely what spirituality is all about; hence it is very easy to deceive. And I am not saying that Hubbard is deceiving others -- he may be deceived himself. He has a clear mind and his processes are good as far as clearance of the mind is concerned, but it is not spiritual work. It cannot take you to the eternal and it cannot make you aware of your innermost core. It keeps you identified with the mind, and the more mind becomes clear and beautiful, the more you become attached to it because the more precious it looks. And when it starts giving you visions and spiritual experiences, then it becomes absolutely impossible to drop it. It is easier to drop an unclear, confused mind; it is difficult to drop a clear mind.

So I am not interested in making your mind clear. My whole effort is to make you aware of your confused mind, to make you aware of your ill mind, to make you aware of your insanities, to make you aware of your schizophrenia, to make you aware of your whole pathology, so that you are bound to drop it, you cannot cling to it anymore.

And the moment mind is dropped, the moment you know you are not the mind, a mutation has taken place. You are

transported into another world; you have entered into the world of consciousness.

The body is there. The physiologists work on it and they think the body is all -- they don't even believe in mind. Mind is an epiphenomenon, just a by-product; it is nothing but the functioning of the body. Then there are psychologists who think man is more than the body: he is psychology, he is mind, he is not just the body. But their mind also is going to die with the body; maybe it is separate but it cannot exist on its own.

The psychologist has not moved very far away from the physiologist. And in fact psychology and physiology are two aspects of the same coin. Man is neither body nor mind but both: man is bodymind, man is psychosomatic. The body affects the mind, the mind affects the body; hence they are not separate. You drink alcohol; the alcohol goes into the body but affects the mind. You can take LSD or marijuana; it goes in the body, it changes the chemistry of the body, but immediately your mind is totally different. Even a man like Aldous Huxley was deceived by LSD. He thought that under the impact of LSD what he was experiencing was exactly what Kabir had experienced in his mystic experiences, in his mystic world. A man like Huxley, a man of far more clear mind than Hubbard, got deceived. He thought that, "We have found the shortcut to spiritual experience: LSD is enough. There is no need now to fast for years, no need to stand on your head for years, no need to torture your body, no need to do the old, ancient austerities. Those are bullock-cart methods, and we are in a jet age and we have found a spiritual shortcut -- LSD." He was deceived because he also thought that the mind is all.

And LSD can give you great mental experiences because it can change your mind.

Change the body, the mind changes. Change the mind, the body changes.

That's how hypnosis works. If you are hypnotized and told that tomorrow you are going to have a great fever, if it is insisted again and again and you are conditioned that tomorrow, early morning, as you wake up you will find yourself with a great fever.... Nothing has been done to the body, just your mind has been conditioned: tomorrow morning you are going to suffer from fever. One can even die.

In 1952, a few countries of the world made laws against hypnosis. They made it clear that only authorized hypnotists can be allowed to hypnotize people, because in one of the universities of America a great accident happened. Four students, all psychology students, were studying about hypnosis and the history of hypnotism, and they became intrigued and they wanted to try it. So they hypnotized one of their friends; he must have been really very vulnerable.

Thirty-three percent of people are very vulnerable; out of three one person is very ready to be hypnotized. These thirty-three percent are the problem in the world; up to now they have been the problem: anybody can hypnotize them. Adolf Hitler depended on these thirty-three percent, Mao Zedong depended on these thirty-three percent. All wars, all fanatic crusades, have depended on these thirty-three percent. One third of the people of the world are very prone, very ready, to be hypnotized.

By coincidence that boy must have been one of those people, and those three tried hard to hypnotize him. They hypnotized him and they were feeling great, because whatsoever they were saying, he was doing. They told him to dance, he danced. They told him that, "This is very hot water," and they gave him ice-cold water, and he could not drink it. He said, "It is too hot, my mouth will be burned." And they were surprised when they put a small pebble on the palm of the hypnotized person and told him that, "This is fire." He was already burned, immediately burned, actually burned -- by a cold pebble. They became more and more intrigued by the whole phenomenon.

They tried the last thing. They told the person to lie down and they told him, "You are dead!" -- and he died. Then they tried hard to wake him up, but it was too late. Because of that incident many countries have made laws against hypnosis. Only authorized professionals should be allowed to use it because it can be dangerous. It can affect your mind, and through the mind your body.

Mind and body are not separate, but YOU are a third entity. You are in the body, in the mind, but you are not identified with them. You are a witnessing consciousness.

My work is totally different from Hubbard's work: his work is psychological, my work is spiritual. My effort here is not to give you a clear mind; my effort here is to give you a state of no-mind, because only through no-mind will you be able to know the reality -- the reality within and the reality without. But the no-mind is the door, the only door.

The fifth question:

Question 5

BELOVED MASTER,
WHY IS IT THAT THE JOURNALISTS NEVER SEEM TO UNDERSTAND YOU?

Kavyo, it has nothing to do with me. They have never understood Jesus, Socrates, Buddha, Kabir. They cannot understand; it is against their investment.
The journalist lives on creating sensations. Any news is news only when it is sensation. They live on rumors and they have to make rumors very spicy. They have no interest in truth, because truth is never news. Truth is so ancient, truth is always the same. I am saying the same truth. Buddha said it, Christ said it, and all those who have known. It is nothing new -- how it can be news?
And they come here in search of news. They have to invent -- and it is really interesting how inventive people can be. Just a few days ago I was reading a report in a Punjabi magazine about this commune, this ashram. The man says, the journalist says, that he has been here for fifteen days, stayed in the commune, and whatsoever he is writing is based on his own experience. Because he introduced his article in this way I became interested: what has he seen? So I went through it. Ordinarily I don't read what journalists go on writing, it is impossible. We have a big press department for that, at least thirty persons continuously reading and collecting, because it is happening all over the world, in all the languages. So much is being published that it is impossible for me to keep any track of it. But because this man said that, "I have been in the ashram for fifteen days," I looked into the article. I was amazed!

He says that the ashram is spread over fifteen square miles! Now, I think even Poona is not spread over fifteen square miles. He says the moment you enter the gate the first thing that you see is a big white marble statue of a naked woman! Because I very rarely go to the gate, I asked Laxmi, "What has happened? Where is this statue?"

He says that there are artificial lakes, artificial waterfalls, thousands of sannyasins swim naked in the lake. There are underground air-conditioned halls where ten thousand people can sit together. Each morning I deliver a discourse in an underground hall. You are sitting in an underground hall, air-conditioned, and not only that -- all the disciples have to sit in absolute nudity! Feel your clothes -- if you think you are wearing clothes you are deceived. You are all naked.

Now these people have a great investment in creating rumors. That's how the magazines, the newspapers sell. They have nothing to do with truth. This man has never been here.

They cannot understand for two reasons. First: if they understand, they will not be able to write anything. That has happened to a few journalists. Those who have understood, they have become sannyasins; they have forgotten all about writing. They had come to write; now they have decided not to go again back, they have decided to be here.

Not only journalists... here are detectives from many countries. And a few detectives even have become sannyasins! And they have confessed to me that they had come as spies, but now they have understood what is

happening here and they would like to become part of the commune.

If a journalist goes and reports exactly what he has seen, nobody is going to believe him. That's what happened with Satyananda. He had come from a famous German magazine, STERN, to report; then he became a sannyasin. His becoming a sannyasin created a trouble. His own people with whom he had worked for years -- the chief editor, the editors and others -- they thought that he had been hypnotized. He tried hard for months to convince them that he had not been hypnotized, but they wouldn't listen. They were not even ready to publish what he had written. They said, "You are too much influenced, you are not in your senses." And even when they agreed after months of argument to publish it, they cut the whole article into half in such a way that it lost all context, it lost all its wholeness, it became fragmentary.

In the first place, the journalist lives on rumors. He is not here to understand me, he is here to MISunderstand me; that is his investment. Secondly: the people who become journalists -- not all the people but almost ninety-nine point nine percent of the people who become journalists -- are very uncreative people. In fact those who can create, they create; those who cannot create, they criticize. Uncreative people become great critics.

It is easy to criticize poetry, it is difficult to write poetry. It is very easy to criticize painting -- you can criticize Picasso, but you cannot paint like Picasso. It is easy to criticize anything.

Turgenev has written a story, THE FOOL. In a certain town there was a man who was known as the greatest idiot in these parts. He was very much worried because wherever he would go people would laugh at him, whatsoever he would say people would ridicule him. Even if he was saying something right, people would laugh at him because nobody could believe that the idiot could say anything right. It was assumed that he was a perfect idiot.

A Sufi mystic was passing through the village. The idiot went to him and he said, "My whole life is wasted -- everybody thinks I am an idiot. Can you help me?"

He said, "It is so easy! You just start doing one thing -- you start criticizing, and after seven days you come to me. I will remain here for seven days just for you; within seven days everything will be changed. But you criticize! If somebody quotes Shakespeare, immediately say, 'What is there in it? It is all nonsense, rubbish!' If somebody says, 'The moon is beautiful, look!' -- just say, 'What is it? I don't see any beauty. Prove what beauty is there!' Nobody can prove it, because beauty cannot be proved. If somebody says, 'What a beautiful morning!' -- immediately jump upon it and start criticizing. You do only one thing for seven days: go around the town and criticize everybody."

Within seven days the man came back -- not alone, followed by hundreds of people, and they all said, "You have done a miracle! The greatest idiot has become the greatest wise man. Nobody can argue with him."

It is easier to criticize, very easy to criticize. It is very difficult to create.

And what I am creating is something invisible. Unless you have very sympathetic eyes you will not be able to see it. Unless you fall in rapport with me you will not be able to understand it.

Father Murphy was a priest in a very poor parish. He asked for some suggestions as to how he could raise money and was told that a racehorse owner always had money.
He went to a horse auction, but instead of buying a horse he got a donkey. However, he thought he would enter it in the race and the donkey came in third. The next day the headlines in the paper read, "Father Murphy's ass showed."
The archbishop saw the headlines and was displeased.
The next day the donkey came in first and the headlines read, "Father Murphy's ass out in front." The archbishop was up in arms and figured something had to be done.
Father Murphy had entered the donkey once again and the donkey came in second.
The headlines read, "Father Murphy's ass back in place."
The archbishop thought this too much, and forbade the priest to enter the donkey in the next race.
The next day the headlines read, "Archbishop scratches Father Murphy's ass."
The archbishop ordered Father Murphy to get rid of the donkey. He was unable to sell it, so he gave it to Sister Agatha for a pet. When the archbishop heard this he ordered Sister Agatha to dispose of the animal at once.
Since she could not give it away, she sold it for ten dollars.
The next day the headlines read, "Sister Agatha peddles her ass for ten dollars."
They buried the archbishop three days later.

Journalists live on such stupid things. Their whole investment is wrong, their priorities are wrong. And they know perfectly well how to report about politicians because that is their business. The politician understands them, they understand the politician; they speak the same language. But when they come across a person like me, the distance is so vast. They speak one language, I speak totally another. They can't understand what I am saying: they go on misunderstanding it, they go on putting their own interpretations on it.
And the journalists think themselves very clever, they think themselves very knowledgeable, they think themselves very intellectual. A great misunderstanding prevails that they are part of the intelligentsia -- they are not! Intelligence is always creative; it is only nonintelligence which is critical. Criticism is not of much value; hence I don't pay any attention to what they go on saying. And you need not be worried about them -- leave them to themselves.

The last question:
Question 6
BELOVED MASTER,
HOW DO YOU MANAGE TO SPEAK YEAR IN, YEAR OUT, AND STILL IT IS ALWAYS AS FRESH AS THE MORNING RAYS OF THE SUN?

Suryananda, I am a drunkard! I don't know what I have said yesterday. In fact I don't know what I have said today. And slowly slowly you also become drunkards with me, so you

go on forgetting. Hence it appears every day fresh and new, because neither I remember nor you remember! And there is no need to remember either.

The new priest at his first mass was so afraid he could hardly speak. Before his second week at the pulpit he asked the other priest how he could relax.
The priest replied, "Next week it may help if you put a martini in the water pitcher. After a few sips, everything should go smoothly."
The following week, the young priest put his elder's suggestion into practice and really talked up a storm.
After his sermon, he asked the other priest how he liked the sermon.
The elder priest replied, "There are a few things you should learn before addressing the congregation again:

1. Next time sip instead of gulp the martini.
2. There are twelve disciples, not ten.
3. There are ten commandments, not twelve.
4. David slew Goliath, he did not kick the shit out of him.
5. We do not refer to our savior Jesus Christ and his disciples as J.C. and the boys.
6. Next week there is a taffy-pulling contest at Saint Peter's, not a peter-pulling contest at Taffy's.
7. We do not refer to the Cross as the Big T.
8. The Father, Son and Holy Ghost are not referred to as Big Daddy, Junior and Spook.
9. Last but not least, it is the Virgin Mary, not Mary with the cherry."

Enough for today.
The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 3
Chapter #5
Chapter title: Freedom contains all
16 August 1979 am in Buddha Hall

AT THE END OF THE WAY,
THE MASTER FINDS FREEDOM
FROM DESIRE AND SORROW --
FREEDOM WITHOUT BOUNDS.

THOSE WHO AWAKEN
NEVER REST IN ONE PLACE.
LIKE SWANS, THEY RISE
AND LEAVE THE LAKE.

ON THE AIR THEY RISE
AND FLY AN INVISIBLE COURSE,
GATHERING NOTHING, STORING NOTHING.
THEIR FOOD IS KNOWLEDGE.
THEY LIVE UPON EMPTINESS.
THEY HAVE SEEN HOW TO BREAK FREE.

WHO CAN FOLLOW THEM?
ONLY THE MASTER,
SUCH IS HIS PURITY.

LIKE A BIRD,
HE RISES ON THE LIMITLESS AIR
AND FLIES AN INVISIBLE COURSE.

HE WISHES FOR NOTHING.
HIS FOOD IS KNOWLEDGE.

HE LIVES UPON EMPTINESS.
HE HAS BROKEN FREE.

Gautam Buddha's search is not for God; it cannot be. If God is not known already, how can you search for him? If the search depends on believing in God, then the search is falsified from the very beginning.

A true search has to be neither of belief nor of disbelief. If you believe, you will project; you will autohypnotize yourself according to your belief. There is every danger that you will find whatsoever you believe in -- you will create an illusion of it.

Deep belief can create a space in which hallucinations become possible. Hence the Christian can see Christ and the Hindu can see Krishna. The Hindu never comes across Christ, the Christian never comes across Krishna. Why does it never happen? -- because whatsoever you believe, you find. Not that it is there in reality but because you are projecting it on reality. The reality functions as a screen and you go on projecting your own prejudice. If you disbelieve, then of course there is no possibility of ever finding it; from the very beginning your mind is closed.

Hence Buddha's search is not for God. We don't know whether God is or not; we cannot take any standpoint. And without taking a standpoint about God there is a possibility of inquiring into his reality.

This is a basic difference between Buddha's approach and the approach of all other religions. Buddha is far superior.

The other religions are very anthropocentric: their idea of God is nothing but their idea of man -- projected, magnified, decorated, made as beautiful as possible, but it is man projected onto the sky.

That's why the Negro will have a God according to the Negro idea of what a human being is: the lips will be thick, the hair will be curly. The Chinese will have his own projection, the Indian will have his own idea. There are three hundred religions on the earth; there are not three hundred gods. Why these three hundred religions? And these three hundred religions have at least three thousand sects, and they all have differences about God and God's conception.

God is one, because reality is one. If God is equal to reality, synonymous with reality, then there are not many existences, there is only one existence -- it can't have so many images. In fact, no image can represent it; every image will be only partial. And to claim the whole truth for the part is a sin -- a sin against yourself and against humanity and against truth.

And the moment you start thinking about God in anthropocentric terms, you make an image. That image is nothing but a toy to play with. You can worship it, you can pray, you can bow down to it, but you are simply being stupid. You are bowing down to your own toy, you are worshipping your own creation! And that's what your temples, your churches, your mosques are -- man-made, manufactured by man's own mind.

God cannot be manufactured. God cannot be part of man's creation. On the contrary, man is God's creation. The Bible says: God created man in his own image. But what has

happened on the earth is just the opposite of it: man has created God in his own image. And of course there are many kinds of man, so there are many kinds of God, and great quarreling continues, who is right. It is not the question of WHAT concept of God is right, the question basically is WHOSE concept is right.

God too has become an ego trip: Christians fighting with Mohammedans, Mohammedans fighting with Hindus, Hindus fighting with Jainas. And this "sorry-go-round" goes on and on.... The whole history of humanity has been ugly because of these so-called religious people. They have proved the most irreligious. They have proved to be the greatest fanatics, utterly blind, deeply prejudiced, completely closed, not ready to listen to anything that goes against them or that is a little bit different from their idea. Religions have made people blind, deaf. Religions have made people foolish, unintelligent.

Buddha is a totally different world, he brings a totally different vision. The first thing to be remembered: he is not interested in God... and the miracle is that he finds God. His inquiry is not into God, but he ends, he lands, in God. His inquiry begins with a totally different angle, and that is the right angle to begin with. If you start as Buddha starts, you are bound to find God.

H.G. Wells is right when he says that Gautama the Buddha is the most godly man on the earth and yet the most godless. Yes, he is a paradox. He denies God, he says there is no God. He says there is no need to worship, he says there is no need to believe. Inquire, don't believe! Search and seek, but without any prejudice for or against. Start with a totally pure and open mind. Start like a small child,

in utter innocence, who has not even heard of God. And he does not say that if you start this way you will find God, because he knows the cunningness of human mind. If he says, "If you start this way you will find God," your mind will say to you, "Then THIS is the way to find God -- start this way," but deep down your desire for God remains. The desire for God arises in your psychology; it is not a spiritual search.

Sigmund Freud is right that God is nothing but a search for a father or mother figure. Buddha would have agreed with him, Buddha would have blessed Sigmund Freud. Sigmund Freud's insight is very accurate about it. He does not go very far, but he begins rightly, though he becomes stuck in the middle because he was not aware of Buddha and he was not aware of Lao Tzu. He remained basically part of the Judaic-Christian tradition -- which is not very evolved, which is not yet a metaphysics in the true sense of the term. Christianity and Judaism are very earthly religions, more rooted in man's psychology than in man's spiritual understanding. And because man's psychology is a chaos, whatsoever is rooted in his psychology is bound to remain a chaos.

Man needs a father figure, somebody to depend upon. In the name of God people are not searching for God but are only searching for excuses for their dependence -- beautiful excuses so that the dependence does not look like slavery, so the dependence also starts having a flavor of religiousness, spirituality. But to call God "the father" indicates what you have been searching for.

There are religions which call God "the mother"; it is the same, the same game -- either mother or father. If the

society is mother-oriented, matriarchal, then God becomes "the mother"; if the society is father-oriented, patriarchal, then God becomes "the father."

Germany calls itself "the fatherland," India calls itself "the motherland"; the difference is only in names. Whether you call the country motherland or fatherland does not make much difference, because you create the same trouble. The labels are different but it is the same politics; the labels are different but it is the same childish approach towards reality.

Why do you seek for God? Out of fear? Yes, there is fear, because there is death. If you are seeking God out of fear you will never find him. God can be found only through love, not through fear.

In all the languages of the world such phrases exist as "God-fearing"; the religious person is called God-fearing. It is utter nonsense! A religious person is never God-fearing: a religious person is God-LOVING. His prayer arises not out of fear but out of tremendous love and gratitude. His prayer is a thankfulness, not a demand. He does not ask for security, because he knows already that he is secure. He does not ask for safety, he does not ask for protection, because he knows that existence protects, that existence is our home, that we belong to it and that it belongs to us. Why should he ask for such things which are already available, which are already given, which are built in, in your very existence?

But the so-called religious person goes on demanding. Maybe he has lost his father, his mother... and everybody one day or other loses them. It is not really that your father dies, then you lose him; the moment you become mature,

you start moving on your own, the father is lost, the mother is lost -- and the childhood illusions are lost. And then great fear arises: up to now you were protected by the father, cared for by the mother. Now who is going to protect you and who is going to care for you? The sky seems to be utterly neutral; it does not care this way or that, whether you live or die doesn't matter. A great fear arises in one's being, a trembling. Soren Kierkegaard has exactly called it trembling; in that trembling he thinks religion is born. Yes, in that trembling religion is born, but that religion is pseudo, that religion is not true.

Religion is born when you are centered, rooted, not trembling. Religion is born in great understanding, not in fear. Religion is born when you start feeling that the existence responds with love, that it is not uncaring, that it is not cold; that it is very warm, that it is very welcoming. It is our very life -- how can it be uncaring towards us? But the so-called religious people go on asking God for protection; hence God is called "The Great Protector." The religious people go on asking God for eternal life because they are trembling, they are scared of death... and death is coming every day closer and closer. Soon it will encompass you, it will drown you into darkness. Before that you have to find a secure ground, a home. That becomes your search for God.

Buddha is not interested in such a search. He says rather than listening to the ill, pathological mind and going according to it in search of God, it is better to drop this pathological mind. It is better to drop this whole pathology, be free of it -- because in that freedom is seeing, in that freedom is knowing.

Free from mind you become a knower. You become so absolutely certain of immortality, of timelessness, of deathlessness, that there is no need for any God to protect you -- you are already protected. In that protection you bow down to existence in gratitude. In that protection, in that caring, in that love that goes on flowing invisibly from the universe towards you.... It nourishes you every moment. It is the universe that you breathe in and out, it is the universe that flows in your blood, it is the universe that becomes your bones, your very marrow. The moment it becomes your own experience, you have become religious.

And now you know that God is, but this is a totally different God. It is not a father figure -- it is not a figure at all. It is not a person but a presence, a loving presence overflowing the whole cosmos. Now it is not a person controlling, a dictator dictating. It is not like the Old Testament God who says, "I am very jealous."

Buddha says: God and jealous? Then who is going to be beyond jealousy? Buddha says even man has to become nonjealous, only then will he be able to know God. But can it be a condition that you have to become nonjealous and then you will know a jealous God? Can it be a condition that to know a jealous God first you have to drop all your jealousies? That would be very illogical! The Old Testament God says, "I am jealous, I am angry. Those who don't listen to me will be condemned forever!"

Bertrand Russell has written a book, WHY I AM NOT A CHRISTIAN. In the book he gives many arguments; one of those arguments is worth considering. He says the Christian and Jewish God seems to be utterly unjust, unfair, because Christians and Jews believe only in one life. Bertrand

Russell says, "As far as I am concerned, for all the crimes that I have committed, even the hardest judge cannot sentence me for more than four years. And if the sins that I have not committed but only contemplated are also included, then too, at the most, eight years, ten years."

In a life of seventy years, how much sin can you commit? In a life of seventy years one third is spent in sleeping, the other one third in working for bread and butter. What time do you have to commit sin and how much can you commit? And, Russell says, the Christian, the Jewish Gods say you will be punished for eternity! Now, this is unfair! Even if you punish a man for seventy years, okay; seventy years at least he lived. If life itself is sin, if to breathe is sin, then send him for seventy years to hell -- but sending him to hell for eternity, for ever and ever he will be in hell... Russell says that this is unjust. If this is your idea of God, then what is your idea of the Devil? How can God be more devilish? This is a very evil conception.

But because the so-called religions are based in fear, such ideas create more fear in people. And the priests exploit your fear; they say you will be condemned, punished. And they have created pictures, paintings of hell, hellfire and all kinds of tortures they have invented in hell.

These people can't be saints. Even to contemplate that others should be burned forever and forever needs a very cruel mind -- even to think about it, even to write about it. Buddha says the search, the true search, is not for God, cannot be -- because God is the need of a pathological mind. Let this sink deep in you; otherwise you will not be able to understand this very superior vision of religion.

Secondly, Buddha says religion is not a search for truth either, because the moment you start inquiring about truth you become intellectuals. The whole inquiry becomes philosophical, intellectual, rational -- truth is a rational concept. Then you start thinking that you have to go through many logical processes, that you have to argue, discuss, debate, and then finally one day you will come to the conclusion -- as if truth is going to be a conclusion of a logical process, as if truth is going to be a by-product of your syllogism.

Truth is not just intellectual. And what can the intellect think about truth? It is all imagination, inference. At the most it can arrive at a certain hypothesis, a workable hypothesis, utilitarian; but it can never arrive at any truth. That's why philosophy never arrives; it simply goes on and on in circles -- it moves in vicious circles. Science also never arrives at truth. At the most it comes across hypotheses which are accepted today and rejected tomorrow because tomorrow you find a better hypothesis which works more efficiently; hence yesterday's hypothesis has to be discarded.

Newton is discarded by Albert Einstein; Albert Einstein will be discarded sooner or later by somebody else. Science never comes to truth, to ultimate truth. Everything is utilitarian: if it works then it is worth using. But the question is not of truth, the question is of utility.

Buddha says truth can only be existential, not intellectual. Intellect will be a part in it, emotion will also be a part in it, the body will also be a part in it -- and the center of it is going to be your witnessing consciousness. It will be a total phenomenon, not only intellectual, not only emotional.

There are two kinds of religion: the intellectual religions and the emotional religions. The intellectual religions philosophize and the emotional religions worship, pray -- but both are partial. And the truth is not just the sum total of all its parts: it is more than the sum total of its parts. Hence Buddha says an existential approach is needed -- not intellectual only, not emotional only. Neither the philosopher is going to discover it, nor the devotee. Thirdly, Buddha says, "My search is not for bliss either..." because you cannot conceive what bliss is. Whatsoever you will conceive is bound to be somehow colored by your idea of happiness. And your idea of happiness is not very blissful, is not very close to bliss. Your idea of happiness is much closer to unhappiness. Your idea of happiness is nothing but the opposite of unhappiness -- and they are both together, two aspects of the same energy. Like day and night they are joined together; the day follows the night, then the night follows the day, and it goes on and on. Happy one moment, unhappy another, happy again, unhappy another... and this way your whole life is wasted. When you hear the word 'bliss', what notion arises in your mind? -- something of happiness, something of eternal happiness, something when you will never know unhappiness again. But if unhappiness disappears, happiness cannot remain. If darkness disappears completely there will be no light. They depend on each other; they appear contradictory but they are really complementaries. So whatsoever you conceive of as bliss is going to be wrong from the very beginning. You will be searching for a new kind of hedonism -- maybe spiritual, metaphysical.

Maybe you are not searching happiness here, but you are searching for happiness on the other shore.
And that's what all the religions talk about in the name of heaven, paradise: what they are missing here they project in paradise. If you look into the ideas about paradise of different people you will be able immediately to know one thing: what is missing in their life. You will not know anything about paradise, but you will certainly know what is missing in the lives of the people whose conception this paradise is.
For example, the Mohammedan paradise has provision for homosexuality. Strange! But that's what was very much prevalent in the days when Mohammedanism was in its early stages. The Mohammedan countries have still remained very homosexual; it is the only paradise. So if some gay people are here they should remember it. When after death you are asked, "Where do you want to go?" immediately say, "To the Mohammedan paradise." There you will find gay clubs. But don't go to a Hindu paradise -- there you will not find gay clubs at all! That has never been the idea in India; it has been a sin.
If you go to a Greek paradise you will find homosexuality very much praised. In fact, in the Greek culture man's body was thought to be far more beautiful than the woman's body; hence all the Greek sculpture is centered around the male figure. Even in the schools of Plato and Aristotle homosexuality was the rule, not the exception. The Greek idea of paradise is bound to be with the Greek mind.
In the Hindu paradise you will find beautiful women and they are all stuck at the age sixteen, for centuries and centuries, because the Hindu idea of beauty is the sixteen-

year-old girl -- not even eighteen, what to say about twenty-one! The Hindu idea is that at sixteen the woman attains perfection; after that there is deterioration. And because the Hindu, so-called saints were starving themselves of feminine relationship, from female energy, their minds were too much obsessed with women. Of course they had to find some consolation somewhere; their paradise is their consolation.

In their paradise women have bodies of gold, eyes of diamonds. What kind of women these will be! Utterly dead! I don't think the Hindu saints will allow blood to run through their veins -- cows' milk will be far better and far purer, and holier too! And these girls go on dancing continuously, singing songs, around sages -- sages who had renounced family life here on the earth. They are really on a picnic! Their paradise is what they are missing here. Analyze the paradise of any race, any country, any religion, and you will know what they are really missing here. The Hindu paradise is very rich -- Hindus are poor. In the Hindu paradise there are rivers of milk -- water does not flow there. In the real world of the Hindus you cannot even find pure water in the rivers.

I have not tasted water at least for fifteen years -- I have to depend on soda water! All kinds of impurities are found in Indian rivers, Indian water, because the whole sewage system goes on pouring itself into Indian rivers, and buffaloes and cows and people are taking their baths there. Indian rivers seem to be the dirtiest -- and that is the only water to drink. But they have managed beautifully in paradise; they have dropped water completely. Rivers are of milk and curd!

And there are wish-fulfilling trees; you simply sit underneath the tree, no need to work at all. Indians are tired of working, utterly tired. Just sit under a wish-fulfilling tree and whatsoever you wish is immediately fulfilled, instantly -- just as you have instant coffee. That too takes a little time, but under the wish-fulfilling tree the wish arises, "A woman!" and the woman appears. "Food!" and suddenly there is food. "Coca-Cola!" and immediately there is Coca-Cola. India has been starving for centuries; the wish-fulfilling tree simply indicates the starving country, the poor country.

When these scriptures were being written many things were not there in the world, hence they are not there; otherwise Rolls Royces would have been in paradise, especially made in solid gold, for the great sages, mahatmas, saints. They have golden thrones, so there is nothing wrong about having solid gold Rolls Royces. Here you have to move in worthless cars; even they are very difficult to find. India produces the worst kind of cars in the world!

I have heard that when the manufacturer of Ambassador cars died -- I knew him, he was my friend, so I believe that the story is true -- he was suddenly taken to paradise. He was very much puzzled because he was not hoping for that much. He was thinking that if he can get some good quarters in hell, that will do. This was too much! He was a little puzzled. He asked when the door was opened, he asked the doorkeeper, "Is there something wrong? -- because I have been thinking that I will be thrown into hell, I have never done anything good. Why are you taking me in?"

The doorkeeper said, "You made the Ambassador, and because of the Ambassador many more people have remembered God than through anything else. Whosoever travels in an Ambassador remembers God continuously: 'My God!' You have made people so religious. Even atheists when they travel in your car start remembering God -- they have to! Hence this special concession for you: a special place has been reserved for you in heaven."
If now the scriptures are written, then there will be solid gold Rolls Royces and everything that is missing here will be there.

Buddha says: My search is not for bliss... because the moment you talk about bliss, people start thinking of pleasures. It is better not to talk about bliss, it is dangerous. People will simply misunderstand.
Then what is his bliss for? He has chosen a word never chosen before -- he says: My search is for freedom. That word is immensely important: freedom from the ego, freedom from the mind, freedom from desires, freedom from all limitations. In a way, he is very scientific in his inward journey. He is saying if you can create a space in your being where your consciousness is totally free, then all is achieved: God is achieved, truth is achieved, beauty is achieved, bliss is achieved. But only in freedom anything becomes possible.
Hence these sutras:

AT THE END OF THE WAY,
THE MASTER FINDS FREEDOM
FROM DESIRE AND SORROW --

FREEDOM WITHOUT BOUNDS.

Not God, not truth, not bliss, but freedom. Freedom is Buddha's word which contains all: God, bliss, truth, beauty. And freedom avoids all other pitfalls. Freedom needs courage; you cannot attain to freedom if you are afraid. Freedom needs that you drop all identification with the mind and the body; otherwise you will remain confined, you can't be free.

Freedom means that you get out of this constant desiring mind. It is the desiring mind that creates paradise. If you drop desire, how can you talk about paradise? If you drop desire, sorrow disappears automatically, because sorrow is a shadow of desire. The more you desire, the more frustrated you feel, because no desire is ever fulfilled. Desire is unfulfillable; its very nature is such. It is not that YOU are incapable of fulfilling it; desire's very nature is such that it cannot be fulfilled -- it goes on becoming bigger and bigger. In the beginning you ask for ten thousand rupees; by the time you have ten thousand, your desire has moved ahead of you -- it is asking for one hundred thousand rupees.

It is like the horizon that surrounds the earth: it looks so close by. Move, and it moves ahead with you. The distance between you and the horizon remains always exactly the same. In fact, there is no place where earth meets the sky -- there is no horizon. The horizon is a mirage: it only appears, it is not a reality.

So is fulfillment: fulfillment is only a mirage. It only appears there, very close, alluring, enchanting, inviting. You go on moving, and you waste your whole life; and by

the time you are dying you have not even moved a single inch closer to fulfillment. People die on the same spot where they were born. People die in the same stupid state in which they were born.

I have heard:
Sir Henry, bored with English country life, visited a French SALON DE PLAISIR. In response to Sir Henry's request for something unusual, the madam suggested, "I can give you Hott Tung, a Chinese delicacy."
"No," replied his lordship, "I have already had one of those."
"Perhaps," asked the madam, "you would like to make a selection from our Black African group."
"I have had one of those too," yawned Sir Henry. "Actually, the only thrill I have not tried would be a little bitty girl, about eight years old."
"This is outrageous!" shrieked the madam. "The very idea is criminal! I am going to summon a policeman."
"No, don't do that," said the Englishman. "I have already had one of those!"

You can have everything and yet you will not have anything at all. You can have all the wealth of the world and still you will be poor. You can have all that the world makes available and yet the discontent will be deeper than ever before -- because before there were hopes, now even hopes will disappear.
AT THE END OF THE WAY, THE MASTER FINDS FREEDOM. The goal is to find freedom, but one has to start becoming a master of oneself, master of one's

consciousness. That is the beginning, the first step. You are not master of your own consciousness. You are a slave of a thousand and one desires, thoughts, imaginations. You are pulled into this direction and that. You don't know who you are and where you are going. You don't know why you are existing at all. You don't know the purpose of your life, you don't have any sense of direction. How can you be a master of yourself?
The first thing to becoming a master of oneself is to become more conscious of your acts and your thoughts. Unconsciousness is slavery, consciousness is mastery.
I call my sannyasins swamis; the word 'swami' means the master. It simply means one who is trying to become centered in his being, rooted in his consciousness, who is trying not to be pulled by desires against his wishes. But desires are very cunning and the ego plays such games that unless you are constantly alert you will remain a slave.

Rabinowitz, hiding with his wife from the Nazis in a secluded Berlin attic, decided to get a breath of fresh air. While out walking he came face-to-face with Adolf Hitler. The German leader pulled out a gun and pointed to a pile of horse manure in the street. "Alright, Jew," he shouted, "eat that or I will kill you!" Trembling, Rabinowitz did as he was ordered.
Hitler began laughing so hard he dropped the weapon. Rabinowitz snatched it up and said, "Now, you eat the manure or I will shoot!" The Fuhrer got down on his hands and knees and began eating.
While he was occupied, Rabinowitz sneaked away, ran through an alley, climbed over a fence, and dashed up the

stairs to the attic. He slammed the door shut, bolted and locked it securely. "Bessie! Bessie!" he shouted to his wife. "Guess who I had lunch with today!"

The ego is very subtle. It can find opportunities where they don't exist at all; it can make the impossible possible. And you have to be very alert, because the mind is always rationalizing. The mind can go on rationalizing everything and it can rationalize so beautifully that even you will be allured -- it is your own mind deceiving you!
Unless one is really committed to being free it is impossible to be free. It is very rarely a man becomes free, very rarely: a Jesus, a Moses, a Mohammed -- only few and far between. But everyone has the capacity, everyone has the seed, the potential. You can become a Jesus, you can become a Buddha, you can become a Confucius, you can become a Socrates.
All that is needed, all that is required, is there. Only one thing is missing: you have not yet decided, you are indecisive; you have not decided to become a master of your own being. And then stupid things go on deceiving you, but you can always rationalize.

It is little known that Sherlock Holmes had a secret vice unrevealed in the stories. When Dr. Watson came around to 221B Baker Street one afternoon, the housekeeper told him that Holmes had a visitor, a schoolgirl.
Watson sat down to wait, but then heard muffled sounds coming from the study. Fearing that the schoolgirl might be an assassin in disguise he broke open the door, only to find

the great detective and the girl -- a very young girl -- engaged in rather a shocking form of play.
"By God, Holmes!" huffed the doctor, "just what sort of schoolgirl is this?"
Smirked Holmes, "Elementary, my dear Watson!"

You can always find ways and means to protect yourself, to deceive others and to deceive yourself -- unless a very deliberate, conscious decision has been made. I call that decision sannyas.
Sannyas is nothing but a decision, a total decision, a commitment, an involvement, that "Now my whole energy is going to move into one direction -- the direction of freedom; I have decided to be free, free from all desire and free from all sorrow. Freedom without bounds is my goal." And it can be attained. Once the decision is there and you are pouring your energy into it and nourishing it, nobody can prevent you from attaining it. It is your birthright.

THOSE WHO AWAKEN
NEVER REST IN ONE PLACE.
LIKE SWANS, THEY RISE
AND LEAVE THE LAKE.

Buddha is saying: If you start awakening you will be surprised that your whole life you were stuck in the same place, you were not really moving. Your movement was empty, impotent. You were not moving, because you were not reaching anywhere. You were moving up and down on the same bank, thinking that by running up and down you will reach the other shore. But the other shore is as far

away as ever, and you are unnecessarily wasting your breath.

THOSE WHO AWAKEN.... Those who become committed to freedom, those who take a decision that, "Now I am going to be free from all that is dark in me, from all that creates future in me, from all that is past in me -- I am going to be free from it all. I am going to be a pure freedom so that I can have wings and I can soar high, to the ultimate heights of being and existence...." Unless you decide that... and it needs guts to decide. Many people come here and they go on hesitating for months about whether to take the jump or not -- and never for a single moment thinking what they have got to lose, never for a single moment realizing that time is rushing out of their hands... tomorrow may never come. If anything has to be done, it has to be done right now.

And strange is man and his ways! That which is useless he immediately is ready to do, and that which is of immense value he postpones. He goes on saying "Tomorrow," and the tomorrow never comes. Instead comes death.

And this has been happening many times. This is not your first life on the earth; you have lived millions of times and each time this postponement has been your root cause of misery.

Now don't postpone any more. Use this opportunity. Use this context that I am creating here. It is a buddhafield! If you are ready to take a jump into it, you will never be the same again. But the jump has to be total. You should not cling to the bank, you should leave the bank absolutely. In that very leaving, in that very renunciation of the bank, the transformation happens -- you start becoming freed.

It is not the chains which are keeping you in bondage; it is you who are holding on to the chains, it is you who are clinging to the chains. This is a very absurd situation! The prison is not holding you in; it is you who are afraid to go out. And you go on believing that there is no way out: "What is there to find outside? Those who have gone have never returned. Who knows? -- there are wild animals and dangers. Here I am safe, living comfortably."

Don't think in terms of comfort, think in terms of freedom. Don't think in terms of safety, think in terms of being more alive. And the only way to be more alive is to live dangerously, is to risk, is to go on an adventure. And the greatest adventure is not going to the moon -- the greatest adventure is going to your own innermost core.

THOSE WHO AWAKEN NEVER REST IN ONE PLACE. Don't be stagnant, don't remain in one inner place. Move! Movement is life. Become a river. Don't remain a stagnant pool, otherwise you will stink.

That's why millions of people stink. Their life does not seem to be a benediction, a blessing. Their life gives no aura of beauty, their life does not radiate. They seem to be completely dark and dismal, utterly depressed, hiding inside their own caves, not capable to come out in the sun, in the moon, in the rains, in the wind; not courageous enough to open up like flowers, not capable of risking and being on the wing.

THOSE WHO AWAKEN NEVER REST IN ONE PLACE. That is growth. Go on growing. God is not something that you will encounter on the road; God is your ultimate growth. God is not to be found anywhere, you

have to become God. In fact, you are God; you only have to discover your reality.

A real human being is one who goes on growing. Each morning the sun finds him never in the place where it had left him the last evening. Each evening the sun finds him somewhere else, not at the exact place where it had found him in the morning. He is movement, he is revolution. He goes on and on, he never looks back. He never moves on the old trodden paths; he finds his own way.

LIKE SWANS, THEY RISE AND LEAVE THE LAKE.

Have you seen swans leaving the lake? I am reminded of Ramakrishna. His first samadhi, his first glimpse of God, glimpse of truth or bliss, happened when he was only thirteen years old. He was coming back from his farm -- he was a farmer's son -- he was coming back to his home. On the way there was a lake. The rainy season was just to come, the monsoons were approaching. The sky was becoming cloudy, dark clouds, thunder, lightning, and Ramakrishna was almost running because it seemed that it was going to pour heavily. He was passing by the lake of the village; because he was running he disturbed the swans in the lake and they all flew together.

Swans are one of the most beautiful birds, the whitest -- symbols of purity, innocence. A long queue of swans suddenly rose high against the backdrop of the black clouds. Ramakrishna was transported into another world. The vision was so beautiful, and the vision was such a message, he fell there on the bank of the lake in utter ecstasy. The joy was such that he could not contain it; he became almost unconscious as far as the outside is concerned.

The other farmers were returning to their homes, everybody was in a hurry; the clouds were there and it was going to rain and they wanted to reach home. They found Ramakrishna lying on the lake bank absolutely unconscious, but with such joy on his face, so radiant was his being, that they all fell on their knees. The experience was so superb, it was something not of this world.

They carried Ramakrishna home; they worshipped him. When he came back he was asked, "What has happened?" He said, "A message from the beyond: 'Ramakrishna, be a swan! Open your wings, the whole sky is yours. Don't be trapped by the lake and its comfort, security and safety.' I am no longer the same person. I have been called. God has called me!"

And since that day he was never the same person: something was triggered by the swans rising high in the sky.

Buddha says: LIKE SWANS, THEY RISE AND LEAVE THE LAKE -- as if Buddha is predicting something about Ramakrishna. The distance is vast, twenty-five centuries, but the prediction is true. It is not only about Ramakrishna, it is about all those who are going to awaken ever; it is about all the buddhas.

The swan has become a symbol in the East of the awakened one, hence the awakened one is called PARAMAHANSA. Paramahansa means the great swan.

ON THE AIR THEY RISE
AND FLY AN INVISIBLE COURSE,
GATHERING NOTHING, STORING NOTHING.
THEIR FOOD IS KNOWLEDGE.

THEY LIVE UPON EMPTINESS.
THEY HAVE SEEN HOW TO BREAK FREE.

This sutra is of immense import. Drink it slowly, let it sink in your heart. ON THE AIR THEY RISE.... The world of spirituality is a subtle world; it is more like air than like earth. You can feel it but you cannot see it. You can breathe it and live on it but you cannot hold it in your fist. It is invisible.

ON THE AIR THEY RISE AND FLY AN INVISIBLE COURSE. And the course of a buddha, of one who is awakened, is invisible; hence nobody can follow a buddha. He leaves no footprints. He is like a swan flying in the sky; he leaves no footprints. He is not like a man walking on the sand.

Buddha has said again and again: "I am like a swan, a bird in the sky. I leave no footprints. Hence you cannot imitate me, hence there is no need to bother to imitate. Understand -- that will do." Listen, feel, imbibe the spirit of a buddha, that's all. Be nourished by his presence, be thrilled by his being, but don't try to imitate. Don't try to become a carbon copy, because God loves only originals; carbon copies are rejected.

ON THE AIR THEY RISE AND FLY AN INVISIBLE COURSE, GATHERING NOTHING, STORING NOTHING. The man who has awakened gathers nothing, stores nothing. He remains utterly empty inside.

GATHERING NOTHING, STORING NOTHING means he goes on dying to the past continuously. It is the past that you gather, it is the past that you store. You think it is very valuable -- it is all junk! Even the greatest experiences of

the past are junk. They were great when they were present; once they are past they are useless. Throw them away. Forget all about the past so that you can remain clean and pure and available for the new. If you become too much cluttered with the past, who is going to be available to the new? And the new is constantly impinging upon you! Remain spacious, go on creating space inside you. And the only way is not to store anything.

The past stored becomes your ego; the past creates the ego. And the ego fills you so much that it leaves no space for God to enter in or bliss to flow in or beauty to penetrate you.

The sun comes and knocks on your doors, but your doors are closed. The moon comes and waits at the door, but you don't open it -- because you are too full of yourself. You are the only barrier between yourself and God. You have to disappear.

And remember that the ego will find new ways to enter inside you. If you push it out from the front door it will come from the back door. It will wear new masks. It may become knowledge, scholarship, austerities. It can pretend anything. But remember: the past accumulated in any way is bound to culminate into an ego. And the ego is always comparing, the ego is always thinking in terms of superiority, inferiority. And because of these comparisons, these ideas of superiority and inferiority, you go on suffering, you live in sorrow.

Nobody is superior and nobody is inferior, because comparison is false, comparison itself is not valid. Two persons cannot be compared because each is unique, they are not alike. You can compare two Ford cars, that's okay,

but you cannot compare two individual human beings. What to say of human beings? -- you cannot compare two rosebushes, you cannot compare two rocks, you cannot compare two pebbles on the seashore, because each pebble is unique. There is no one other pebble like it, not only on this earth but on any other earth anywhere, on any other planet anywhere.

Scientists say there are at least fifty thousand earths where life exists, and millions and millions of planets which are dead. And each planet must be having millions and millions of pebbles, but you will not find another pebble which is exactly like this pebble. How can you compare two dissimilar things?

Comparison is the way of the ego. Avoid comparison, otherwise you will always suffer. You will suffer in two ways. Sometimes your ego will feel superior to somebody; that will give you airs, that will get into your head, that will make you tense. You will not walk on the earth; you will become drunk, drugged. Or sometimes it will give you the feeling of inferiority; then too you will be crestfallen, shattered. Again great anguish and pain....

And this will happen continuously, because in one thing you may look superior to somebody, and in another thing you may look inferior to somebody else. Somebody is taller than you and somebody else is smaller than you. Somebody is more beautiful, although you are more knowledgeable. But somebody is stronger, has a more muscular body, is more athletic -- and you look a very poor specimen in front of him. Somebody is so ugly that you feel great compared to him, and somebody is so beautiful that you start feeling

ugly. Now you will be pushed and pulled between these two; these two rocks will crush you.

Harlemite Huckley was driving his big blue Cadillac through Mississippi. He pulled up at a gas station and honked his horn.
"What do you want, boy?" asked the attendant.
"Give me ten gallons of gas," said Huckley. "Check my oil and wipe off the windshield. And look, man, I am in a hurry."
Immediately the attendant pulled out a big .38, picked up an empty oil can and said, "You must be one of them smart ones from up north. I am gonna show you, boy, how we expect your kind to behave around here."
He threw the oil can into the air and emptied his gun at it. When the can came down, it had five bullet holes in it. The attendant tossed it to Huckley saying, "Now, you look that over and think about it."
Huckley looked at it, then got out of the Caddy and picked up an apple he had lying on the seat. He threw the apple in the air, whipped out a knife and as the apple came down, he made a few passes at it. The apple landed at the attendant's feet, peeled, cored, and quartered.
The attendant said, "How many gallons of gas did you want, sir?"

This will happen every day, this will happen every moment. There are millions of people and each individual is unique. Drop that nonsense of comparing. But you cannot drop it unless you drop the past -- the past LIVES on comparison, the ego FEEDS on comparison.

Buddha says: GATHERING NOTHING, STORING NOTHING. THEIR FOOD IS KNOWLEDGE.
'Knowledge' is not a right translation of what Buddha means. It would have been more true to translate it as 'knowing', not 'knowledge'. The difference may not look great between these two words, but it is great, it is vast. It is tremendously important to understand the difference between knowledge and knowing.
Knowledge is always of the past; it is a finished phenomenon, a full point has come. Knowing is always a present process. Knowing is alive, knowledge is dead. A buddha is not a man of knowledge but a man of knowing. A scholar is a man of knowledge, a pundit is a man of knowledge but not a man of knowing. Knowing is riverlike, flowing.
And it is very important to remember, as far as Buddha is concerned, that he did not believe in nouns, he believed in verbs. He says the noun is only a convenience. In fact, in reality nouns don't exist, only verbs. When you say, "This is a tree," your statement linguistically is acceptable but not existentially, because by the time you said, "This is a tree," this is no longer the same tree -- one dead leaf has fallen, one new leaf has started coming up, the bud has opened. The bird that was singing on the tree is no longer singing. The sun that was shining on the tree is hidden behind a cloud. It is no longer the same tree, and it is growing, continuously growing.
A tree, to be true, should be called treeing, not a tree. A river should be called rivering, not a river. Everything is growing, moving, everything is in a flux. Verbs are true, nouns are false. If some day we are going to create an

existential language, it will contain no nouns, it will contain only verbs. You are not the same person that had come this morning to listen to the discourse. When you leave you will be a totally different person -- so much water has gone down the Ganges, so much has changed. You may have come very sad and you may leave laughing. You may have come very serious and you may leave very playful. These changes are tremendously important.

Hence I will translate it: THEIR FOOD -- the food of the awakened ones -- IS KNOWING. 'Knowledge' is not the right translation. They continuously are in a state of awareness, consciousness; they are continuously learning, knowing. They never say, "I have known." They only say, "I am available, open to know, more available, more open to know." The full point never comes, the process continues.

Life is a process, not a thing, not a commodity. It is an unending river, no beginning, no end. Inexhaustible it is: AES DHAMMO SANANTANO. This is the very law of life, that everything goes on changing. Buddha has said: Except change, everything changes. Heraclitus would have agreed with Buddha, Buddha would have agreed with Heraclitus; they would have embraced each other. And they were contemporaries, almost contemporaries.

It has always happened in the world that whenever some insight happens in one part of the world it is always echoed all over the world in different parts, in different languages, by different people -- as if something triggered in one part invisibly affects other sensitive souls everywhere else. When Buddha was alive in India, Greece was rich with Heraclitus, with Socrates, with Pythagoras. China was rich

with Lao Tzu, Confucius, Chuang Tzu, Lieh Tzu. And all these people have something very similar, although their languages are different.
Heraclitus says: You cannot step in the same river twice. Buddha will agree absolutely; in fact he will say you cannot even step in the same river once, because the river is constantly flowing. And it is not only the river that is flowing, you are also flowing.

One man came and insulted Buddha very much; Buddha listened to him silently. The next day he felt sorry, came to apologize. Buddha said, "Forget all about it, because I am not the same man whom you had insulted, and you are not the same man who had insulted me. So who is going to apologize to whom? And what can I do now? -- that man is no more, it is finished forever! You will never see that man again, so don't be worried. And you are not the same either! How can you be the same?"
Ananda, Buddha's disciple, who was sitting by the side, said, "Sir, this is too much! This is the same man -- I cannot forgive him ever! He insulted you so much, he said such ugly words, he abused you badly. It hurts still in my heart. I could not say anything because you wouldn't allow it. I had to swallow it all, otherwise I would have shown this man!"
Buddha said, "Ananda, can't you see this is not the same man at all? The man who had come yesterday was abusing, was insulting -- this man is apologizing. How can they be the same? Do you think insult and apology are the same? This is somebody else! Just look into his eyes -- tears are flowing from his eyes. Do you remember the other man? Fire was in his eyes! He wanted to kill me, and this man is

touching my feet! And you still say, Ananda, this is the same man?"

Nobody is ever the same. To know it is knowing, to be constantly aware of it is knowing. Their food is knowing.... THEY LIVE UPON EMPTINESS. And because they go on discarding the past they always remain empty. Their emptiness has a purity of its own. They are utterly spacious, like the sky without clouds. THEY LIVE UPON EMPTINESS....
THEY HAVE SEEN HOW TO BREAK FREE. And this is the way: THEY HAVE SEEN HOW TO BREAK FREE. Drop knowledge, become a knowing awareness, alertness, watchfulness, witnessing -- all verbs, remember. Forget the past and remain available to the present and don't project the future, and you will remain empty. And to remain empty is the way of the free man.
Freedom is utter emptiness, but in that utter emptiness descends something from the beyond which Buddha leaves undescribed, unexpressed, because it is inexpressible. He does not call it truth, he does not call it God, he does not call it bliss. He does not call it any name; he simply keeps quiet about it, utterly silent. He says: Come and see.

WHO CAN FOLLOW THEM?
ONLY THE MASTER,
SUCH IS HIS PURITY.

Unless you also become a master -- master of your own inner being, of your consciousness -- unless you also

become empty, you cannot go with the buddhas, you cannot fly with the swans.

LIKE A BIRD,
HE RISES ON THE LIMITLESS AIR
AND FLIES AN INVISIBLE COURSE.
HE WISHES FOR NOTHING.
HIS FOOD IS KNOWLEDGE.

HE LIVES UPON EMPTINESS.
HE HAS BROKEN FREE.

And if you can keep the company of a buddha you will also be free. You will also rise on the winds. You will also start the flight of the alone to the alone. You will also start moving to the ultimate.
Buddha calls this ultimate freedom, nirvana -- cessation of the ego, cessation of your personality. Freedom means freedom from your personality. Then whatsoever is left is God, is truth, is bliss.
Enough for today.
The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 3
Chapter #6
Chapter title: There is no evolution
17 August 1979 am in Buddha Hall

The first question:
Question 1
BELOVED MASTER,

COULD THERE BE AN ULTIMATE GOAL OF THE PHYSICAL EVOLUTIONARY PROCESS? IF SO, WHAT IS IT?

Digvijay, there is no goal of life. Life itself is its goal. It is not moving towards some target. It is herenow, it has no future. Life is always in the present. But the mind cannot live in the present: mind dies in the present. Hence, down the ages, mystics have invented devices to bring the mind to the present. The moment the mind comes to the present, it melts as snow, melts in the hot sun; it disappears, evaporates.

And the disappearance of the mind is the greatest experience possible to human beings, because in that disappearance is the appearance of God.

Mind lives in the future; future is its territory, its kingdom. And future is possible only through goal orientation. So mind makes goals out of everything; life must have a goal -- not only a goal but an ultimate goal. Then mind is perfectly happy, then it can protect itself: how to achieve that goal, how to reach to that ultimate?

The moment you can ask, "How?" mind is perfectly at ease. It is very clever, cunning, skillful in inventing ways and means to achieve something, whatsoever it is -- but it has to be there in the future. Mind lives through creating goals: political, social, evolutionary, spiritual, and so on and so forth; but the mind needs some goal to exist, it feeds on it. In truth, all is and nothing is going to happen. Tomorrow never comes. It is always now and here.

The mystic approach is totally different from the goal-oriented mind. The mystic says, "Live the moment in its

totality, love the moment in its totality, drown yourself in this overwhelming existence, and you will come closer and closer to God." By "God" I don't mean some person; by "God" I simply mean the essential core of existence, the center of the cyclone.

The universe is the circumference and God is the center. If you dive deep in the now, in the here, you are bound to encounter the center. And the miracle is that the center of all is also your center too. To become aware of it, to live that center, from that center, into full awareness, is to be a buddha, is to be enlightened.

But remember, buddhahood is not an ultimate goal. It is not something which has to be achieved somewhere else. It is available right now -- immediately it is available, not ultimately. Remember these two words: the ultimate and the immediate. The ultimate brings the mind in, the immediate helps the mind to disappear.

To me, the immediate is the ultimate. There is no goal, physical, psychological, spiritual. All is as it should be... it already is. Drop your tensions, anxieties for the future, what is going to happen. All has already happened! Live it! Don't be ambitious. Goals make you ambitious, and they drive you crazy. The more goal-oriented a person is, the crazier he becomes -- because ambition is nothing but ego. You can go on inventing new goals; there will always be the horizon beyond. And with those new goals your ego can go on and on having new trips.

The mystic and the world of the mystic is a totally different dimension. What I am talking about here has nothing to do with goal orientation -- that is the way of the mind. I am teaching you the way of no-mind.

Digvijay, I know your tremendous interest in the evolutionary process. I am perfectly aware that you have devoted your whole life in that search. And you will be shocked when you hear me say that you have been wasting your life -- wasting because the present is being sacrificed for the future. And unless you drop this idea of an ultimate goal you will never be able to come down to the earth, to the present, to the moment. And without that there is no meditation, and without meditation there is no God.

The immediate is the ultimate -- I teach you the immediate, living moment to moment, without carrying the past. Buddha says, not hoarding the past, not accumulating the past; I would like to add, not projecting in the future either. If the past and the future disappear, what is left? A great silence, a profound presence of something utterly unknown. A mystery overwhelms you. And that mystery is immediate. I will not say "ultimate," because 'ultimate' means you can postpone for tomorrow. 'Immediate' shocks you, shakes you into awareness right now.

A goal is possible if we divide life into means and ends. That's how it has been down the ages. But life is one, it cannot be divided. It is indivisible, whole; it is an organic unity. Nothing is a means, nothing is an end. The whole life is one. You cannot categorize means and ends.

But the moment you think about evolution, goal, you have to divide life, then something becomes a means and something else becomes the end. Adolf Hitler believed in evolution, hence he could convince the intelligentsia of Germany, which is one of the most sophisticated intelligentsia of the world. In the name of evolution he could preach his Nazi philosophy that superman is the goal,

that man has to be sacrificed for the superman. It appealed, it looked logical.

Who is the superman? And who is going to become the superman? Of course, the Nordics, the Germans. It enhanced the German ego tremendously. "Even if the whole humanity has to be destroyed, it is worth destroying because the great goal of superhumanity is looming large on the horizon. Everything can be sacrificed for it." That's how he could convince his country to drag the whole world into a world war.

Sri Aurobindo also talks in the same language -- the language of evolution. Not the superman but the supermind is the goal. And you have to sacrifice your present for that supermind; again the same idea of sacrifice. Man has remained dominated by the idea of sacrifice. Sacrifice! Sacrifice! Sacrifice! Be a martyr! That's the only way to create a golden future.

My effort here is just the opposite. Avoid Adolf Hitlers and Sri Aurobindos. No sacrifice! Don't try to be a martyr! There is no other goal than this moment, and existence is as perfect as is ever possible. Existence is as perfect as it ever will be. Existence IS perfection.

But because of the idea of a goal, we start comparing: then man is higher than the monkeys and the monkeys are higher than the dogs, and so on and so forth. But who is going to decide? Have you ever asked the monkeys? As far as I know, they still laugh at Charles Darwin, because they can't believe this poor man is higher than the monkeys. Have you ever fought with any monkey? Fight with a monkey barehanded and you will know who is more powerful. Can you jump like the monkeys on the trees?

And then you will know whose body is more athletic. Monkeys live on the trees and you live on the earth: you are the fallen monkeys! But Charles Darwin never asked the monkeys.

Man himself goes on deciding. So if Germans decide then Germans are the highest race, obviously. And if Indians decide then they are the Aryans, the real Aryans, the pure blood. And if Jews decide then they are the chosen people of God. But who is going to decide? And if man decides then man is higher than all the animals. In fact, there is nobody higher and nobody lower. All these categories are stupid -- there is no hierarchy.

Existence is absolutely communist. Everybody is equal, participating in the same life, breathing the same air, getting warmed by the same sun, dancing under the same sky. Even trees are not lower than you, even rocks are not lower than you. The very language of lower and higher is utterly wrong. But the word 'evolution' brings that language in; it becomes the "in" thing. Then you have to make a hierarchy: then you are above animals and below angels. And then the whole journey starts: how to go higher and higher and higher? And there is no roof, there is no ceiling; you can go on projecting.

But if you ask the bees they won't think that you are higher than them. The intelligentsia of the bees must be watching a thousand and one stupidities of human beings -- because the bees are the most organized phenomenon in existence. Man and his society must look like chaos compared to the society of the bees. Everything is so organized -- even Adolf Hitler would have felt a little inferior. And so willingly, so voluntarily -- the bees are not forced, they are

not living in a concentration camp. Willingly, joyously, they are part of an organization, so deeply involved with the organization that they have lost their individuality totally; they live as an organic part, they are not separate. Or if you watch the society of the ants, it is fixed, systematic; it has a tremendous order.

Now, how are you going to decide who is higher? This chaotic society of man? In three thousand years man has fought five thousand wars -- constantly killing each other, murdering, butchering, in the name of politics, in the name of religion... and this man you think is the highest evolved being on the earth? There are people like Arthur Koestler who think that something in the very beginning has gone wrong in the human mind, some nuts and bolts are missing -- man is born crazy.

If you watch man, it appears so. His whole life seems to be that of violence, struggle, destruction. No other animal is so destructive. No other animal kills its own species; the tigers don't kill other tigers and the dogs don't kill other dogs. Even if they fight, their fights are mock fights; they fight only to decide who is powerful. Once it is decided, the fight stops -- because to attack somebody who is weaker than you is not only wrong, it is utterly destructive and stupid too.

Two dogs will fight: they will show their teeth, they will bark, they will jump at each other, but they are simply watching who is more powerful. Once they have taken note who is more powerful, one dog will stop barking, will put his tail between his legs, and it is finished! He has given the sign that "I am weaker and you are stronger." And there is no shame, he is not ashamed -- what can he do if he is

weaker and the other is stronger? How is he responsible for that? One tree is taller, another tree is not taller. Do you think the rosebushes are feeling ashamed because the mango trees and the neem trees and other trees are going so high? The roses are not worried at all: "So what? You are taller and we are not taller -- that's the way you are, this is the way we are."

See the sanity of the point: except human beings nobody is so insane as to fight with someone who is weaker. Once it is decided.... And don't you have even that much consciousness as dogs and tigers have -- that they can see, it is so apparent that the other is stronger? Then what is the point of fighting at all? The game is finished -- the other is the winner. Hence no destruction happens, hence no killing happens. And animals don't kill even other animals unless they are hungry -- except man. Only man goes for hunting. And Digvijay is a former prince: he must know what hunting is, he must have animal heads in his palace, trophies. The more tigers and lions you have killed, the greater you are. And for what? Just to exhibit! Whenever I have visited the palace of a king, I have felt very sorry for the king. He seems to be utterly insensitive; showing these dead heads and dead bodies and skins of animals, he thinks he is exhibiting his power, his vitality. He is simply exhibiting his utter stupidity, inhumanity.

Animals kill only when they are hungry; then it can be forgiven. No animal ever kills without hunger; no animal ever kills as a play. Killing somebody in a game, can you think this hunter is more evolved than other beings? Just destroying a life for sheer play -- and the play is also unjust, because you are sitting in a treetop and the animal is

on the ground, and from high on the top where the animal cannot reach you shoot him. The animal has no weapons to protect himself, and you think you are being very brave? You are simply showing your cowardliness.

If we look at man it does not appear at all that he is the most evolved animal on the earth -- just the opposite. No other animal goes insane except man. Yes, a few animals go insane, but they only go into insanity when they are put in zoos, not in their wild state. And a zoo is a human phenomenon.

Just think of yourself: if the elephants created a zoo and put you into a zoo -- how long would you remain sane? It will be impossible for you to remain sane; it will be just natural to go insane. Animals don't become homosexuals -- unless they are put in a zoo. In a zoo they turn into homosexuals; in a zoo they are bound to because they can't get their females. In a zoo they are confined in such small spaces; those small spaces are bound to drive them crazy.

You must have seen tigers walking up and down in their cages, because they used to live and run for miles. The whole wild world was theirs, and now just a small cage... and surrounded by the tourists and the visitors and foolish people looking at them. Just think of yourself being in a zoo made by the elephants or the tigers or the monkeys, and all kinds of monkeys looking at you, day in, day out, the whole situation unnatural.

Now scientists say that there is a certain territory that is needed by every animal, a certain space; if that is not given to that animal it is bound to go insane. Wild animals need an area of miles and miles to remain free and to remain sane. Yes, in a zoo they go insane, they go crazy. They

attack even their own species; they become destructive. Even sometimes they have been known to commit suicide, but never in their natural state. It is only man who commits suicide, goes insane, becomes sexually perverted -- and still man goes on thinking that he is the highest peak!
As far as I am concerned, I don't believe in hierarchy. The monkey is a monkey, the man is a man. Nobody is higher and nobody is lower. The rocks are rocks and the trees are trees. And we all participate in one God. Yes, there are great changes happening, but it is not evolution; evolution means we are going higher. Changes are there, certainly; life is constantly moving, it is a river. But change does not mean evolution, remember. You can change without your being evolving -- and that's what is happening.

And that change, constant change, gives you grounds to impose your theory of evolution on it. Things are changing, life is always in a flux; nothing is permanent, all is fluid. Man has not been like this before, and man will never again be like this. Everything is in a process, but the process is not goal-oriented; it is not moving towards a certain goal. It is a very playful process.
Children playing, you cannot say that they are evolving; children playing, you cannot say they are achieving something. They are not achieving anything. That's exactly the concept of LEELA in the East. Leela means play -- the world is God's play, and in play there is no question of evolution.
The idea of evolution is really Western; the East has never believed in evolution. The East believes in playfulness. In playfulness there is no evolution at all. Nothing is means

and nothing is taken as ends. It is a dance of energies, not moving into any particular direction, not meant to achieve something; the joy is in the play itself, the value is intrinsic, not extrinsic. When you start thinking of evolution, the value is extrinsic; the value depends on what you are going to achieve, what you are going to become.

If a man becomes a great scientist, a Nobel Prize winner, he has evolved, but the man who remains a woodcutter, he has not evolved. Why? What is there so significant in doing mathematics? And what is there so insignificant in chopping wood? One likes to chop wood, another likes to play with figures, arithmetic, geometry or something else -- these are likes, different likes. One loves to swim, somebody else loves to philosophize... there is nothing higher and nothing lower.

But we have made a society on a hierarchical pattern. The brahmin is at the top -- the brahmin means the professor, the academician, the Nobel Prize winner, the famous doctor, the famous engineer, the scholar. That is the meaning of the brahmin -- he is the highest. Why? Why is not the woodcutter the highest? If the woodcutter enjoys his chopping of wood more than the professor enjoys his teaching, who is higher? The professor may be simply dragging, repeating every time, every year, the same thing.

I used to know a professor who was repeating the same lectures at least for thirty years. I had heard it, and his other students had told me that exactly the same lectures, word for word.... So one day, when the professor was asleep in the afternoon, I went into his house. I looked into his

books, found the book in which he had collected all the lectures, and stole it.

You cannot believe what happened to the professor! He didn't turn up the next day. I inquired after him; he said, "I am shattered, my life is finished -- somebody has stolen my book, and I cannot speak without it. I have been using the same notes for thirty years! Now I cannot make again new notes."

I could see the poor man; he was just functioning like a gramophone record. There was no need of him. I gave him the book and I said, "Why do you bother to come to the university at all? You can simply send this book, one of us can read it, and others can take notes. Why do you bother in your old age to come to the university again and again? This book will do! You can die in peace. This book is enough. You don't have to live at all -- there is no need."

Now, this professor is a brahmin; he is the highest because the head is thought to be the highest. It IS on the top, maybe that's why the idea has arisen that the head and the head people are the topmost people. The bosses are called "heads" and the servants are called "hands"! Why? Just because physically the head is on top...?

We have created hierarchy in society. The lowest are those poor people who are chopping wood or cleaning the roads. Why are they the lowest? -- because they are doing the most essential things. The professors can be discarded, the society can exist without them; but the society cannot exist without the street cleaners, the toilet cleaners, the woodchoppers -- the society cannot exist without them.

They are far more essential, far more fundamental, but they are the lowest.

The whole idea is wrong. There is no hierarchy. The professor is doing his work, and the woodcutter is doing his work, and both are needed. Neither is there a hierarchy between men and other animals, nor is there a hierarchy between men and men. I am against the whole idea of hierarchy.

And that's my vision of a new commune.

In the new commune there is going to be nobody higher and nobody lower. In this ashram, there is nobody higher, nobody lower. There are toilet cleaners and there are professors, therapists, and they are all the same -- they are all doing some useful work, some essential work. The vice-chancellor here, in this commune, is on the same ground as the woodchopper. The great therapist has no more prestige, power, than the toilet cleaner. Hence, there is no problem. A Ph.D. can choose toilet cleaning -- one Ph.D. IS doing that; another Ph.D. is just cleaning the streets of the ashram.

If there is no hierarchy, there is no problem; otherwise, the Ph.D. will think, "How can I do this work, this menial job? I am not a hand, I am a head." In this commune there are no heads, no hands -- people, whole people, respected, loved, for whatsoever they are doing, or whatsoever they can do, or whatsoever they LIKE doing.

This whole existence is a commune. God is the center and we are all its circumference.

There is no evolution, Digvijay, no ultimate goal. It is a play. Enjoy it, celebrate it! If this idea of ultimate goal and evolution can drop from your mind, I KNOW your

potential; you can become one of the great sannyasins. You can be a new man. But you are going crazy because of this idea; your whole life is being devoted to it. And if it is fundamentally wrong then you will repent one day. Forget all about it! Start meditating more and more about your own inner being. Don't be worried what is going to happen; rather, be involved with what is already happening. God is a presence, God is a being, not a becoming, and so is this whole existence.
The day we drop the idea of evolution and ultimate goal, the world will be freed from its bondage of future. It is the future that is keeping us in a bondage, and the past -- and both are in conspiracy against man.
Future and past dropped, you attain to freedom -- freedom, Buddha says, which has no bounds.

The second question:
Question 2
BELOVED MASTER,
HOW DO YOU KNOW SO MANY JOKES?

Viramo, first, in none of my past lives have I been an Englishman. Secondly, in many of my past lives I have been a Jew.

Sir Reginald, riding in a New York taxi, was challenged by the driver to solve a riddle: "This person I am thinking of has the same father that I have and the same mother, but it is not my sister and it is not my brother. Who is it?"
The Britisher thought for a moment, and then gave up. "It is me," the cabdriver told him.

"By Jove! That's jolly good. I must try that on the chaps at my club!"
A month later he was sitting in London with his cigar-smoking cronies. He said, "Gentlemen, this individual I have in mind is not my brother and not my sister, yet this person has the same parents as I have -- who is it?"
After several thoughtful minutes, all the members conceded defeat. "Who is it?" one of them inquired. "Come, Reggie, give us the answer."
Reggie slapped his knees in triumph. "It is a taxicab driver in New York City!" he roared.

And the second story:

Morton and Fogel were discussing humor over lunch. "Do Jews react differently when they hear a joke?" asked Morton.
"What a question!" replied Fogel. "If you tell an Englishman a joke he will laugh at it three times: once when you tell it, again when you explain it and a third time when he understands the point. Tell a German the same joke: he will laugh twice -- both times to be polite -- there won't be a third time because he will never get the point. Tell the same joke to an American: he will laugh once, immediately, because he will get it right away. But," said Fogel, "when you tell the joke to a Jew...."
"Yes?" asked Morton.
"When you tell the same joke to a Jew, he won't laugh at all. Instead he will say, 'It is an old joke -- and besides, you told it all wrong!'"

The third question:
Question 3
BELOVED MASTER,
I HEARD YOU SAY THAT BEING A SANNYASIN MEANS TO BE READY TO LIVE A VERY LONELY LIFE. BUT SINCE I'M A SANNYASIN I FEEL THAT I CAN'T BE LONELY ANYMORE, AS YOU ARE ALWAYS AROUND. DO I UNDERSTAND YOU WRONG?

Deva Maya, you do not understand me at all. It is not a question of understanding right or wrong -- you don't understand me at all.
I have NOT told you that a sannyasin has to be ready to live a lonely life. What I had told you was: a sannyasin knows how to live alone. And to be lonely is totally different from being alone. Not only different, they are opposites. They are as far away from each other as the sky and the earth; the distance is infinite between them.
To be lonely means a negative state: you are hankering for the other, you are longing for company, you are missing the crowd. You cannot tolerate yourself; you feel yourself intolerable. You are bored with yourself -- that's what being lonely means -- utterly bored.
To be alone is totally different: it is utterly ecstatic. To be alone means a positive state. You are not missing the other, you are enjoying yourself. You are not bored by yourself, you are intrigued. A great challenge comes from your innermost core. You start a journey of interiority. When there are others you are occupied with them, your consciousness remains focused on them. When you are

alone, your consciousness moves inwards. When you are with others you have to be an extrovert -- your consciousness turning upon itself, showering upon itself. When you are with others your light shows their faces; when you are alone your light shows your own original face.

Maya, you have not understood me. I had not told you that to be a sannyasin means "to be ready to live a very lonely life." From where did you get this idea of living a very lonely life? Certainly one has to be able to live alone, but to live alone does not mean that you cannot relate; on the contrary, a man who can live alone becomes so full of joy, becomes so brimful, that he HAS to relate. He becomes a raincloud -- he has to shower. He becomes a flower so full of fragrance that he has to open its petals and allow its fragrance to be released to the winds.

A person who knows how to be alone becomes so full of song that he has to sing it. And where can you sing a song? You can sing a song only in love, in relating, in sharing with people. But you can share only if you have in the first place.

The problem is that people don't have any joy in their being and they are bent upon sharing it. Now, two miserable people bent upon sharing their joys with each other -- what is going to happen? The misery will not be doubled, it will be multiplied.

That's what people are doing to each other: husbands to wives and wives to husbands, and parents to children and children to parents, and friends to friends. In fact enemies are not so inimical as friends prove finally: torturing each other, unloading their miseries on each other, throwing

their dirt on each other. They are stinking -- what can they do? When they come close to you, you have to suffer their stink. And you have to suffer if you want them to suffer YOUR stink. So it is a bargain.

You cannot live alone, they cannot live alone -- you have to be together. Even if it stinks, at least there is the consolation that "I am not alone."

A man who knows how to be alone knows how to be meditative. Aloneness means meditation -- just relishing your own being, celebrating your own being.

Walt Whitman says: I celebrate myself, I sing myself. That is aloneness. This man Whitman is really a mystic, not just a poet. He should be counted with the ancient RISHIS of the Upanishads. America has not given birth to many great mystics; Whitman is really one of the most precious gifts of America to the world. He says: I celebrate myself, I sing myself. That's what a mystic has always been supposed to do, that's what a mystic's function is: to celebrate himself. But how will you celebrate? You will have to invite others. You will have to ask others to come and participate. Meditation gives you the insight of your own inner treasure, and in love you share it. That's what I mean when I say that a sannyasin has to be ready to be alone -- so that one day he can be ready to love. Only a man who knows the beauties of solitude can love. But just a slight difference and you can miss the whole point.

Now, the difference between aloneness and loneliness is not much; as far as language is concerned there is no difference at all, they are synonyms. In the dictionaries you will find aloneness described as loneliness, loneliness as

aloneness -- but that is only in the dictionaries, not in life itself. In life itself it is totally different.
Don't live through language, don't become too much obsessed with language, because language is only utilitarian. It can mislead you -- it misleads. It can't help it; it has been invented by people who know nothing. I am saying "aloneness" and your mind hears "loneliness." Once you translate aloneness as loneliness you are millions of miles away -- not only miles but millions of light-years away from me.

Potter saw a store with a sign reading: "Hans Schmidt's Chinese Laundry." Being curious he entered and was greeted by a Chinese who identified himself as Hans Schmidt.
"How come you have a name like that?" asked Potter.
"When I land in America I stand in immigration line behind German," explained the oriental. "When they ask German his name, he say, 'Hans Schmidt.' When official ask me my name I say, 'Sam Ting.'"

It is very easy to understand.

P.F.C. Perkins refused to go and fight in Korea. He was told that if he would not bear arms, the provost marshal would shoot him. "Are you a conscientious objector?" asked the first sergeant.
"I ain't objectin' to nothin'," said Perkins, "but I had the gonorrhea and the diarrhea both, and if this 'Korea' is anything like it -- go ahead and shoot!"

Maya, I said something, you heard totally something else.

A London chap sees a good-looking girl sitting alone at another table and says, "Would you care for a cigarette?"
She said, "Sorry, I don't smoke."
He waited for a few moments and then said, "Would you care for a drink?"
"Sorry, I don't drink."
He waited another ten minutes and asked, "Would you care to have dinner with me?"
"I am sorry," she replied, "I don't eat dinner."
"Well, for heaven's sake! If you don't smoke or drink or eat dinner, what in heaven's name do you do about sex?"
"Oh, along about six I have a cup of tea and a biscuit."

You change that word 'loneliness'; drop it completely from your mind. Learn what aloneness is -- and aloneness is a beautiful phenomenon, the most beautiful. Then my presence will not disturb your aloneness, my presence will enhance it. My presence, my remembrance, feeling me around yourself, engulfing you, will enhance it, will make it richer, will make it more crystal-clear. And not only my presence but the presence of my sannyasins will also be absolutely nondisturbing to aloneness.
In fact, aloneness cannot be disturbed at all. It is such a crystallized state of consciousness, nothing can distract you away from it, and everything helps to make it stronger.
Have you watched this paradoxical phenomenon? For example, right now we are sitting here in silence... the chirping of the birds -- is it disturbing the silence or enriching it? The crow -- is he disturbing your silence, or

helping and giving it a contrast? If you are really silent, then even in the marketplace you will be surprised that your silence deepens. If your silence is disturbed by the marketplace, that simply means it was not silence in the first place. It was just forced, cultivated, practiced, plastic -- it was not true.

If true silence is there, nothing can disturb it. Each disturbance comes to enhance it. It is like in a dark night you are walking on a street and a car passes by with full headlights on. For a moment you are dazed by the light, and then the car is gone by. Do you think the darkness is less than before? It is deeper than before, it is denser than before. The car and its headlights have not disturbed it at all; rather, they helped tremendously.

And this is how it is with aloneness: your aloneness will not be disturbed by the commune, and certainly not by me -- because I am not a noise. I am a melody, a music -- a music that cannot be heard by the ears but can only be heard by the heart.

It is good that you have started feeling me. It is good that you say, "Since I am a sannyasin I feel that I can't be lonely anymore, as You are always around."

Yes, you cannot be lonely anymore, but you will be more alone now that I am always with you. And aloneness is a precious treasure, the door to the kingdom of God. But forget that word 'loneliness'; it is ugly, it is pathological. And a man who seeks friendship, love, companionship, out of loneliness is not going to find it. In fact, with whomsoever he will associate he will feel cheated and he will make the other feel cheated. He will feel tired and bored, and he will make the other feel tired and bored. He

will feel sucked and he will make the other feel sucked, because both will be sucking on each other's energies. And they don't have much in the first place. Their streams are running very thin; they are like summer streams in a desertland. You cannot take any water out of them. But if you seek friendship and love and companionship out of aloneness, you are a flooded river, a river in the rains. You can share as much as you want. And the more you share, the more you will have.
This is the inner economics: the more you give, the more you get from God. Once you have known the knack of it you become a spendthrift, you are no longer a miser.
A spiritual person cannot be a miser, and a miser cannot be a spiritual person.

The fourth question:
Question 4
BELOVED MASTER,
WHAT DO YOU HAVE TO SAY ABOUT THE NEW INDIAN GOVERNMENT OF PRIME MINISTER, CHOWDHRY CHARAN SINGH?

Narendra, I have nothing to say about such rubbish things, but because you have asked, just to be polite to you and to your question, just to pay my respects for your question, I will tell you three stories.
First:

A man took a cab to the palace of the prime minister where he asked the driver to wait for him.

The driver refused saying he did not have time. "But you will wait for me," said the passenger. "I am the new prime minister."
"In that case," replied the driver, "I will wait -- you won't be in there long!"

And the second:

Work schedule of the Indian cabinet:
Monday: Conference with leading personalities.
Tuesday: Formation of new cabinet.
Wednesday:First meeting of the new cabinet.
Thursday: First announcements of new cabinet.
Friday: Withdrawal of announcements.
Saturday: Resignation of new cabinet.
Sunday: Holiday.
Monday: See above.

And the third:

It is an historical fact that Diogenes went all around the known world, lamp in hand, trying to find an honest man. When he got to New Delhi, they stole his lamp.

The fifth question:
Question 5
BELOVED MASTER,
SEX AND DEATH SEEM TO BE THE MAIN ATTRACTIONS FOR ME. WHAT CAN YOU SAY ABOUT THESE POLES TO HELP ME GO BEYOND?

Saguna, sex and death are really one energy. Sex is one side of the coin, death the other side. Hence, anybody who is interested in sex is bound to be interested in death -- although he would like to avoid it. Anybody who is interested in death is bound to be interested in sex -- although he would like to avoid it. Why? -- because the popular conception is that sex and death are opposites. They are not. And because of this popular conception there have existed two kinds of cultures in the world: sex-oriented and death-oriented.
For example, India has remained for centuries a death-oriented culture. Because it is death-oriented it represses sex. Thinking that sex is against, it represses sex, it avoids sex; it pretends sex does not exist. You can talk about death with no problem, but you cannot talk about sex.

Just the other day a sannyasin had asked, "I was almost caught and imprisoned by the police because I was saying goodbye to my girlfriend and we kissed each other before the police station." It was very difficult to get rid of the police. They caught hold of them; they had to wait there for two hours. Somehow they persuaded them, apologized. The sannyasin had asked, "I am puzzled. What wrong had I done there? I was saying goodbye to my girlfriend, she was leaving; we may see each other, we may not, because who knows about tomorrow? She will be away for six months, and who knows what is going to happen in these six months? So what was wrong with my kissing the girl and her kissing me, just a goodbye? Why is it objectionable? People are pissing on the streets and nobody objects!"

Now, that sannyasin does not know that since Morarji Desai became prime minister of this country pissing has become a holy thing. You can piss anywhere -- that is something sacred. In fact it is a sacred duty. Do as much as you can, because it is not pissing: it is the water of life. You are nourishing the earth; you are doing a great public service.

I have heard:
When Morarji Desai went to America, he was very much puzzled because in the parties, in the gatherings, in meetings, ladies would always keep to the other side of the room. Finally, he had to ask; he was curious why ladies wouldn't come close to him. He was informed, "We are sorry to say, but ladies are afraid that you may feel thirsty any time, and if you do your thing in public it will be embarrassing. So they keep to the other side. In case something like that happens, they can escape; at least they can turn their backs towards you."

In India, kissing is something like a sin, a crime. And in a public place, and that too before a police station! India is a death-oriented culture. You can talk about death; dead bodies of beggars can lie down by the side of the road and nobody will pay any attention. People will go on passing. It is accepted; death is accepted. In fact, not only accepted, but magnified -- to create fear in people so that they become religious.
If death is magnified, it really scares you. And out of fear you can start going to the temple, to the mosque, to the priest, because death is coming -- sooner or later you will

have to die. Some arrangements have to be made, arrangements for that long journey. Who knows what will be needed? The priests pretend that they know.
And all the so-called saints of India will be talking about death. They will bring up the subject of death again and again and again. Their whole business depends on death; if people forget about death, people start forgetting about God, people start forgetting about temples, people start forgetting about saints. So saints cannot leave you alone; they will go on bringing the subject of death in your mind so they can go on keeping you trembling. Your fear is the secret of their trade: if you are afraid, you will remain slaves to them. If you become unafraid, then you will get out of their folds; then you cannot be exploited. Death is not bad for them, it is good. It helps their business.
But sex... that is a danger for them. India is not a sex-oriented country. Kissing, hugging, love, the very phenomenon of love, makes you more earthbound, makes you less afraid of death. Lovers are the people who are the least afraid of death. When you are in love you don't care about death. If it comes, it comes. So what? If you are in love, you can die smilingly. With a kiss on your lips you can say goodbye. You loved, you lived; there is nothing to repent. Your life has not been a wastage. You bloomed! You danced in the sun, in the wind, in the rain -- what more can you expect? Immense was the gift of life: love was its gift. You are grateful! Why should you go to the priest? You may go to the poet, you may go to the painter, you may go to the musician, but you will not go to the priest. That's why you will be surprised: in my commune you will find musicians and you will find poets and you will find

dancers and you will find singers, but you will not find any priest at all. The priest seems to be the center of all religious activity, and he is missing here, absolutely missing -- because my approach is that first you have to know what love is, you have to go deep into love. Dive as deep as possible into love!

If you can dive really deep into love you will be surprised that you have arrived at death. That's my own experience -- I am not propounding a theory, I am simply stating my own existential state, my own experience. I am only stating a fact: if you love deeply you are bound to come to the phenomenon of death. And when you come through love to death, even death is beautiful, because love makes everything beautiful. When you come through love to death, love glorifies death, love beautifies death; even death becomes a blessing. Those who have known love will know death as the ultimate in orgasm.

Now there are sex-oriented cultures, for example, America. There, death is taboo; you should not talk about death. If you start talking about death, people will avoid you. You will not be invited to parties anymore. You are not supposed to talk about death; death has not to be mentioned. Death is still one of the unmentionables. That's why even if somebody dies we have euphemisms, words to cover up the fact of death. We say, "He has passed away." We don't say, "He has died." We say, "He has become God's beloved." We don't know about God, we don't know what it means to become God's beloved, because we have never been beloved to anybody. Even if God wants to hug you, the police will catch hold of him. If he kisses you, even you will feel a little disturbed -- God? and kissing me?

Is he really a God or just a fraud? How can God kiss? Kissing has never been thought a spiritual activity. Even in public places it is prohibited, and he is doing it on a universal plane -- not only public but universal, at the very center of the cosmos! But we have these ways of avoiding death; it has to be somehow avoided. The word itself is taboo.

It is because of Sigmund Freud that the taboo against the word 'sex' was removed -- the whole credit goes to this man. He is one of the greatest benefactors of humanity. Although he himself was not enlightened, he has done a great service, a pioneer work: he removed one great taboo. Now you can talk about sex without feeling ashamed, without feeling guilty.

Another Freud is needed -- a Freud who will remove the taboo against death. The West is sex-oriented, the East is death-oriented; hence in the East people are repressive of sex and in the West people are repressive of death. Both are wrong because sex and death are two sides of the same coin. If you repress one, you cannot experience the other in its totality, because to experience the one in its totality is to experience the other too, and both have to be experienced. Life is an opportunity to experience sex and death. If you experience these two and if you can come to your own authentic experience that they both are one, you have transcended. Knowing that both are one is transcendence.

Saguna, you ask me, "What can you say about these poles to help me go beyond?"

Experience both. But right now death is not there; right now you have to experience love, sex -- all the delicacies of love, intricacies of love, complexities of love, all the

nuances of love. Right now, go deep into love, Saguna. And then when death comes you will be able to go deep into death too.
In fact, while making love, at the highest peak of orgasm a small death happens, because mind disappears, ego disappears, time disappears, as if the clock suddenly stops. You are transported into another world. You are not a body anymore, not a mind anymore, not an ego anymore... you are pure existence. That's the beauty of orgasm. To know orgasm is to experience a little bit of death, a small death. First go deep into love so you can have a few tastes of death. Then death will come one day -- then go dancingly into it, because you know it is going to be the greatest orgasm that you have ever known, that it is going to be the deepest of love. And that's how one transcends -- knowing that both are one. That very knowing is transcendence.

The last question:

Question 6
BELOVED MASTER,
I WANT TO BECOME A SANNYASIN, BUT GRADUALLY. IS IT OKAY WITH YOU? OR IS A SUDDEN JUMP A NECESSITY?

Girish Chandra, you remind me of a story:
During World War I, RAF Captain Bainsby shot down the German ace Baron von Ribstein over English territory. The next day Bainsby visited the baron in the hospital.
"Old chap," said the Britisher, "is there anything I can do for you?"

"Yes," replied Von Ribstein. "They are amputating my right arm. Would you drop it over Germany?" Captain Bainsby did as he was requested and a week later returned for a visit.
"My friend," said the baron, "they are taking off my right leg. Would you drop it over the fatherland?"
Bainsby fulfilled the request and went back to see his air nemesis once again.
"Captain," said Von Ribstein, "they are going to remove my left leg. Once more, can I get you to drop it behind the German lines?"
"Of course, old bean," replied Bainsby. "But I say, you are not trying to escape, are you?"

Enough for today.
The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 3
Chapter #7
Chapter title: He is the charioteer
18 August 1979 am in Buddha Hall

HE IS THE CHARIOTEER.
HE HAS TAMED HIS HORSES,
PRIDE AND THE SENSES.
EVEN THE GODS ADMIRE HIM.

YIELDING LIKE THE EARTH,
JOYOUS AND CLEAR LIKE THE LAKE,
STILL AS THE STONE AT THE DOOR,
HE IS FREE FROM LIFE AND DEATH.

HIS THOUGHTS ARE STILL.
HIS WORDS ARE STILL.
HIS WORK IS STILLNESS.
HE SEES HIS FREEDOM AND IS FREED.

THE MASTER SURRENDERS HIS BELIEFS.
HE SEES BEYOND THE END AND THE BEGINNING.

HE CUTS ALL TIES.
HE GIVES UP ALL HIS DESIRES.
HE RESISTS ALL TEMPTATION.
AND HE RISES.

AND WHEREVER HE LIVES,
IN THE CITY OR THE COUNTRY,
IN THE VALLEY OR IN THE HILLS,
THERE IS GREAT JOY.

EVEN IN THE EMPTY FOREST
HE FINDS JOY
BECAUSE HE WANTS NOTHING.

Man is a seed of great potential: man is the seed of buddhahood. Each man is born to be a buddha. Man is not born to be a slave but to be a master. But there are very few who actualize their potential. And the reason why millions can't realize their potential is that they take it for granted that they already have it.
Life is only an opportunity to grow, to be, to bloom. Life in itself is empty; unless you are creative you will not be able to fill it with fulfillment. You have a song in your heart to

be sung and you have a dance to be danced, but the dance is invisible, and the song -- even you have not heard it yet. It is deep down hidden in the innermost core of your being; it has to be brought to the surface, it has to be expressed. That's what is meant by 'self-actualization'. Rare is the person who transforms his life into a growth, who transforms his life into a long journey of self-actualization, who becomes what he was meant to be. In the East we have called that man the buddha, in the West we have called that man the christ. The word 'christ' exactly means what the word 'buddha' means: one who has come home.

We are all wanderers in search of the home, but the search is very unconscious -- groping in the dark, not exactly aware what we are groping for, who we are, where we are going. We go on like driftwood, we go on remaining accidental.

And it becomes possible because millions of people around you are in the same boat, and when you see that millions are doing the same things that you are doing, then you must be right -- because millions can't be wrong. That is your logic, and that logic is fundamentally erroneous: millions can't be right.

It is very rare that a person is right; it is very rare that a person realizes the truth. Millions live lives of lies, lives of pretension. Their existences are only superficial; they live on the circumference, utterly unaware of the center. And the center contains all: the center is the kingdom of God.

The first step towards buddhahood, towards the realization of your infinite potential, is to recognize that up to now you have been wasting your life, that up to now you have remained utterly unconscious.

Start becoming conscious; that is the only way to arrive. It is arduous, it is hard. To remain accidental is easy; it needs no intelligence, hence it is easy. Any idiot can do it -- all the idiots are already doing it. It is easy to be accidental because you never feel responsible for anything that happens. You can always throw the responsibility onto something else: fate, God, society, economic structure, the state, the church, the mother, the father, the parents.... You can go on throwing the responsibility onto somebody else; hence it is easy.

To be conscious means to take the whole responsibility on your own shoulders. To be responsible is the beginning of buddhahood.

When I use the word 'responsible' I am not using it in the ordinary connotation of being dutiful. I am using it in its real, essential meaning: the capacity to respond -- that's my meaning. And the capacity to respond is possible only if you are conscious. If you are fast asleep, how can you respond? If you are asleep, the birds will go on singing but you will not hear, and the flowers will go on blooming and you will never be able to sense the beauty, the fragrance, the joy, that they are showering on existence.

To be responsible means to be alert, conscious. To be responsible means to be mindful. Act with as much awareness as you can find possible. Even small things -- walking on the street, eating your food, taking your bath -- should not be done mechanically. Do them with full awareness.

Slowly slowly, small acts become luminous, and by and by those luminous acts go on gathering inside you, and finally the explosion. The seed has exploded, the potential has

become actual. You are no longer a seed but a lotus flower, a golden lotus flower, a one-thousand-petaled lotus flower. And that is the moment of great benediction; Buddha calls it nirvana. One has arrived. Now there is no more to achieve, nowhere to go. You can rest, you can relax -- the journey is over. Tremendous joy arises in that moment, great ecstasy is born.
But one has to begin from the beginning.

After a three-day drinking bout, Tooley and Bragan registered at a hotel and asked for twin beds. However, in the darkness they both got into the same bed.
"Hey!" yelled Tooley. "I think a homo has crept in bed with me."
"There's a queer in my bed, too," called Bragan.
"Let's throw the fairies out," called back the first.
A terrific wrestling match ensued and finally Tooley went sailing out of the bed. "How did you make out?" he called from the floor.
"I threw my guy out," said the other Irishman. "How about you?"
"He threw me out."
"Well, that makes us even. Get into bed with me."

This is how man is: in darkness, utterly unconscious; doing things, not knowing why; simply doing because there is an unconscious urge to do. Now, this is not only a mystic hypothesis about man. Sigmund Freud, Gustav Jung, Alfred Adler and others, the modern researchers into the psyche of man, have also come across the same fact.

Freud says man lives unconsciously, although the mind is so cunning that it can find reasons, motives. At least it can create a facade as if you are living a conscious life -- and that is very dangerous because you can start believing in your own facade. Then your life is gone, then you will not be able to use this tremendously valuable opportunity. People go on doing unconscious things -- although they suffer, although they are immensely miserable, still they go on doing the same things which bring misery to them. They don't know what else to do. They are not there, they are not present; hence they can't do anything. They are trapped in the unconscious instincts.

Hennessy, loaded to the gills, was lurking on a dark and deserted street corner. Soon a man came walking by, and Hennessy sprang out of the shadows, a gun in his hand. "Stay where you are!" he slobbered. Then he pulled a bottle out of his pocket. "Here," Hennessy ordered, "take a drink of this."
Too terrified to resist, the poor schnook took the bottle and drank deeply. "Wow!" he exclaimed. "That stuff tastes awful!"
"I know," gurgled the crocked Irishman. "Now you hold the gun and force me to drink some."

The stuff that you are drinking, that stuff that you call your life, is really awful! But you go on forcing yourself, doing the same repetitive acts again and again -- not knowing what else to do, not knowing where else to go, not knowing that there are other alternatives possible, that there are

alternative life-styles possible. And the greatest alternative is the religious dimension.

The religious dimension simply means the dimension of being conscious, of being alert, of living a life with self-remembrance. Let me add that by self-remembrance I don't mean self-consciousness. Self-consciousness is a false phenomenon; it is another name of ego. Self-remembering is a totally different phenomenon; it is the cessation of the ego. In self-consciousness there is no consciousness, there is only self; in self-remembering there is no self, only remembering.

Buddha's whole methodology is that of self-remembering: SAMMASATI. It has been translated as right-mindfulness or right awareness. What is RIGHT awareness? Can awareness also be wrong? Yes, there is a possibility: if awareness becomes too much focused on the object it is wrong awareness. Awareness has to be aware of itself, then it is right awareness.

When you look at a tree, at a mountain, at a star, you can be conscious -- conscious of the tree, conscious of the mountain, conscious of the star -- but you are not conscious of the one who is conscious of all these things. This is wrong awareness, focused on the object. You have to unfocus it from the object, you have to help it turn inwards. You have to bring it to your own interiority, you have to fill your subjectivity with its light.

When one is full of light, not showing other things in the light but only showing the light itself, then it is right awareness and that is the door to nirvana, to God -- to self-actualization.

By birth you are only given an opportunity. There is no inner necessity that you will really become, that your potential will be realized, that you will really attain to beinghood. Only the opportunity is given, then it is up to you. You will have to find the way, you will have to find the master, you will have to find the right situation. It is a great challenge.
Life is a great challenge to know oneself. If this challenge is accepted, you really become man for the first time; otherwise you go on existing on a subhuman level.
And it is not only the worldly people who are living an unconscious life. The so-called religious are not in any way different.

Father Duffy was sent to a small Eskimo village in the coldest part of Alaska. Several months later, the bishop paid him a visit. "How do you like it up here among the Eskimos?"
"Just fine," replied the priest.
"And what about the weather?" asked the bishop.
"Ah, as long as I have my rosary and my vodka I don't care how cold it is."
"I am glad to hear it. Say, I could go for a bit of vodka myself right now."
"Absolutely," said Father Duffy. "Rosary! Would you bring us two vodkas?"

The worldly, the otherworldly, are not really different. There is only one difference that makes a difference and that is of awareness, alertness. And the awareness can be practiced anywhere: you need not go to the mountains, you

need not go to the monasteries, you need not renounce the world.

In fact, IN the world it is easier to practice awareness than anywhere else. This is my own experience, and not only my personal experience but my observation of thousands of sannyasins, too. The easiest way to become aware is to be in the world and practice it, because the world gives you so many opportunities. A monastery cannot give you so many opportunities. Living in a mountain cave, what opportunities do you have to be alert? You will be more and more asleep there, more and more dull. Intelligence will not be required, hence you will lose all sharpness of intelligence. And awareness will not be required; there will be no challenge for it. It is only in challenges that life grows; the greater the challenge, the greater the opportunity. And the world is really full of challenges. Hence to my sannyasins I say: never renounce.

Rejoice in the world! In the past we have renounced too much and the result has been nil. How many buddhas have we produced in the past? They can be counted on the fingers. Only rarely, very rarely, a man became a Buddha, Christ or Krishna. Out of millions and millions of seeds only one seed sprouted? That is not much. It has been a sheer wastage of great human potential, and the reason has been the escapist attitude of the religions.

I affirm life, I rejoice in life. And I would like you all to be deeply, intensely, passionately in life, with one condition only: alertness, watchfulness, witnessing. And I know the difficulty arises, because you will be living with millions of sleepy people -- and sleep is contagious; just as awareness

is. Awareness, too, is contagious; hence the significance of being with a master.
The master cannot give you the truth. Nobody can give the truth to anybody else; it is untransferable. The master cannot take you to the ultimate goal, because there you will have to arrive alone, nobody can accompany you. You cannot reach there by imitating the master, because the more you imitate somebody, the falser you become. How can you arrive to truth by becoming false?
Then what is the function of a master? Then what is the use of searching for a master? Then why be a disciple at all? Still there is a reason, and the reason is that awareness is as contagious as sleepiness. If you sit with a few people who are all feeling sleepy you will start feeling sleepy.

A famous Sufi story says:
There was a fruit seller. He had a very cunning fox who used to watch his shop. Whenever he had to go out he would tell the fox, "Be alert. Sit in my place and just watch. Watch every activity that goes on around here. Don't allow anybody to steal anything. If somebody tries to steal, make noises -- I will run out of the house immediately."
One day Mulla Nasruddin was passing. He heard the shopkeeper talking to the fox, saying all these things, "Be alert, watch every activity that is going on around, and if you see that something is against us or somebody is trying to steal the fruits, make a noise immediately and I will come out."
Mulla Nasruddin was very much tempted. The shopkeeper went in. Nasruddin sat in front of the shop and just started

pretending he was falling asleep; with closed eyes he started dozing.
For a moment the poor fox thought, "What to do? Should I make a noise? But sleep is not an activity -- in fact it is just the opposite -- and the master has said that if some activity goes on around.... This is not activity: this man is falling asleep, and what can a man who is asleep do, what harm?"
But the fox was not aware that Mulla was trying a Sufi strategy! By pretending to be falling asleep, by dozing with closed eyes, slowly slowly he managed to make the fox fall asleep. Then he stole the fruits.
When the master came back, the fruits were gone... and the fox was snoring! He shook the fox and asked, "What is the matter? Didn't I tell you if any activity happens you have to make a noise so that I can come? But I never heard any noise."
The fox said, "But there was no activity happening. Just one man came; he sat in front of the shop and started dozing. Now, sleep is not an activity, is it? Sleep is inactivity."
Simple logic! A poor fox and simple logic.
"Then what happened to you?" the owner asked.
The fox said, "That I don't know, what happened to me. But the more I watched the man dozing, somehow I started dozing myself and it was impossible to remain awake. I don't know when I fell asleep."

If a few people are dozing and you are sitting with them, you can see the point: the vibe of sleep reaches to you. And similar is the case... although a little difficult because sleep is downhill and awakening is uphill. It is a little harder task.

But to be with a man who is awake, who is a buddha, is bound to make you alert -- just being with the master.
We are affected continuously by people around us. We may be absolutely oblivious of the fact that whatsoever we think has been given by others to us; whatsoever we feel, even that, too, has been given to us by others. The child learns by imitation. Even our emotions may be just borrowed, not only our thoughts; our sentiments may be just borrowed. People even can die just because of a borrowed idea. What is a motherland? -- an idea which we go on stuffing in the heads of small children. And we go on telling them that to die for the motherland is to be a great man, is to be a martyr; to die for the motherland is the greatest virtue.
In the past they used to say the same thing about religions, churches: "To die for the church, to die for your religion, is the sure way to enter into paradise. Instantly you are uplifted into paradise if you die for your religion." Kill others for your religion and it is not sin; die for your own religion and it is not suicide. Killing is not murder, committing suicide is not suicide! Once these ideas have been implanted in your being, imprinted in your being, they start functioning from there.

Three boys, a Catholic, a Jew, and a black kid, were sitting on a curb. A priest and a rabbi saw the boys.
The Catholic priest recognized one of the kids as a member of his parish, so he said, "Sonny, what are the two biggest things in your life?"
He said, "Father, the two biggest things in my life are the Catholic church and my priest."

The rabbi looked down and recognized the Jewish kid from his congregation. He said, "Son, what are the two biggest things in your life?"
"Rabbi, the two biggest things in my life are my congregation and my rabbi."
Both members of the clergy left smugly satisfied. Then the little colored kid looked at his two buddies and said, "Say, ain't neither one of you little mama's boys never had no girls nor watermelon yet?"

We learn from others. It may be your idea of God, it may be the priest, the rabbi -- or the watermelon! It is all the same: we learn from others.
In the close intimacy with a master, two things happen: one is his contagious awareness, his contagious love, his contagious compassion; and second, a great unlearning. Whatsoever you have learned from sleepy people, whether it is about the watermelon or about the rabbi -- there is not much difference between watermelons and rabbis! What you have learned from the established church and the state and the educational system, which are all serving vested interests, which are all serving the past, the dead past, which are not in your service.... Remember, they are to exploit you, they are to reduce you to machines -- efficient, but machines are machines, whether efficient or not efficient. Their function is to make you slaves of the society -- and the society is ill, the society is insane, the society is pathological.
Two things happen in the affinity of the master: the first, his contagious awareness; and the second: a process of unlearning. He starts destroying all that you have learned.

He cannot give you the truth, I repeat, but he can take away the lies. And that is one of the most essential things; without it, the truth can never happen to you. Truth is going to happen to you in your aloneness, but before it can happen all the blocks have to be removed: the blocks of lies that have been placed in the way of truth.

The master can take away your lies. His function is negative in that way, and positive in being contagious. His vibe can touch and wake you up. He can be a sunray entering through the window in your bedroom, falling on your face, and telling you that, "It is morning, now get up!" making it very difficult for you to sleep. Yes, the master can make it difficult for you to sleep and difficult for you to imitate and difficult for you to learn from those who are really your enemies and not your friends.
If these two things are possible, your life starts moving, you are no longer stuck. Your seed has fallen into the right soil: now in the right time the sprout will come. Soon there will be spring and you will see your own flowers. And the flowers of consciousness are the greatest flowers there are.

The sutras:

HE IS THE CHARIOTEER.
HE HAS TAMED HIS HORSES,
PRIDE AND THE SENSES.
EVEN THE GODS ADMIRE HIM.

The moment your potential becomes actual, the moment you are a realized soul, even gods admire you. Even gods

are far behind, because even gods have not yet become buddhas. They are also living unconscious lives -- maybe living in heaven. What you call angels in Christianity are called gods in Buddhism. The angels living in heaven, even they are not buddhas; they are as asleep as you are. The only difference is in their situation: they are in paradise and you are on earth. But the difference is not in their psychology; as far as their inner being is concerned it is as dark as yours.

Hindus have never been able to forgive Buddha, because he said that even gods admire a buddha, even gods worship a buddha.

The story is told that when Buddha became a buddha, when Gautama Siddhartha became enlightened, became a buddha, gods came from paradise to worship him. They touched his feet and they showered celestial flowers and they played celestial music. Hindus have never been able to forgive Buddhists for this story -- gods worshipping a man? But see the point: the gods are not worshipping a man, the gods are worshipping awareness, the gods are worshipping buddhahood. Gods are not worshipping Gautama Siddhartha the man, but the flame that has happened into his heart. That flame is eternal light, that flame is divine. And even gods are yet far far away from it; they have to attain it.

The idea of a buddha is higher than the idea of gods. Buddhism is the only religion of the world which has given man such dignity; no other religion has dignified man so highly. Buddhism is the religion of man.

A Buddhist poet, Chandidas, has said: SABAR UPAR MANUS SATYA, TAHAR UPAR NAHIN -- the truth of man is the highest truth, there is no higher truth than that. But the truth of man does not mean the body of man, the bones and the blood and the marrow, no. The truth of man means the flame which is not yet lit in you. Once it is lit you are transported into a totally different world. You have become part of the whole, you are no longer separate. The way to reach to this actualization is: HE IS THE CHARIOTEER. He becomes a conscious master. His body is a chariot, he drives it where he wants to, not vice versa. The unconscious man is driven by his body.

Just watch yourself: your body goes on driving you. Just a moment before you were not hungry, and you pass by the side of a restaurant, and the smell of food... and suddenly you start feeling hungry. The body is deceiving you, because just a moment before you were not hungry at all, there was no hunger. This hunger is the body driving you towards food. You were not even thinking of food just a moment before, and the smells coming from the bakery -- and suddenly a great desire, a great hunger, has arisen in you. It is the body driving you; you are not the charioteer. The chariot has become the master. This is the ordinary situation.

HE HAS TAMED HIS HORSES.... Senses are called the horses. In the ancient days in India there were chariots with five horses. Great kings used to move in chariots with five horses. Those who were the greatest, those who were called CHAKRAVARTINS -- the world rulers -- they used to move in chariots with seven horses. Five horses represent the five senses... and your five senses are continuously

influencing you. A man who wants to be really conscious has to start by becoming alert of these things.

If you take your dinner at a particular time every day, and you see the clock and it is time.... The clock may have stopped, the clock may not be right, the clock may be one hour ahead, but if it is time, immediately there is hunger. Now, this hunger is false, created by the senses, created by the body -- and you are going to be driven by these senses your whole life?

All over the world, seekers of truth have become aware of this phenomenon and they have reacted in two ways; one is right, the other is wrong. The wrong way is to start fighting with your senses and your body. By fighting you will never win. By fighting you will become weaker, you will be dissipating energy. By fighting you will become repressive -- and that which is repressed will take revenge sooner or later. Whenever it will find any opportunity to take possession of you, it is bound to take possession of you -- and with a vengeance!

You can fast for three days, you can force your body to fast, but if it is repression, the fourth day the body will take revenge -- you will eat too much, for a few days you will eat too much. In fact, if you had lost any weight in those three days, you will gain more weight within a week. The body has taken the revenge, the body has taught you a lesson.

Fighting is not the way -- not the way of the buddhas. Fighting is stupid; it is your own body, you need not fight with it, you have just to be more watchful of it. If some watchfulness starts crystallizing in you, you will be surprised that the body starts following you. It no longer

commands you, it no longer orders you: it becomes obedient to you.

When the master has arrived, the servants immediately fall in line. But the master is asleep, that's why the servants are pretending to be the masters.

HE IS THE CHARIOTEER. HE HAS TAMED HIS HORSES.... They have not to be killed or destroyed but tamed. They are beautiful animals! If tamed they can be of tremendous value, they can be of great service to you.

A buddha is not one who destroys his senses, but is one who makes his senses more clear, more clean, more sensitive -- but he remains the master. A buddha sees far more than you see, his eyes are far more receptive, because there is no smoke in his eyes, no clouds in his consciousness.

He sees the same green trees, but the trees are far greener for him than they are for you. He smells the same perfume but it is far more for him than it is for you. He sees the same beauty, but it gives him great ecstasy. It may not give you any ecstasy at all; you may bypass it. You may not even see the nazunia flower by the side of the road. What to say of the nazunia -- you may not even see a roseflower. You are so much occupied, your senses are so full of information; they are not empty and available. Your senses are not very sensitive.

The buddha does not kill them, but many saints have been doing that stupidity. There have been Christian saints in Russia -- a long tradition -- who used to cut off their genital organs; the nuns used to cut off their breasts. Ridiculous, stupid! What more stupidity can you expect than this? How can you be a master by cutting off your genital organs? --

because sexuality is not there, sexuality is in the head. And, of course, you cannot cut off your head. And even if you cut it off, it is not going to make any difference; you will be born again with a far filthier head!

Now we know -- scientific research has proved it beyond doubt -- that sexuality has nothing to do with the genital organs; it is not there. The genital organs are triggered by the head; in the brain there are centers. Pavlov and B.F. Skinner's work has been of tremendous value in this field. I don't agree with their behavioristic approach, but what they have researched can be used by the mystics, can be used by the seekers of truth, by the explorers of their inner being, in a very valuable way.

Skinner has found that in the brain there are centers -- centers for food, centers for sex, centers for everything. You touch with an electrode the sex center in the brain, and immediately you have an orgasm. A great joy arises in you as if you have made love to a woman. Skinner was experimenting with rats; he fixed an electrode in the sex center in the brain of the rat and he taught the rat how to push a button if he wants an orgasm. He was surprised what the rat did; he had never thought that rats are so sexual. The rat completely forgot about food, about everything. Even if there was danger, even if a cat was brought, the rat was unafraid. Who cares? He was continuously pushing the button, continuously... six thousand times! Until the rat fell utterly exhausted, almost dead, he went on pushing, because each push and there was an orgasm.

Now sooner or later this is going to happen to you too! It will be far easier, far more comfortable -- because to have a woman or to have a man is such a conflict. You can just

have a small, matchbox-sized computer in your pocket -- nobody will ever know what you are doing! You can go on moving your rosary and with the other hand you can push the button, and people will think that the ecstasy is happening because of the rosary. And your face will glow.... But if it becomes possible you will be in the same situation as the rat: you will die by pushing your button too much, you will forget everything else.

Genital organs have nothing to do with sex; everything is contained in the brain. Your hunger has nothing to do with your stomach; that too is contained in the brain. That's why at the right time, looking at the clock, suddenly the hunger. And the smell of the bakery does not go into the stomach, remember, it goes into the brain. It triggers a certain center in your brain, it pushes a button in the brain, and suddenly you are hungry. Now, destroying your body is not going to help, starving your body is not going to help. Even committing suicide is not going to help. Only one thing can help, and that is awareness.

If you become aware... awareness is not a part of the brain. Awareness is behind the brain, awareness is capable of seeing the brain.

You will be surprised to know that whatsoever modern psychological methods have been able to discover was discovered thousands of years before by the mystics in the East. Buddha was perfectly aware of the brain centers, Patanjali was perfectly aware of the brain centers. And the only way is to find something which is beyond the brain and move to that beyond and remain there. There is your mastery; from there you are the charioteer, from there all the horses are in your hands. And then they are beautiful!

Senses are not ugly -- nothing is ugly. Even sex has its own beauty, its own sacredness, its own holiness. But if you are rooted and centered in your beyond, in your consciousness, then everything has a different meaning, a different context. Then eating has its own spirituality.

The Upanishads say: ANNAM BRAHMA -- food is God. The man who had said this must have tasted God in food. And the tantrikas in the East have been saying it for centuries, that sex has the greatest potential to realize samadhi. It is the closest point -- the sexual orgasm is the closest to the spiritual orgasm, hence you can learn much from it. In sexual orgasm time disappears, ego disappears, mind disappears. In sexual orgasm, for a moment the whole world stops.

The same happens in the spiritual orgasm on a far bigger scale. The sexual is momentary and the spiritual is eternal, but the sexual gives you a glimpse of the spiritual.

Senses have to be tamed, not to be destroyed, remember. ... PRIDE AND THE SENSES. EVEN THE GODS ADMIRE HIM. Tame the senses, tame the pride. If the pride masters you, it is ego; if you are the master, then it is only self-respect. And every person of integrity has self-respect. Self-respect is not egoistic, not at all. Self-respect simply means, "I love myself, I respect myself, and I will not allow anybody to humiliate me. I will not humiliate anybody and I will not allow anybody to humiliate me. I will not create slavery for anybody and I will not be a slave to anybody either."

That is pride tamed. Then it has become a servant and it is beautiful.

YIELDING LIKE THE EARTH,
JOYOUS AND CLEAR LIKE THE LAKE,
STILL AS THE STONE AT THE DOOR,
HE IS FREE FROM LIFE AND DEATH.

The man who has become awakened becomes YIELDING LIKE THE EARTH. He loses all rigidity. He is not like a rock; he is like soft earth. And only the soft earth can be fertile, can be creative. The rock remains impotent; it creates nothing, nothing grows on it, nothing can grow in it. The rock remains utterly empty. But the yielding earth -- soft, humble, surrendering, receptive, womblike -- can give birth to new experiences, can give birth to new visions, new songs, new poetries. The awakened person is not rigid. In the words of Lao Tzu, he is not like the rock but like water. His way is the way of water -- the watercourse way.
JOYOUS AND CLEAR LIKE THE LAKE.... The man who is awakened, who is alert, becomes clear; all his confusions are gone. Not that he has been able to find solutions, no, but because all his questions have disappeared. Not that he has found the answers -- there is no answer to be found. Life is a mystery and remains a mystery; life cannot be demystified. And because he knows the mystery of life and now there are no longer any questions and no longer any conflicting answers, he is very clear, he is clarity itself, and he is joyous.
Why is he joyous? -- because now he knows that the whole kingdom of God is his. Now he knows that he is not an outsider here, that he belongs to existence and the existence belongs to him. He has become part of this infinite

celebration that goes on and on. He is a song in this celebration, a dance in this celebration.

STILL AS THE STONE AT THE DOOR.... Yielding like the earth and still like the rock, silent, unmoving.... HE IS FREE FROM LIFE AND DEATH. And he is not only free from death, remember: the moment you are free from death you are free from this life also -- this so-called life. Then there is another life.... Buddha does not name it, he will not give it any definition; he simply leaves it there. He leaves the sentence incomplete, because he knows anything said will destroy the beauty of it. Anything said will give it a limitation, and it is unlimited. Anything said is bound to be inadequate.

So he says only one thing: he is free from this life and this death. The life that you have known and the death that happens every day -- this life and this death both disappear for the awakened one. Time disappears, and life and death are two sides of time. Then he is eternity. He becomes one with the whole; you cannot find him as a separate entity anywhere.

Where is Gautama the Buddha now? Now he is in the air you breathe and in the water you drink and in the birds that go on singing and in the trees and in the clouds. Where is Buddha now? He has become the universe! The dewdrop has become the ocean, but the dewdrop has disappeared as a dewdrop. Now there is no life and death for the dewdrop; it exists no more -- how can there be a life for it? It exists no more, so how can it die? It has gone beyond the duality of life and death.

HIS THOUGHTS ARE STILL.

HIS WORDS ARE STILL.

This is a tremendously important statement. HIS THOUGHTS ARE STILL. That is simple and can be understood, because a man who is alert need not think. Thinking is needed because we cannot see. If a blind man wants to go out of this hall he will have to think; he will have to ask somebody; he will have to plan where to move, where are the steps, where is the door, and he will grope with his stick. But if a man has eyes he need not ask, he need not think. He simply gets up, he simply starts moving towards the door. He gets out of the door, not thinking about it at all. But the blind man cannot afford not to think. And this is how the sleepy man has to think -- the sleepy man is blind.

The man with awareness has inner eyes, has insight. He can see, and because he can see he need not think. Seeing is enough. Thinking is a poor substitute for seeing. HIS THOUGHTS ARE STILL.... But even more important is the statement: HIS WORDS ARE STILL. It is a contradiction in terms: "His words" means he speaks. Buddha spoke; otherwise we would not have these tremendously significant sutras. For forty-two years he was speaking continuously -- day in, day out, year in, year out; morning, afternoon, evening he was speaking. But he says: HIS WORDS ARE STILL.

If you are really attuned, if you are really silent in the presence of the master, you will see: HIS WORDS ARE STILL. His words carry a silence around them, his words are not noisy. His words have a melody, a rhythm, a music,

and at the very core of his words is utter silence. If you can penetrate his words you will come across infinite silence. But to penetrate the words of a buddha, the way is not analysis, the way is not argument, the way is not discussing. The way is falling in rapport with him, becoming attuned with him, being in a synchronicity with him. It happens: a moment comes between the disciple and the master when the very heart of the master and the heart of the disciple beat in the same rhythm, when the breathing of the master and the breathing of the disciple are in the same rhythm. When the master breathes out, the disciple breathes out; when the master breathes in, the disciple breathes in. Everything becomes so attuned.

In that attunement, in that at-onement, one enters into the very core of the master's words. And there you will not find any sound, any noise; there you will find absolute silence. And to taste it is to understand the master. The meaning of the word is not important, remember, but the silence of the word. The meaning can be understood by anybody who understands language, that is not difficult; but the silence can be understood only by the disciple, not by the student. The student listens to the word, understands its meaning, and that's that. He will understand the philosophy of Buddha, but he will not understand the Buddha himself. He will understand his theories, but he will miss his being. The disciple may not be able to say what his master's teaching is, he may not be able to reproduce his philosophy, he may be at a loss. If you ask him, "What is the teaching of your master?" he may become dumb. But he understands the master -- not what he says but what he is.

There is a very beautiful story:
When Buddha died, all the enlightened disciples gathered together to write down the message of the Buddha, because now the master is gone and for the coming generations the treasure has to be collected.
There were great enlightened disciples, but nobody could exactly reproduce it. A few of them were absolutely silent; when they were asked they shrugged their shoulders. A few said, "It is impossible, it can't be done." A few others said, "We would not like to commit any mistakes, and mistakes are bound to happen, because what we have seen in the man is impossible to express in language." In fact, not a single enlightened disciple was ready to compile the philosophy of the Buddha.
Then Ananda was approached. He was the only one who had lived with Buddha for forty-two years and was not yet enlightened. He had remembered all, everything; he had the whole collection, word for word. His memory must have been just extraordinary. But there was a problem. The problem was: can you believe in the words of an unenlightened person about an enlightened person?
Those who are enlightened are not ready to say anything; the one who is ready to reproduce the whole philosophy, word for word, from the beginning to the end, from the first statement that Buddha made to the last... but he is not enlightened. Can you rely on his memory? Can you rely on his interpretation? Now, this is really an insoluble problem: those who know, those who can be relied upon, are not ready to say anything, and the one who is ready to say cannot be relied upon -- he is not enlightened himself.

Then the whole gathering told Ananda, "Do one thing -- don't waste a single moment. Bring your total energies and become as alert as possible. If you can become enlightened before your death, then something is possible. We will not collect your statements unless you are enlightened. You remember -- you are the only one who remembers absolutely -- but we cannot trust it."

How can you trust a blind man's report about someone who had eyes and was talking about colors, light, rainbows, flowers? How can you believe in the report of a blind man? It is absurd, it cannot be believed!

So the congregation prayed to Ananda, "You are the only hope. If you can become enlightened we will be able to accept whatsoever you say, but we will not be able to accept it unless you become enlightened."

Ananda had lived for forty-two years with Buddha, but because Buddha was so close to him he had started taking him for granted. It happens. It happens here too. Many of you who are close to me can start taking me for granted. Ananda was very close, the closest one; he was not much concerned about his enlightenment. Whenever he was told he said, "I am not worried about it. Buddha is going to take care of me. I have been serving him for forty-two years -- is he not compassionate enough to help drag me out of the darkness? He will do it. And what is the hurry? Why be in such a haste? It can happen tomorrow, it can happen the day after tomorrow. Buddha is there."

And for forty-two years he had been postponing and believing deep down in his heart that, "Buddha will do it. Although he says nobody can make anybody else enlightened, I know he can do it. I know miracles have

been happening around him. And at least, if not for anybody else, for me he is going to make an exception. I have served him so much. And then he is always there; if today I miss, tomorrow; if tomorrow I miss, the day after tomorrow. Where is he going? He is always there."

The day Buddha died, he said to Ananda, "Ananda, now I will not be here tomorrow. So make haste, hurry! Now no more postponing."

And it happened that after Buddha's death, when the congregation prayed to Ananda, for twenty-four hours he sat with closed eyes. This was for the first time in his whole life. In fact, there was so much happening around Buddha that it was impossible to close the eyes. The whole day so many things were happening and Ananda was too occupied. Now Buddha was gone and nothing was happening anymore, there was nothing to see. He closed his eyes and for twenty-four hours, for the first time, he sat in silence.

He became enlightened within twenty-four hours. This had not happened in forty-two years; it happened in twenty-four hours. When he became enlightened, when all the enlightened disciples recognized his aura, his light, his luminousness, then they said, "Now Ananda can be allowed to come in the assembly. He can relate and we will compile."

That's how all the Buddhist sutras have been compiled.

But only an enlightened person can be trusted. Why? -- because he can see. And he can see into the words and find the silence -- which is the real message. If you listen to the meaning, you are a student; if you listen to the silence, you

are a disciple. And if you completely forget who is talking and who is listening, you become one with the master -- you are a devotee.
These are the three stages: the student, the disciple and the devotee. The student understands the meaning of the words, the disciple understands the silence of the words, and the devotee becomes the silence itself. HIS THOUGHTS ARE STILL. HIS WORDS ARE STILL.

HIS WORK IS STILLNESS.

His whole work is stillness, he creates stillness. He creates devices to create stillness.

HE SEES HIS FREEDOM AND IS FREED.

THE MASTER SURRENDERS HIS BELIEFS.

Once you become enlightened all that you have believed before becomes ridiculous, irrelevant, absurd, nonsense. It is like the belief of the blind man in light. Whatsoever he had believed before, whatsoever he had thought in his blindness that light is... once his eyes open he will have to drop all his beliefs about light. Not a single word out of those beliefs is going to be true. It is impossible for the blind man to conceive what light is. What to say about light? -- the blind man cannot even conceive anything about darkness either, because to see darkness you need eyes as much as to see light. The blind man knows nothing of darkness and nothing of light.

Once you become awakened all your beliefs in gods, heaven, hell, karma, reincarnation, this and that, they all become simply rubbish. THE MASTER SURRENDERS HIS BELIEFS....

HE SEES BEYOND THE END AND THE BEGINNING.

Now there is no need to believe -- he can see beyond the beginning and beyond the end. He can see the whole through and through. Seeing is the goal.
In India we don't have an equivalent word for philosophy. We have a totally different word for it, that is DARSHAN. Ordinarily it is translated as 'philosophy'; it is not. Philosophy means something of the mind; darshan simply means insight, vision, seeing. In the East we have called the greatest ones, the seers. We have not called them prophets, we have not called them philosophers, we have called them seers -- they have seen. The East has always believed in seeing, not in thinking.
To translate 'darshan' into English is very difficult. To call it philosophy is to be unfair; it destroys the whole beauty of the word 'darshan'. So I translate it with 'philosia'. Philosophy means love for knowledge: 'sophia' means knowledge, 'philo' means love. Philosia means love for seeing -- 'sia' means seeing. Once you have seen, all beliefs wither away like dry leaves falling from the trees.

HE CUTS ALL TIES.
HE GIVES UP ALL HIS DESIRES.
HE RESISTS ALL TEMPTATION.
AND HE RISES.

Now a totally new law starts functioning: the law of levitation. Ordinarily things fall downwards, but the man of awakening rises upwards. Everything in him starts rising upwards, soaring upwards. He has to cut all ties, because those ties are with the earth. He has to give up all desires, because those desires are the ties that keep him tethered to the earth.

HE RESISTS ALL TEMPTATION. Many times the old mind will try to assert itself. Many many times the mind will make efforts to bring you back to the earth.

Kahlil Gibran says: When a river comes closer to the sea, it waits for a moment, looks backwards -- all those joys, the mountains, the virgin snows where it originated, the forests, the solitude of the forests, the birds, their songs, the people, the plains, thousands of experiences, the long journey.... And now the moment has come to disappear into the ocean. The whole past pulls backwards. The whole past says, "Wait! You will be lost forever. You will never be the same. Without your banks, how can you be? You will lose your definition."

Exactly the same happens when you come closer to buddhahood: when all is being lost, all ties, all desires, great temptations arise. There is no Devil to tempt you; it is your own mind, your own past experiences. Your whole loaded past tries to pull you backwards, but now nothing can pull you backwards. The call has been heard, the invitation has arrived.

HE CUTS ALL TIES. HE GIVES UP ALL HIS DESIRES. HE RESISTS ALL TEMPTATION. AND HE RISES.

AND WHEREVER HE LIVES,
IN THE CITY OR THE COUNTRY,
IN THE VALLEY OR IN THE HILLS,
THERE IS GREAT JOY.

And not only that he is joyous: wherever he is he brings a climate of joy. Joy surrounds him.
It is said that wherever Buddha would move, trees would bloom out of season, rivers would start flowing in the summer season when there was no water. Wherever Buddha would move there would be peace, silence, love, compassion, all around. This is really so; not that trees will bloom out of season -- these are metaphors -- but whenever there is a buddha something mysterious starts happening. People start blooming out of season, joy spreads, great waves of joy.
When you enter into the buddhafield you enter into a totally different world: the world of blessings, the world of benedictions.

EVEN IN THE EMPTY FOREST
HE FINDS JOY
BECAUSE HE WANTS NOTHING.

And he is everywhere joyous, because the only thing that destroys your natural capacity of rejoicing is your desiring mind. The desiring mind makes you a beggar. Once all desires have been dropped you are the emperor. Joy is a natural state of your being.

Just let there be no desire and see. When there is no desire there is no mind. When there is no desire there is no turmoil. When there is no desire there is no past, no future. When there is no desire you are utterly contented herenow. And to be contented herenow is joy.
And whenever such a man moves, wherever he moves, he brings his climate with him. A buddha is in the spring season all the year round. And fortunate are those who come in some way close to him, blessed are those who become associated with him, because they also share his joy, his benediction, his wisdom, his love, his light.
Enough for today.
The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 3
Chapter #8
Chapter title: A good belly laughter
19 August 1979 am in Buddha Hall

The first question:
Question 1
BELOVED MASTER,
YOU GRACIOUSLY SENT ME A TAPED ANSWER TO A QUESTION LAST AUTUMN. THE GIST OF YOUR ANSWER WAS THAT I WAS TRYING TOO HARD AT SPIRITUAL PURSUITS. I STOPPED ALMOST EVERYTHING FOR NINE MONTHS AND GOT GOOD RESULTS FROM FOLLOWING YOUR ADVICE.
NOW I AM ATTENDING A SANNYASIN GROUP AGAIN, BUT I FEEL THAT BECOMING A SANNYASIN WOULD BE DOING WHAT YOU TOLD ME NOT TO DO -- TRYING TOO HARD. I HAVE

ALREADY BEEN INITIATED INTO MANY GROUPS AND FEEL THAT THIS MAY BE SYMPTOMATIC OF TRYING TOO HARD. SHOULD I JUST RELAX AND ENJOY YOU THE WAY WE ARE NOW?

Mariel Strauss, that's exactly what sannyas is: relaxing and enjoying whatsoever is. It is not an initiation like other initiations you have been through -- it is a totally different phenomenon. It is not a serious affair at all, it is basically playfulness. It is for the first time on the earth that we are trying to bring playfulness to religion.

Religion has always been of a long face, sad, serious, somber. Because of that seriousness, millions of people have remained aloof from religion. Those who were alive could not become religious because religion meant a kind of suicide to them -- and it was so. Those who were already dead or dying, those who were ill, pathological, suicidal, only they were interested in the old religions.

The old religions were not dancing, singing, celebrating; they were anti-life, anti-earth, anti-body. They were purely negative; they had nothing to affirm. Their God was based on negativity. Go on negating: the more you negate life, the more religious you were thought to be.

I am bringing a totally new vision of religion to the earth: I am introducing you to a religion that can laugh, a religion that can love, a religion that can live the ordinary life with extraordinary awareness.

Religion is not a question of changing life patterns, of changing things and situations. Religion changes you, not your situation. It does not change things: it changes the way you look at things. It changes your eyes, your vision; it

gives you an insight. Then God is not something against life: then God is the intrinsic core of life. Then spirit is not anti-matter but the highest form of matter, the purest fragrance of matter.

Mariel Strauss, if you avoid sannyas that will be being serious. You have not understood that this is not the same kind of initiation. You have been into many schools, and you have gathered much knowledge about initiation and the mysteries -- but this is not that kind of initiation. It is just the opposite: it is getting initiated into life, into the ordinary life. Once your ordinary life becomes suffused with your meditativeness you are a sannyasin. It is not a question of changing your clothes only -- that is only symbolic -- the real sannyasin is bringing meditation to the ordinary affairs of life, bringing meditation to the marketplace. Eating, walking, sleeping, one can remain continuously in a state of meditation. It is nothing special that you are doing, but doing the same things with a new way, with a new method, with new art.

Sannyas changes your outlook.

You listened to my advice and for nine months, you say, you stopped almost everything and got good results from following the advice. But somewhere deep down you are still serious; otherwise you would have taken a jump into sannyas -- nonseriously. Even to ask about it is to show your seriousness. You could not accept it playfully, with a laughter.

Sannyas is just a play -- LEELA. That concept is not known in the West; the West has missed much because of not knowing that concept. In the West, religion has no idea that God is not a creator but a player, that existence is not

his creation but his play of energies. Just like the ocean waves roaring, shattering on the banks and the rocks, eternally, just a play of energy, so is God. These millions of forms are not created by God, those are just because of his overflowing energy.
God is not a person at all. You cannot worship God. You can live in a godly way but you cannot worship God -- there is nobody to worship. All your worship is sheer stupidity, all your images of God are your own creation. There is no God as such, but there is godliness, certainly -- in the flowers, in the birds, in the stars, in the eyes of the people, when a song arises in the heart and poetry surrounds you... all this is God. Let us say "godliness" rather than using the word 'God' -- that word gives you the idea of a person, and God is not a person but a presence.
Sannyas is not like becoming a Hindu or a Christian or a Mohammedan. In fact, it is dropping out of all these trips -- Hindu, Christian, Mohammedan, all these trips. Sannyas is simply dropping out of all ideologies. Ideologies are bound to be serious; no ideology can have laughter as its spirit, because ideologies have to fight with each other, argue with each other, and argument cannot be done with laughter. Argument has to be serious! Argument is basically egoistic, how can it laugh? The ego knows no laughter at all.

Once it happened:
A great philosopher and thinker, Keshav Chandra Sen, went to see Ramakrishna. He wanted to defeat Ramakrishna, and, certainly, he was capable of great argument. He argued against God, against religion, against the whole nonsense that Ramakrishna was doing. He was

trying to prove that Ramakrishna was a fool, that there is no God, that nobody has ever proved the existence of God. He talked and talked, and slowly slowly he started feeling a little weird because Ramakrishna would only laugh. He would listen to the argument and laugh -- and not only laugh, he would jump, hug Keshav Chandra Sen, kiss him and say, "Beautiful! This argument I have never heard! It is really intelligent, clever."

Keshav Chandra Sen started feeling very embarrassed. A crowd had gathered seeing that Keshav Chandra, a great philosopher, is going to Ramakrishna; many people had come to listen, hearing that something is going to transpire there. Even they started feeling that the whole journey had been futile. "This is a strange thing that is happening!"

And Ramakrishna danced and laughed and he said, "Even if there had been any doubt in my mind about God, you have destroyed it. How can there be such intelligence without God? You are proof, Keshav Chandra -- I believe in you."

And Keshav Chandra has written in his memoirs, "Ramakrishna's laughter defeated me -- defeated me forever. I forgot all arguments. It looked so foolish! And he had not argued against me, he had not even said a single word against me. He simply kissed me, hugged me, laughed, danced. He appreciated me as nobody has ever appreciated -- and I was talking against him! He said, 'Keshav Chandra, your presence, such intelligence, such genius, is enough proof that God is!' He said this to me," Keshav Chandra writes, "but really his presence, his laughter, his dance, his hugging and kissing, proved to me

that God is; otherwise, how is such a phenomenon as Ramakrishna possible?"
The uneducated Ramakrishna, the villager Ramakrishna, proved far more profound than the very sophisticated, educated Keshav Chandra. What happened? Something tremendously beautiful happened. Ramakrishna is really religious; he knows what religion is, he knows what godliness is: to take life in a dancing way, to take life singing, to accept life in all its manifoldness, without any judgment -- to love it for what it is.

A sannyasin means one who is not trying to solve the mystery of life but is diving deep into the mystery itself. Living the mystery is sannyas, not solving the mystery. If you start solving it you become serious. If you start living it you become more and more playful.
Mariel Strauss, see the difference between sannyas and other initiations. There is a qualitative difference. It is not initiation in the old sense, just as it is not a learning in the old sense -- it is an unlearning, and so I can say it is UNinitiation. It will bring you out of all your initiations, because if you have been to so many schools and sects and ideologies, many things must be still hanging around inside you. You need a good cleaning, you need a thorough cleaning, you need a good bath -- and sannyas will give you a shower, it will cleanse your soul. It will give you back the innocence of a child, the laughter of a child, the eyes full of wonder and awe.
Don't hesitate... take the jump. It is a jump, because you cannot come to it through thinking. It is a jump because it is not a conclusion of your mind. To others it will look like

madness -- in fact all love is mad and all love is blind, at least to those who don't know what love is. To UNlovers love is blind; to lovers love is the only possible eye which can see to the very core of existence. To those who don't know the taste of religion, sannyas is madness; but to those who know, everything else is madness except sannyas. This is entering into sanity. I don't see anything saner than laughter, saner than love, saner than celebration.

But you are still thinking in serious terms: 'initiation' is a great word. You are still obsessed with your old ideas, still afraid that you may start trying too hard. In fact, you are still trying.

First I had suggested to you not to try too hard. Now you are trying too hard on the opposite end, on the polar opposite: trying too hard not to try hard! It is the same thing. Become a sannyasin and forget all this nonsense. Then one transcends trying and nontrying both. A great laughter is waiting for you. And the moment the beyond starts laughing inside you, giggling inside you, then you know for the first time what it means to be a christ, what it means to be a buddha.

But Christians say Christ never laughed -- this is THEIR idea about Christ. This is not true about the real Christ -- I know the man! It is impossible to conceive that he never laughed. He enjoyed good food, you know, dining and wining both; he enjoyed beautiful company. And if you want beautiful company you have to find it not in the scholars but in the gamblers; if you really want good company you will have to move to those who live on the fringes of your so-called society -- the fringe people, the outsiders, the gamblers, the drunkards, the prostitutes --

because your society has become so dull and dead. The established society is almost a cemetery; you don't meet people there, you meet only dead bodies, corpses -- walking, talking, moving, doing things... it is a miracle!

One day a small boy was asking me, "Do you believe in ghosts?"
I said, "Believe? -- I am surrounded by ghosts!"
He understood the point immediately. He said, "So... so you mean... the people in the streets and the market are all ghosts?"
I said, "Yes, they are all ghosts. They are all living a post-mortem existence. They have died long ago. In fact, they died before they were ever born."

The society kills and kills slowly, skillfully. You never become aware because it is done so slowly, that's why. A child is slowly poisoned.
In the East, in the past, there used to be a certain kind of woman detective. Those woman detectives were called VISHKANYAS -- poisoned girls. Certain beautiful girls were poisoned very slowly from the very beginning with the mother's milk -- it is an historical fact -- but the poison was given in such small doses that it would not kill them immediately; but slowly slowly their whole system would become poisoned. Poison would flow in their blood, their breath would become poison. By the time they became adolescent, they would be ready to be used by the kings, and they were so beautiful that it was very easy to allure anybody with them. They were sent to the enemy king who was bound to fall in the trap of the beautiful woman, and

once the woman kissed the man that was the end of him. Just the kiss was enough to kill; a kiss of death it was.
To make love to such a woman will be the end -- you will die like a few spiders die. There are a few spiders who die while making love -- because the girlfriend starts eating them while they are getting higher and higher, and they are in such ecstasy -- you know spiders -- trembling, and they have completely forgotten the world. They are no longer material, they are spiritual. But women are women; they are very materialistic. The moment the spider gets into his orgasmic spasms, the girlfriend starts eating him. By the time he comes back, he is no more. He was thinking he was coming -- he was really going!
Those poisoned girls were trained... but the miracle was that so much poison didn't kill them. It was given in such mild doses, very slowly.

A scientist was experimenting with frogs: he threw a frog into boiling water -- of course, the frog jumped immediately out of it. Then he gave the frog just ordinary water, normal temperature; the frog enjoyed the bucket, sat at the bottom, relaxed, and the scientist started heating it up slowly slowly, very slowly. Within hours it was boiling, but the frog didn't jump out of it... he died. He never became aware, the thing happened so slowly.

And that's what is happening in society. It takes almost twenty-five years to kill a child totally, to poison a child totally. By the time he comes from the university he is dead, he is finished; now he will live a post-mortem existence.

I can see a grain of truth in the hippie idea that don't trust a man beyond thirty. There IS some truth in it. By the time a man is thirty he is no longer alive -- if he is still alive he will become a Buddha, he will be a Christ, he will be a Krishna. But by that time people die -- and they die so unconsciously that they go on living as if they are alive.
Sannyas means giving you your life back. It is a process of deprogramming you, unconditioning you, unpoisoning you.
You cannot decide logically to be a sannyasin, because that very mind is a problem, and you are trying to decide with that very mind. Sannyas has to be a jump. It happens from the heart, not from the head.
Mariel Strauss, you are still thinking from the head. Please, get down from the head. At least let one thing happen from the heart -- not logically but illogically, not in a prosaic way but in a poetic way. Sannyas has to be a love affair! Nonserious, full of laughter, enter into it... and you will be surprised that this is not some other initiation. This will bring out all your initiations and all your philosophy and all your systems of thought.
Sannyas is relaxing in life, trusting in life, resting in life. Nowhere to go, nothing to achieve, then the whole energy is available to dance and sing and celebrate.

The second question:
Question 2
BELOVED MASTER,
WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A DISCIPLE?

Prem Samadhi, it is one of the most delicate mysteries. No definition is possible of a disciple, but a few hints can be

given, just fingers pointing to the moon. Don't cling to the fingers -- look at the moon and forget the fingers.

A disciple is a rare phenomenon. It is very easy to be a student because the student is searching knowledge. The student can only meet the teacher, he can never meet the master. The reality of the master will remain hidden to the student. The student functions from the head. He functions logically, rationally. He gathers knowledge, he becomes more and more knowledgeable. Finally in his own turn he will become a teacher, but all that he knows is borrowed, nothing is really his own.

His existence is pseudo; it is a carbon-copy existence. He has not known his original face. He knows about God, but he does not know God himself. He knows about love, but he has never dared to love himself. He knows much about poetry, but he has not tasted the spirit of poetry itself. He may talk about beauty, he may write treatises on beauty, but he has no vision, no experience, no existential intimacy with beauty. He has never danced with a roseflower. The sunrise happens there outside, but nothing happens inside his heart. That darkness inside him remains the same as it was before.

He talks only about concepts, he knows nothing of truth -- because truth cannot be known through words, scriptures. A student is interested only in words, scriptures, theories, systems of thought, philosophies, ideologies.

A disciple is a totally different phenomenon. A disciple is not a student; he is not interested in knowing about God, love, truth -- he is interested in becoming God, in becoming truth, in becoming love. Remember the difference. Knowing about is one thing, becoming is totally different.

The student is taking no risk; the disciple is going into the uncharted sea. The student is miserly, he is a hoarder; only then he can gather knowledge. He is greedy; he accumulates knowledge as the greedy person accumulates wealth -- knowledge is his wealth. The disciple is not interested in hoarding; he wants to experience, he wants to taste, and for that he is ready to risk all.

The disciple will be able to find the master. The relationship between a student and a teacher is that of the head, and a relationship between a disciple and a master is that of the heart -- it is a love relationship, mad in the eyes of the world, utterly mad. In fact, no love is so total as the love that happens between the master and the disciple. The love that happened between John and Jesus, the love that happened between Sariputta and Buddha, Gautama and Mahavira, Arjuna and Krishna, Chuang Tzu and Lao Tzu -- these are the real love stories, the highest pinnacles of love. The disciple starts melting into the master. The disciple destroys all distance between himself and the master; the disciple yields, the disciple surrenders, the disciple effaces himself. He becomes a nonentity, he becomes a nothingness. And in that nothingness his heart opens. In that absence his ego has disappeared and the master can penetrate into his being.

The disciple is receptive, vulnerable, unguarded; he drops all armor. He drops all defense measures. He is ready to die. If the master says, "Die!" he will not wait for a single moment. The master is his soul, his very being; his devotion is unconditional and absolute. And to know absolute devotion is to know God. To know absolute surrender is to know the secret-most mystery of life.

The word 'disciple' is also beautiful -- it means one who is ready to learn. Hence the word 'discipline' -- discipline means creating a space for learning. And disciple means being ready to learn. Who can be ready to learn? Only one who is ready to drop all his prejudices. If you come as a Christian or a Hindu or a Mohammedan, you can't be a disciple. If you simply come as a human being, with no a priori prejudice, with no belief, then only you can become a disciple.

A disciple is the rarest flowering of human consciousness, because beyond the disciple there is only one peak more -- the master. And one who has been totally a disciple one day becomes a master. Disciplehood is a process of becoming a master. But one should not start with the idea of becoming a master; otherwise one is going to miss, because then it is again an ego trip. One should come simply to evaporate. You have lived through the ego, and your life has been just a misery and nothing else. Enough is enough! One day the realization comes that, "I have wasted a great opportunity by constantly listening to my own ego. It has been driving me onto unnecessary paths which lead nowhere, and it has been creating a thousand and one miseries." The day one realizes that "The ego is the root cause of my misery," one starts searching for a place where the ego can be dropped. The master is an excuse to drop the ego.

You can drop your ego only if you come across a person who catches hold of your heart so tremendously that his being becomes more important than your own being, that you can sacrifice all that you have for him.

Just a few days ago, I received a letter from Gunakar from Germany. In German newspapers a statement of Teertha's

has been given too much importance and has been criticized -- and it can be criticized, manipulated, because what has happened in Jonestown has become the talk of the world. Somebody, a journalist from Germany, has asked Teertha, "If your master asks you to shoot yourself, to kill yourself, what are you going to do?" And Teertha said, "There is no question of thinking at all. I will kill myself immediately."

Now, this statement can be manipulated in such a way that the place that I am creating is going to be another Jonestown. Teertha has said it out of his heart; he has not been political, diplomatic; otherwise he would have avoided such a statement. He had simply said what a disciple is bound to say.

The disciple is ready. In fact to say that he is ready to die is something less than the truth. The disciple has already died into the master; it is not going to happen in the future, it has already happened. It has happened the day the disciple accepted the master as his master: since then he has been no more, only the master lives in him.

Slowly slowly, the presence of the master overfloods the disciple. And the presence of the master is not really the presence of the master himself: the master is overflooded with God. The master is only a vehicle, a passage, a messenger; it is God flowing through the master. When the disciple surrenders to the master totally he is really surrendering to God in the guise of the master. God he cannot see yet, but the master he can see, and in the master he can see something godly. The master becomes the first proof of God to him. Surrendering to the master is surrendering to the visible God.

And, slowly slowly, as the surrender deepens, the visible disappears into the invisible. The master disappears. When the disciple reaches into the innermost heart of the master, he does not find the master there but God himself, life itself -- indefinable, inexpressible.
Prem Samadhi, your question is significant. You ask, "What does it mean to be a disciple?"
It means death and it means resurrection. It means dying into the master and being reborn through the master.

The third question:
Question 3
BELOVED MASTER,
WHO ARE YOU? ARE YOU THE CHRIST COME BACK?

Premananda, do you think I am crazy or something? I am myself. Why should I be Christ or somebody else? Christ is Christ. He is not Krishna and he is not Buddha and he is not Zarathustra. Buddha is Buddha; he is not Yagnavalka, he is not Lao Tzu. And Socrates is Socrates; he is not Mahavira and he is not Patanjali.
I am myself. Why should I be Christ? In fact nothing in existence is ever repeated. Existence is so creative, it always creates new people. And it is not true only about Christ, Buddha and me -- it is true about you too. There has never been another individual like you, and there will never be. You are absolutely unique. Existence never repeats, remember it; hence you are incomparable, neither higher nor lower. That's why I say there is no hierarchy in existence. Each is superb and each is unique and each is

alone. But such questions continuously go on arising. There are reasons for such questions.

Premananda, you must have been taught from your childhood about the second coming of Christ. Now you have fallen in love with me, and you would like somehow to reconcile your childhood mind with your new experiences that are happening here. You would like to bridge what has been told to you and what is happening to you. If somehow it can be bridged you will feel a little at rest. If it cannot be bridged then there will remain a little tension inside you. You will have to decide this way or that.

You cannot serve two masters -- that is the problem, that's why these questions arise. Now the problem is, "What to do? Should I remain with Christ?" But you don't know anything about Christ except what has been told to you. Christ is only a myth to you. He was a reality to John, to Luke, he was a reality to Matthew. He is not a reality to you, Premananda.

I am a reality to you; I will not be a reality to your children. You will teach your children about me, and one day if they come across a master the problem will arise: now what to do? To choose the past or to choose the present? That is the problem.

You are hesitating. You are afraid that if you choose me you will be betraying Jesus. No, I am not Christ. But by choosing me you will not be betraying Jesus, you will be fulfilling him. I am not Buddha, but by choosing me you will not be betraying Buddha; you will be making him as happy as possible, because by choosing me you will be choosing the essential core of religion. It is not a question

of Christ, Buddha or me; these are only forms. Don't be too attached to forms: remember the essential core.

A man in a restaurant calls for the waiter and exclaims, "Waiter! There's a fly walking on my soup."
The waiter falls on his knees, raises his hands and cries, "Jesus is back on earth!"

And I know that Jesus has promised that he will be coming back, but I don't think that he can be so mad as to fulfill the promise. Remember what you have done with him? And if he still comes after what you have done with him he will be really crazy. It is impossible; he cannot come. He may have promised but he cannot fulfill it. If he fulfills it you will crucify him again; you cannot do otherwise. That's how you have been treating all the awakened people all over the world. You cannot tolerate them when they are alive, and when they are dead you worship them: this has been your tradition. When they are alive they are dangerous; you would like to kill them in some way or other. When they are dead they are very consoling; then you will carry their corpses for centuries.
Remember, Jesus was not crucified by criminals, sinners. He was crucified by the rabbis, the priests, the politicians -- the respected people. What was he doing to these so-called respectable people? He was becoming a danger to their very life-style. He was creating great guilt in their being; his very presence was a thorn in their flesh: if he was right, then they were all wrong.
And this was difficult, almost impossible for them to accept -- that this son of a carpenter, absolutely uneducated,

unsophisticated, too young to be wise enough.... He was only thirty when he started preaching, and they could not tolerate him even for three years. By his thirty-third year he was crucified; his ministry lasted only for three years. Buddha was far more fortunate: he was able to work for forty-two years. But Buddha was in a totally different kind of land -- not that the Hindus were behaving in any way differently from the Jews, but Hindus have their own cunning ways of destroying truth. The Jews were more straightforward: seeing the danger, they killed the man. Hindus are far more cunning, bound to be because they are the most ancient race on the earth. And Buddha was not a new buddha they had to encounter; they had encountered many buddhas, they had encountered twenty-four Jaina TIRTHANKARAS. They had seen Krishna and Rama and Parasuram and Patanjali and Kapil and Kanad and thousands of others. They have become very clever and cunning about how to prevent these people from affecting people, from influencing people.

There was no need to kill; they knew far better methods to kill, without killing. They started interpreting Buddha's words, Buddha's sayings, in such a way that they lost all their significance. There was no need to kill the Buddha; this was an easier way: interpret Buddha according to old scriptures, as if he is simply repeating the old scriptures. Their method was, "He is not saying anything new. It is written in the Upanishads, it is written in the Vedas -- so what? We have already got all this; he is not original." And he was utterly original. It is NOT written in the Upanishads, and it is not written in the Vedas, because in the first place it can't be written at all. Yes, the people who

wrote the Upanishads must have known it, but it is not written.

Hindus were very clever. They started writing commentaries on Buddha and they distorted his whole philosophy. They created so much philosophical argument, so much noise, that Buddha's still, small voice was lost, utterly lost. And the day he died, Hindus created thirty-two schools of Buddhist philosophy; each word was interpreted in thirty-two ways. They created so much confusion that the whole point was lost.

In fact, if they had crucified Buddha it would have been far better. Jesus was killed, but Jews have not commented on Jesus at all. Once they killed him they thought, "Now it is finished and that is that!" They forgot all about Jesus, they never mentioned even his name in their scriptures. They never thought of writing any commentary on his statements. They thought they have killed him and sooner or later people are going to forget all about him and there is no problem left.

In a way, Jesus' sayings have been saved far more accurately than Buddha's sayings, because the brahmins, the clever and cunning brahmins who gathered around Buddha, distorted everything that he was saying. It was distorted so much that if Buddha comes back he will not be able to believe his own eyes what has happened.

But these people never come back. A buddha can only be here once. Once a person has become a buddha or a christ, he evaporates and becomes a fragrance of the universe. He cannot materialize again.

Jesus may have promised because he had to leave his disciples so early. Nothing was ready... the disciples were

not ready -- not even a single disciple had yet become enlightened. And they were at a loss what to do without the master. They had just come close to him; only three years' time is not much. They have not yet imbibed his spirit. To console them, to help them, to keep them integrated so they don't start falling apart, he must have promised. He must have said, "Don't be worried, I will be coming back again soon."

This promise was only a device. Remember, devices are neither true not false, they are only devices. It was a device to keep the spirit in the disciples flowing, to keep them integrated, to keep them confident, centered, rooted. It was simply a device! And it has helped, the device has worked; otherwise there would have been no Christians at all. Those poor disciples would have dispersed and slowly slowly would have forgotten all about Jesus. That's what rabbis and the priests were thinking was going to happen.

But Jesus was far more insightful. He gave them a promise that, "Wait! Don't be worried, I will be coming back. I cannot leave you, I will never leave you."

And this promise has helped in another way too: because this promise has been there, the Christian mystic has been able to remember Christ far more concentratedly than a Jaina can remember Mahavira -- because there is no promise. Mahavira has not said that, "I will come back," he has not said, "I will help you," he has not said, "I will be available to you after I am gone." In fact he has said, "You have to depend on yourself only." It is true, but it is going to be hard for the disciples.

And remember, Gurdjieff used to say that a man like Buddha or Christ CAN lie. And I agree with Gurdjieff perfectly. If they see that the lie is going to serve the truth, they will not be worried. They will not feel ashamed or guilty; they will use the lie in the service of truth. The lie becomes a device. Buddha calls it UPAYA -- a device. Christian mystics have been able to remember Jesus far more deeply because this confidence that he will be helpful, that he is around, that whenever he is called he will be coming back.... Not that he will come, not that he is around, not that he is going to help, but this very idea that his help is available makes you centered. So in a way, without helping you, he HAS helped. The lie becomes true; the lie is no longer a lie, it becomes truth.

But don't take such promises seriously. There is no need for me to be a christ just to console you. You have to drop your old ideas; otherwise it is going to be a real problem for me. Here are Hindus, Mohammedans, Christians, Jainas, Buddhists, Parsis, Sikhs, and if the Sikhs say, "Are you Nanak?" and the Jainas say, "Are you the Jaina?" and the Buddhists say, "Are you the Buddha?" it will become troublesome. I cannot be all these people.

This is a gathering not of one religion, this is a gathering of all the religions of the world. This is a true human gathering, this is a true international gathering, a universal brotherhood.

Don't pay much attention to such promises, they are devices. But now they are of no more use to you. I am available here alive -- what is the point of thinking of a device which was invented two thousand years before? I am inventing devices every day for you, and while I am

alive, please use them. It will be far more beneficial and easy to be benefited by them.

They met at a party. He was overwhelmed by her great beauty and vivacity. "I suppose that you have more invitations than you can possibly accept." he said.
"I cannot go out very often," she answered somewhat evasively, "because I work. But when I don't want to go out with a man, I simply tell him that I live in the suburbs."
"What a clever idea," he said, laughing. "And where DO you live?"
"In the suburbs," she answered sweetly.

Be very alert. Jesus certainly said, "I will come." It was just to wipe the tears from his disciples' eyes, it was out of compassion. But a man who has attained to God cannot come back. It is impossible; in the very nature of things it is impossible -- because he cannot enter into the body again. To enter into the body, you need a certain desire, a tremendous desire. And the man who has attained God has no desires left. It is through the doors of desire that a man enters into the body. If all desires are gone, then there is no way to enter into the body, to enter into the womb.
Hence, in the East, we know that once a buddha is gone he is gone forever. You can try to understand his teachings, but far better will be if you can find a buddha alive somewhere. And it never happens that if you search you will not find a buddha somewhere. If you really search you are bound to find a buddha somewhere or other.
Somewhere or other in the darkness of the world there are always a few flames; they are always there because God is

still hopeful, because God is still compassionate, because existence cares for you.
If you can come across a living buddha, a living christ, forget all about the past buddhas and past christs. He contains all, and yet he cannot be identified with anyone in particular. He himself is a buddha, he himself is a christ in his own right.
So I don't claim that I am Christ, I don't claim that I am Buddha. I simply claim that I have arrived, that I am at home. And I have thrown my doors open. If you are really a seeker, a lover of truth, don't miss this opportunity....

The fourth question:
Question 4
BELOVED MASTER,
WHEN YOU ARRIVED IN YOUR CAR THIS MORNING I HEARD A BELLY LAUGH COME FROM HEAVEN. WOULD THAT BE A FRIEND OF YOURS?

Dharma Chetana, I had also heard the laughter. It did not come from the heaven -- the ghost of Jugal Kishore Birla was just standing by the side of Shiva. He played a trick on Charlie who is my engineer and mechanic for the Benz. He tricked Charlie: he connected the battery in a wrong way. Now, a German engineer, especially a mechanic for Mercedes Benz, a trained expert, highly intelligent, connected the battery wrongly! How is this possible? The ghost of Jugal Kishore Birla tricked him, so something got burned, and I had to come in Jugal Kishore Birla's car -- an Ambassador.

Certainly he was waiting here by the side of Shiva. Shiva may have even felt it, because he was looking all around; he must have felt something. And Chetana, you heard rightly.

Jugal Kishore Birla was the manufacturer of Ambassador cars. He has died. We had met a few times. He was a Hindu chauvinist, and he wanted me to become an ambassador to the world for Hinduism. For that purpose he had met me a few times; that's how we became friendly. He said to me, "I can help you with as much money as you want." In fact he was the richest man in India.

I said, "I can take more money than you have, but with one condition."

He said, "What is that condition?"

I said, "I will take it unconditionally. You cannot make any conditions with me. I can take all that you have."

He said, "Unconditionally? But one condition I have to make; that's why I am ready to give all support."

I said, "Please, don't mention it." But he still mentioned. He said, "My condition is very simple: can't you become a messenger to the world for Hinduism? Hinduism needs somebody to propagate it in such a contemporary and modern way that it appeals to the world mind."

I said, "Then I cannot accept a single PAI from you."

He said to me, "This is strange -- because even Mahatma Gandhi had accepted my conditions."

I told him, "That's why I never call Mahatma Gandhi 'Mahatma' Gandhi. I call him the so-called Mahatma Gandhi; otherwise how can anybody accept your conditions? If he knows, he will not accept any conditions from anybody just for money. I know what the world

needs. It is not Hinduism, it is not Christianity, it is not Islam. Enough of all this nonsense! The world needs a purely religious consciousness, with no adjectives attached to it."

But he was a good man in a way. When he was old he tried many times; whenever I would go to Delhi he would invite me to his palace and he would again bring up the subject in some way or other. I said to him, "You have done enough service to humanity; now there is no need for any more service. You have made this Ambassador car -- this is really something wonderful! All the parts of it make noise except the horn. What more service do you want to do to humanity?"

So naturally when I said something about him just a few days ago, he must have got very angry. He tricked Charlie. This is very rare -- an Indian ghost befooling an alive German!

He was here, Chetana, you heard him rightly. But please don't start hearing the laughter of ghosts; otherwise you will be in trouble. Ghosts are always there; because you don't hear them you remain oblivious to their presence. So Chetana, don't grow this capacity any more; it is dangerous. It is enough to hear me; there is no need for you to hear other heavenly voices. There are a few mystics here too who go on hearing heavenly voices. Every day I receive letters saying, "I hear this and I heard that." I am teaching you to be silent and I am teaching you not to hear anything. And all those voices are in your head; they don't come from heaven. It is really a very distant call -- it won't work, particularly in the rainy season, and not in India.

Remember one thing: all that is heard, all that is read, is trivia. Only your silence -- that hears, that silence in which the sounds come -- that silence is significant. Shift your consciousness from every object to subjectivity, from what you hear to the one who hears, from what you see to the one who sees.
But Chetana has joked, so I am not worried about her. And I love such small jokes: they keep the idea of playfulness alive. They keep my idea of religion alive.

The last question:
Question 5
BELOVED MASTER,
WHY ARE THERE SO MANY RELIGIONS IN THE WORLD?

Nagesh, why are there so many languages in the world? -- because there are so many people, so many ways to express. And it is not bad, it is good; the world is richer because of it. So many languages make the world tremendously rich. It gives variety, like so many flowers in the garden and so many birds.
Just think: only one flower all over the world, the marigold, and the whole world will look ugly; or the rose -- just one flower all over the world. And what will you do with those roses? Nobody will write any poetry about roses anymore then. And if you will compare your woman's face with the flower of the rose she will become angry, she will threaten you with a divorce. Roses will lose all meaning; they are beautiful because there are millions of other flowers too.

I don't think that the world needs one religion. The world needs religious consciousness, and then that consciousness can flow into as many streams as possible. In fact, my own idea of religion is that there should be as many religions as there are people -- each person having his own religion. It is difficult to have your own language; each person cannot have his own language, otherwise nobody will understand it.

Mulla Nasruddin has applied for a job. The manager looked at him and did not feel that he's even qualified to apply for it. He asked him, "Can you read and write?"
Mulla Nasruddin said, "I cannot read, but I can write."
The manager was surprised; this is a rare situation -- he could have never conceived of a man who cannot read but can write. He said, "Then write!" He gave him a paper and Mulla immediately started writing on it. He went fast -- one page, two pages, three pages.
The manager said, "Now you stop! You please read what you have written, because I cannot read."
Nasruddin said, "That I have told you before -- I can only write! I can't read."

If you speak a language that only you understand, it will be impossible to communicate with people. But a religion -- you can have your own, because religion need not be communicated. Religion is not a dialogue between you and other people; religion is a dialogue between you and existence. So any language will do, or no language, or any invented languages -- Esperanto, or anything.

All these religions should be taken as different languages, then fanaticism loses its danger. Then it is beautiful! There are churches and temples and mosques and GURUDWARAS -- if we think these are all different languages, there is no problem. You don't see people fighting about which language is the true language -- Hindi, Marathi, English, German, French. Which language is the true language? Nobody will ask such a question, because all languages are arbitrary, made-up. They are not true or false, they are useful.

An Englishman, a Frenchman and a German were arguing about the respective merits of their languages. The Frenchman said, "French is the language of love, the language of romance, the most beautiful and pure language in the world."
The German announced, "German is the most vigorous language, the language of philosophers, the language of Goethe, the language most adaptable to the modern world of science and technology."
When the Englishman's turn came he said, "I don't understand what you fellows are talking about. Take this" -- and he held up a table knife. "You in France call it UN COUTEAU, you Germans call it EIN MESSER. We in England simply call it a knife, which, all said and done, is precisely what it is."

This is how religions have been arguing. Exactly like this has been the argument between religions: who is right? Christians, Hindus, Mohammedans, Buddhists, Jainas -- these are only different languages to express the same

phenomenon. If once this is understood then there is no problem; I would like many MORE religions to evolve.
In fact in a better world every person will have his own religion, because religion is your way of expressing the inexpressible. It is like aesthetics: if you love roses and I don't love roses, there is no problem. We don't fight it out; we don't take swords and we don't go on a crusade: "Who is right? -- because this man says lotuses are beautiful, and I say roses are beautiful. Now it has to be decided on a battlefield."
How will you decide? You can kill me, but that won't make any difference. Even dying, I will go on saying lotuses are the most beautiful flowers; my death will not make any change in my vision. You can kill a Hindu, you can kill a Mohammedan: that does not change anything at all.
But this is what, down the ages, people have been doing to each other -- fighting ridiculously. Somebody calls God "Allah" -- he is wrong. Why? Somebody calls God "Ram" -- he is wrong. Why? -- because you call him "God." God, Ram, Allah, are all names, invented names for something which has no name of its own, which is a nameless experience.
There are so many religions, Nagesh, because there are so many people, different types of people. Different people have different likings, different people have different approaches towards reality, and reality is multidimensional. Hence my emphasis is: we need a religious consciousness, a universal upsurge of religious consciousness. Of course it will take many forms, but forms don't matter; as far as the spirit is alive, forms don't matter. And each form is beautiful. There are so many people: each has a different

face, a different beauty. Each person's fingerprints are different from every other person's in the world -- but this does not create any trouble. Each person's footprints towards God's door are going to be different.

Once we understand it a great brotherhood is possible. Otherwise this nonsense of religious fanaticism -- that "Only I am right" -- has been very destructive. It has destroyed religion itself; it has condemned religion and religious people. That's why there are so many irreligious people, antireligious people. It is what religion has done to humanity up to now that has created antireligious people -- atheists, godless people, God-denying people. The responsibility is of the priests, rabbis, popes, pundits, shankaracharyas -- these are the responsible people. They have made religion so ugly, so inhuman, so violent, so stupid, that any rational person feels a little ashamed of being part of any religious movement.

We have to destroy the ugly heritage of the past. We have to clean the space for the future. All are accepted: the Bible has its own beauty, so has the Koran, so has the Gita. And if you are religious you will enjoy the Bible as much as you will enjoy the Koran and the Gita, because you will know only languages are different. And the difference of languages creates different beauty. Sing the Koran, and you will see the difference. The Bible cannot be beautiful that way; the Koran has a singing quality to it. You can sing the Koran; even if you don't understand the meaning, the very music of it will be a transforming force. In fact, the Koran does not have much meaning; it has great poetry but not much meaning.

Many Mohammedan friends, many Mohammedan sannyasins, ask me when I am going to speak on the Koran. I have thought many times. Many times I have taken the Koran into my hand, looked here and there, and postponed it again -- because the Koran has not much meaning. It has poetry, it has a totally different beauty. It is a piece of art! If you want meaning then the Gita has more meaning, but not that much poetry; then the Bible has more meaning, but not that much poetry. The Bible has its own beauty. It is so simple, the simplest scripture in the world, and because it is simple it has innocence, purity. Jesus speaks in the language of a villager: the parables and the metaphors are all primitive. But because they are primitive they have a purity, they are unpolluted -- unpolluted by the modern mind. They are straight, they go direct to the heart like an arrow. But if you want meaning then you should look into the Vedas, which are full of philosophy. They have their own beauty -- the beauty of intellectuality.
Each scripture has something to contribute to the world, and no scripture can do everything. But because you don't understand different languages, the problem arises. It will be good to have a few encounters with different religions. That's why I go on speaking, sometimes on Buddhism, sometimes on Hinduism, sometimes on Christianity, sometimes on Judaism, on Hassids, on Zen, on Sufis -- for a certain reason: to give you different visions, so your own eyes can become rich, so that you can understand different language also a little bit.

Foster, in Tokyo on business, knew no Japanese. Even so, he persuaded an attractive girl, who spoke no English, to

come to his hotel room. All during their lovemaking, the Oriental kept shouting "Machigai ana!" with great feeling. Foster felt proud that he could get the girl so aroused to keep yelling, "Machigai ana!" Foster must have been thinking that this is something like "Fantastic! Far out!" The next afternoon he played golf with a Japanese industrial tycoon. When the Oriental made a hole-in-one, Foster attempted to make a good impression and exclaimed "Machigai ana! Machigai ana!"
"What do you mean," snapped the tycoon, "the wrong hole?"

It is good to know a little bit of other languages too. It will be a great help to you to have a few glimpses of the Koran, the Bible, the Gita, THE DHAMMAPADA. That will make you more liberal, more broad-minded, more human.
Enough for today.
The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 3
Chapter #9
Chapter title: A small candle
20 August 1979 am in Buddha Hall

BETTER THAN A THOUSAND HOLLOW WORDS
IS ONE WORD THAT BRINGS PEACE.

BETTER THAN A THOUSAND HOLLOW VERSES
IS ONE VERSE THAT BRINGS PEACE.

BETTER THAN A HUNDRED HOLLOW LINES
IS THE ONE LINE OF THE LAW, BRINGING PEACE.

IT IS BETTER TO CONQUER YOURSELF
THAN TO WIN A THOUSAND BATTLES.

THEN THE VICTORY IS YOURS.

IT CANNOT BE TAKEN FROM YOU,
NOT BY ANGELS OR BY DEMONS,
HEAVEN OR HELL.

BETTER THAN A HUNDRED YEARS OF WORSHIP,
BETTER THAN A THOUSAND OFFERINGS,
BETTER THAN GIVING UP A THOUSAND
WORLDLY WAYS
IN ORDER TO WIN MERIT,
BETTER EVEN THAN TENDING IN THE FOREST
A SACRED FLAME FOR A HUNDRED YEARS
IS ONE MOMENT'S REVERENCE
FOR THE MAN WHO HAS CONQUERED HIMSELF.

TO REVERE SUCH A MAN,
A MASTER OLD IN VIRTUE AND HOLINESS,
IS TO HAVE VICTORY OVER LIFE ITSELF,
AND BEAUTY, STRENGTH AND HAPPINESS.

A famous story:
One night the great German philosopher, Professor Von Kochenbach, saw two doors in a dream, one of which led directly to love and paradise, and the other to an auditorium where a lecture was being given on love and paradise.

There was no hesitation on Von Kochenbach's part -- he darted in to hear the lecture.

The story is significant. It is fictitious, but not so fictitious really. It represents the human mind: it is more interested in knowledge than in wisdom, it is more interested in information than TRANSformation. It is more interested to know about God, beauty, truth, love, than experience God, beauty, truth, love.

The human mind is obsessed with words, theories, systems of thought, but is completely oblivious of the existential that surrounds you. And it is the existential which can liberate, not knowledge about it.

The story represents everybody's mind. But I was in for a surprise yesterday. I was reading a book by Silvano Arieti, M.D., and James Silvano Arieti, Ph.D. In their book, LOVE CAN BE FOUND, they quote this story. I was hoping, obviously, that they would laugh at the story and criticize the whole standpoint. But I was in for a surprise: they defended the story; they say the professor did the right thing. Rather than entering directly into the door of love and paradise, entering into the auditorium where a lecture was being delivered on love and paradise -- of course by some other professor -- they say the professor did the right thing. Why? Their reasoning is that unless you know about love, how can you know love? Unless you know about paradise first, how can you immediately enter into paradise?

On the surface it looks logical: first one has to become acquainted with what paradise is, only then can one enter paradise. First you have to have a map. Logical, still stupid;

logical only in appearance, but deep down utterly unintelligent.

Love needs no information about it, because it is not something outside you, it is the very core of your being. You have already got it, you have only to allow it to flow. Paradise is not somewhere else so that you need a map to reach there. You ARE in paradise, only you have fallen asleep. All that is needed is an awakening.

An awakening can be immediate, awakening can be sudden -- in fact, awakening can ONLY be sudden. When you wake somebody up, it is not that slowly slowly, in parts, gradually, he wakes up. It is not that now he is ten percent awake, now twenty, now thirty, now forty, now ninety-nine, now ninety-nine point nine, and then a hundred percent -- no. When you shake a sleepy person, he awakes immediately. Either one is asleep or one is awake; there is no place in between. Hence Buddha says enlightenment is a sudden experience; it is not gradual, it is not that you arrive in steps. Enlightenment cannot be divided into parts; it is an indivisible, organic unity. Either you have it or you don't have it.

But man has remained clinging to words -- words which are hollow, words which carry no meaning, words which have no significance, words which have been uttered by as ignorant people as you are. Maybe they were educated, but education does not dispel ignorance. Knowing about light is not going to dispel darkness. You can know all that is available in the world about light; you can have a library in your room consisting only of books on light, yet that whole library will not be able to dispel the darkness. To dispel the

darkness you will need a small candle -- that will do the miracle.

Looking into the ENCYCLOPAEDIA BRITANNICA I was happy to note that it has no articles on love. That's a great insight! In fact, nothing can be written about love. One can love, one can be in love, one can even become love, but nothing can be written about love. The experience is so subtle and the words are so gross.

It is because of the words that humanity has been divided. A few people believe in a few hollow words -- they call themselves Hindus; others believe in a few other hollow words -- they call themselves Jews; still others call themselves Christians and Mohammedans, and so on, so forth. And they all believe in hollow words. It is not that you have experienced anything. Your being a Hindu or a Jew or a Mohammedan is not based on your own experience -- it is borrowed. And anything borrowed is futile.

But man has suffered much because of the words. A few people believe in the TALMUD, a few people believe in the TAO TEH CHING, a few people believe in THE DHAMMAPADA... and they have been fighting, quarreling, criticizing -- not only that, but killing each other. The whole history is full of blood -- in the name of God, in the name of love, in the name of brotherhood, in the name of humanity.

Mistress Rosenbaum became stranded one evening in a very "exclusive" resort section of Cape Cod. "Exclusive" meant that Jews were excluded. She entered the town hotel and said to the desk clerk, "I would like a room"

"Sorry," he replied. "The hotel is full."
"Then why does the sign say 'Rooms Available'?"
"We don't admit Jews."
"But Jesus himself was a Jew."
"How do you know that Jesus Christ was Jewish?"
"He went in his father's business. And, moreover, it so happened that I converted to Catholicism. Ask me any question and I will prove it."
"Alright," said the desk clerk. "How was Jesus born?"
"By virgin birth. The mama's name was Mary and the papa's name was the Holy Spirit."
"Okay, where was Jesus born?"
"In a stable."
"That's right. And why was he born in a stable?"
"Because," Mrs. Rosenbaum snapped, "bastards like you would not rent a room for the night to a Jewish woman!"

But these bastards are everywhere. They have become the priests and the rabbis and the pundits and the shankaracharyas and the popes. These people are clever, cunning -- with words. They are logic choppers, they can split hairs; they can argue endlessly about useless things, about such stupid things that later on for centuries you laugh at the whole thing.
In the Middle Ages, Christian priests -- Catholics, Protestants and others -- were in a big debate, great discussion was going on for centuries about how many angels can stand on a needle point. It was a great theological debate, it had stirred the whole of Europe, as if something tremendously important was involved in it. How

does it matter? But such stupid things have been dominating humanity for centuries.
In Buddha's time it was one of the greatest problems in India, discussed by all the sects, whether there is one hell or three or seven or seven hundred. Hindus believe in one hell, Jainas were talking about seven hells; and a disciple of Mahavira, Goshalak, who betrayed the master, started talking about seven hundred hells.
Somebody asked Goshalak, "Why do you say that your philosophy is superior, higher than Mahavira's?"
He said, "You can see: he knows only about seven hells and I know about seven hundred. He has gone only up to seven and I have traveled the whole way. And just as there are seven hundred hells, there are exactly seven hundred heavens. His knowledge is very limited, he does not know the whole truth."
Now, you can go on talking about such things. Some other fool can say that there are seven hundred and one....

A French professor and an American were talking. The French professor said, "There are one hundred positions in which love can be made."
The American said, "There are a hundred and one."
Now great argument ensued. The American asked, "You relate your hundred positions, then I will relate my hundred and one positions."
The French professor described in detail one hundred positions. The hundredth was hanging on a chandelier and doing it in the ear of the woman!

Now was the turn of the American. He said, "The first position is: the woman lies down on her back with the man on top of her."
The French professor said, "My God! I never thought about it! So you are right -- there are a hundred and one. You need not now relate the whole thing; there ARE a hundred and one. This one I never heard, never thought of even, never could have imagined. You Americans are something!"

These professors, these scholars, they have dominated humanity, and they have distracted humanity from simple existence, from simple life. They have made your minds very sophisticated, clever, cunning, knowledgeable, but they have destroyed your innocence and wonder. And it is innocence and wonder that become the bridge to the immediate -- and the immediate is also the ultimate.

Buddha says:

BETTER THAN A THOUSAND HOLLOW WORDS
IS ONE WORD THAT BRINGS PEACE.

BETTER THAN A THOUSAND HOLLOW WORDS....
Your scriptures are full of hollow words, your minds are full of hollow words. You go on talking, not even becoming aware of what you are saying. When you use the word 'God', do you know what it means? How can you know if you have not known God? The word is empty, the word itself cannot have any significance; the significance has to come from your experience.

When you know God and you utter the word 'God', it is luminous, it is full of light, it is a diamond. But when you know nothing of God, but only the word 'God' taught by others, it is an ordinary pebble with no color, with no luminosity, with no light in it. You can go on carrying it; it is simply a weight, a burden. You can drag it. It will not become your wings, it will not make you light, and it will not help you in any way to arrive closer to God. In fact it will hinder you, obstruct you, because the more you think you know about God, just by knowing the word 'God', the less you will inquire into the reality of God. The more you become knowledgeable, the less is the possibility of your ever going on the adventure of searching out the truth of God. When you already know, what is the point of inquiring, what is the point of investigating? You have killed the question. You have not solved it, you have not got the answer; you have taken it from others. But others' answers can't be your answers.

Buddha knows, but when he speaks, his words cannot carry his experience. When they leave his heart they are full of light, they are full of dance. When they reach to you they are dull, dead. You can accumulate those words, you can think that you have a great treasure, but you have nothing at all. All that you have are empty words.

Buddha wants you to become aware of this phenomenon, because this is of great importance. Unless you are free of empty, hollow words, you will not start the journey of inquiry. Unless you drop your so-called knowledge, unless you discard all your information, unless you become again innocent like a child, ignorant like a child, your inquiry is going to be futile, superficial.

BETTER THAN A THOUSAND HOLLOW WORDS IS ONE WORD THAT BRINGS PEACE. And what is the criterion? Which word is luminous? Which word is really full of fragrance? The word that brings peace. And that word never comes from the outside -- it is the still, small voice of your own heart. It is heard at the deepest recesses of your being: it is the sound of your own being, it is the song of your own life.

It is not to be found in the scriptures and it is not to be found in learned discourses. It is to be found only if you go in; it is to be found only in meditation, in deep silence. When all borrowed knowledge has left you and you are alone, when all the scriptures have been burned and you are left alone, when you don't know a thing, when you function from a state of not-knowing, then it is heard, because then all the clamor of knowledge and the noise is gone... you can hear the still, small voice. And then a single word... it is a single word: it is the sound of OM.

The moment you enter into your being you will be surprised to find that there is a constant sound that appears like 'om'. Mohammedans have heard it as 'amin' -- it is om; Christians have heard it as 'amen'; it is the same sound. Hence the Christian, the Mohammedan, the Hindu, the Jaina, the Buddhist, they all end their prayers with om. The prayer is bound to end in om; the prayer makes you more and more silent... finally there is nothing but om. All Hindu scriptures end with OM, SHANTIH, SHANTIH, SHANTIH -- om, peace, peace, peace. This is the word 'om'.

And the criterion to judge whether you have really heard it or you have pretended to hear it or you have imagined

hearing it is that it brings peace. Suddenly you are full of peace -- a peace that you had never known before.
Peace is something far superior to happiness, because happiness is always followed by unhappiness; it is always a mixture of polar opposites: happiness/unhappiness. They are like day and night, they follow each other.
If you are a pessimist you can count nights, if you are an optimist you can count the days; that is the only difference in people. There are a few people who say, "There are two days and one night between two days" -- those are the optimists. And then there are people who say, "There are two nights and only one day sandwiched in between" -- they are the pessimists.
But in reality both are wrong. Each night has its day and each day has its night; they are equal. All polar opposites are equal; that's how existence remains balanced. If you have happiness today, wait -- tomorrow the unhappiness will come. If you are unhappy today, don't be worried -- happiness will be just by the corner.
In Indian villages mothers don't allow their children to laugh too much, because, they say, "If you laugh too much then you will have to cry, you will have to weep." And there is great wisdom in it -- a primitive wisdom, unsophisticated, but it has some truth in it. Mothers in Indian villages will stop the child if he is giggling too much and laughing too much. They will say, "Stop, stop right now! Otherwise soon you will be crying and weeping and tears will come."
It is bound to be so because nature balances.
Peace is something far higher than happiness. Buddha does not call it bliss just for this reason: if you call it bliss, which

it is... but he avoids the word 'bliss' because the moment you call it bliss people understand immediately 'happiness'. Bliss gives them the idea of absolute happiness, great happiness, tremendous happiness, incredible happiness, but the difference between happiness and bliss in people's minds is only of quantity, as if bliss is the ocean and happiness is just a dewdrop. But the difference is only of quantity -- and the difference of quantity is not a real difference, it is not a difference that makes a difference. Only qualitative differences are real differences.

Hence Buddha has chosen the word 'peace' instead of 'bliss'. He says peace -- peace gives you a totally different direction to inquire, to search. Peace means no happiness, no unhappiness.

Happiness is also a state of noise, a state of tension, excitement. Have you observed? -- you cannot remain happy for a long long time, because it starts getting on your nerves; you start feeling tired of it, bored with it. Yes, to a certain extent you can tolerate it; beyond that it becomes impossible. How long can you go on hugging your woman? Yes, for a few moments it is beautiful, ecstatic, but how long? One minute, two minutes, thirty minutes, sixty minutes, one day, two days? How long? You try next time, and you will be able to note the point where happiness turns into unhappiness.

When you want to get hold of a woman you are so allured, attracted. And women know it intuitively, hence they do everything to escape from your hands. They remain elusive, they don't become too readily available. They are aware -- intuitively aware, not intellectually -- intuitively aware of the phenomenon that all this attraction will be gone soon

and all this great love will die soon. Everything dies; everything that is born is bound to die. They are far more intelligent that way -- they avoid, they escape. They allow you only a certain amount of intimacy, and then they are again far away. That keeps the game going; otherwise every game will be finished too soon. Any happiness is only for the time being. Beyond that it turns into the opposite; it becomes sour, bitter.

Peace means going beyond the excitement of happiness and unhappiness both. There are people who are attracted to unhappiness too; modern psychology calls them masochists. They enjoy torturing themselves. In the past these same masochists became great MAHATMAS, great sages, saints. Psychologically understood, with the modern insight into human mind, your so-called saints will look -- almost ninety percent of them -- masochistic, or maybe ninety-nine percent even. If looked at deeply, you will find these are people who enjoy torturing themselves. These are people who go on long fasts, lie down on the bed of thorns, stand in the hot sun or in the cold, sit naked in the Himalayan snows. These are the masochists.

And the other side of it is sadism. There are people who enjoy torturing others. And in fact the whole humanity -- almost the whole humanity, except the buddhas -- can be divided into these two camps. These are the real two religions of the world: masochism and sadism. The masochists become religious and the sadists become politicians. Alexander the Great, Tamerlane, Nadirshah, Genghis Khan, Adolf Hitler, Mussolini, Joseph Stalin, Mao Zedong, all these people, they enjoy torturing others. To torture others is as pathological as to torture oneself.

The person who wants happiness is bound to be sadistic. Analyze your happiness, on what it depends. If you have a bigger house than your neighbor you are happy. In fact, you are torturing your neighbor by having a bigger house: it is a very subtle torture.

I used to stay in one of the most beautiful palaces in Calcutta. It was a beauty, a very old Victorian colonial palace it was, and it was the best house in Calcutta. The man was very proud of it, and whenever I would stay with him he was continuously talking about the house, and the garden, and this and that -- but it was around the house, his whole talk.
Once it happened, I stayed with him for three days and he didn't mention the house at all.
I said, "What has happened? Have you become a sannyasin or something? Have you renounced the world? You are not talking about the house!"
He looked with sad eyes towards me and said, "Can't you see the new house that has come up in the neighborhood?"
I had seen the house. A new marble house had come up, and certainly it was bigger and far more beautiful. And he said, "Since this house has come up all my joy is lost. I am living in such misery, you cannot conceive."
I said, "But you are living in the same house! It is the SAME house, and you were so happy. And you are still in the same house. Why should you be so miserable? What does it have to do with the neighbor? And if it is because of the neighbor that you are feeling so miserable, then remember one thing: when you used to feel so happy about the house, it was also not about the house -- it was about

the neighbors, because they were living in small houses. And if you are so much tortured by the neighbor's house, remember, the neighbor must have been in a long long torture because of your house. It is just to take revenge that he has made the new house."

The new house-owner invited me for dinner. He asked my host also to come, but my host simply said, "No, I cannot -- I am too busy." And he was not busy at all! And when the man had gone I said to him, "You are not busy."

He said, "I am not busy, but I cannot go into that house -- unless I have made a bigger house than that. Yes, wait! It will take two, three years for me to make a bigger house, but it is a question of prestige. Once I have made a bigger house I will invite that man for dinner."

This is how people are living.

If you watch your own mind, you enjoy things because others don't have them. You enjoy them not having them, you don't enjoy your having them.

Such is the pathology of man: one is a sadist, he enjoys others being in a state of misery; and the other turns into a masochist. Seeing that it is not good to enjoy others' misery, seeing that it is a sin, seeing that he will have to suffer in hell for it, becoming aware that this is not virtuous, he turns into a masochist, he starts torturing himself. But the torture continues.

Peace means a state of inner health, a state of inner wholeness, where you are not torturing others, not torturing yourself, where you are neither interested in happiness nor in unhappiness. You are simply interested in being absolutely silent, calm, quiet, collected, integrated.

Yes, when the mind is dropped... and mind means your whole past and all that you know and all that you have accumulated. Mind is your subtle treasure, your subtle possession. When all that mind has been dropped and you have entered into a state of no-mind, a great peace descends. It is silence, it is full of bliss, but Buddha avoids the word. I don't avoid it.

Buddha had to avoid it, because in Buddha's days bliss was talked about too much. The Upanishads were talking about it, Mahavira was talking about it, the whole Hindu tradition was talking about it. SAT-CHIT-ANAND -- God is truth, consciousness, bliss, but the ultimate quality is bliss. Too much talk about bliss. Buddha must have felt that it is better not to use that word. That word has become too orthodox, too conventional, too conformist. And because it has been used so much it has lost its meaning, its savor, its salt, it has lost its beauty. But now it can be revived again; now nobody is talking about bliss.

But whether you call it peace or bliss is irrelevant. Just understand one thing: that it takes you beyond all dualities. Day and night, summer and winter, life and death, pain and pleasure -- it takes you beyond all dualities -- love and hate. It takes you beyond all dual phenomena. It takes you to the one.

Hence Buddha says: ONE WORD. It is a simple, melodious, harmonious state of your inner health, inner sanity. One word is enough, far more significant. BETTER THAN A THOUSAND HOLLOW WORDS....

BETTER THAN A THOUSAND HOLLOW VERSES
IS ONE VERSE THAT BRINGS PEACE.

There are poets and poets. There are two kinds of poets in the world. One is the poet who is a dreamer, who is very clever in imagination, in fantasy. He creates works of art, he creates sculpture, music, poetry, but all that remains dream stuff. It may entertain you for the time being, but it cannot give you any insight into reality. It may be a consolation, a solace, a lullaby; it may have a tranquilizing effect on you. Yes, that's exactly what it does. All that is called aesthetics, art... has a tranquilizing effect on you. Listening to classical music you fall into a totally different kind of state. Everything becomes tranquil, still, but it is momentary; it is only a dream world that the musician creates around you. Listening to poetry or looking at great sculpture, for a moment you are dazed, stunned. The mind stops as if you are transported for a moment to some other world, but again you are back in the same old world, in the same old rut.

But there are different kinds of poets, painters, sculptors too: the buddhas. A single verse from them may transform you forever. Listening to a buddha is listening to divine music. Listening to a buddha is listening to God himself. A buddha is God visible, a buddha is God available. A buddha is a window into God, an invitation from the beyond. Shakespeare, Milton, Kalidas, Bhavabhuti, and thousands of others -- these are the dreamers, great dreamers; beautiful are their dreams, but they are not the poets who can transform your being. Mohammed can do it, Christ can do it, Krishna can do it, Buddha can do it, Kabir, Nanak, Farid, yes, these people can do it.

What is the difference between the poetry of a Kabir and a Shakespeare? As far as poetry is concerned, Shakespeare is far more poetic, remember, than Kabir. Kabir knows nothing of the art. Shakespeare is very sophisticated; but still a single verse from Kabir is far more valuable than all the collected works of Shakespeare -- because a single word from Kabir comes from insight, not from fantasy. That is the difference.

Kabir has clarity, he has eyes which can see into the beyond. Shakespeare is as blind as you are. Of course, he is very efficient in bringing his fantasy into words. That's art, worthy of respect, but at the most it can entertain you. It can keep you occupied beautifully, but there is no possibility of transformation happening through it. Even Shakespeare is not a transformed being, how can he transform you?

Only a buddha, only one who is awakened, can wake you up. Shakespeare is as fast asleep as you are, or maybe even deeper asleep than you are, because he is having such beautiful dreams. His sleep is bound to be deep, because he is not only having dreams, he is singing his dreams. He is bringing his dreams to expression -- and still his sleep is not broken.

Buddha is one who is awakened. Only one who is awake can wake you up. BETTER THAN A THOUSAND HOLLOW VERSES IS ONE VERSE THAT BRINGS PEACE. And how will you know that you are around a buddha? His very presence will bring transcendental peace to you.

So a buddha from the past cannot be of much help, because his words will again be hollow words; he will not be

present in them. It will only be a beautiful cage, a golden cage studded with diamonds, but the bird has left the cage long ago.
A buddha is significant only when he is alive, because only his aliveness can trigger a process in you which will lead you ultimately to awakening.

BETTER THAN A HUNDRED HOLLOW LINES
IS ONE LINE OF THE LAW, BRINGING PEACE.

By law, Buddha does not mean any moral, social, political law. By law Buddha means dhamma: AES DHAMMO SANANTANO -- the ultimate law, the eternal law, the law that makes this universe a cosmos instead of a chaos, the law that runs the whole universe in such tremendous harmony.
BETTER THAN A THOUSAND HOLLOW LINES....
"Lines" is not really a good translation. The original word is SUTRA: sutra literally means thread. And in the East the greatest statements of the masters have been called sutras, threads, for a certain reason. A man is born as a heap of flowers, just as a heap. Unless threads are used and the thread runs through the flowers, the heap will remain a heap and will never become a garland.
And you can be offered to God only when you have become a garland. A heap is a chaos, a garland is a cosmos -- although in the garland you also only see the flowers, the thread is invisible.
The sayings of the masters are called sutras, threads, because they can make out of you a garland. And only

when you are a garland you can become an offering to God, only when you have become a cosmos, a harmony, a song. Right now you are just gibberish. You can write down... sit in a room, close the door and start writing on a paper whatsoever comes to your mind. Don't edit it, don't delete anything, don't add anything, because you are not going to show it to anybody. Keep a matchbox by the side so once you have written it you can burn it immediately, so that you can be authentic. Just write whatsoever comes to your mind and you will be surprised: just a ten minutes' exercise and you will understand what I mean when I say that you are just gibberish.

It is really a great revelation to see how your mind goes on jumping from here to there, from one thing to another thing, accidentally, for no reason at all. What nonsense thoughts go on running inside you, with no relevance, no consistency. Just a sheer wastage, a leakage of energy!

The sayings of the buddhas are called sutras. Here the translator has used the word 'line' for sutra. Linguistically it is okay, but these are not linguistic matters. That is one of the great problems: to translate statements of Buddha, Christ, Krishna, is really almost an impossible job. And those who translate them are not awakened people themselves; they are great orientalists, linguists, grammarians. They know the original language, but they only know the language -- and language is not the real point, it is only the garment.

So remember: BETTER THAN A HUNDRED HOLLOW LINES means BETTER THAN A HUNDRED HOLLOW SUTRAS -- logical, philosophical, proposed by great

philosophers and thinkers, but they are hollow because they don't contain the experience.
... IS ONE LINE OF THE LAW -- a single sutra of the law. Who can assert the sutra of the law? Only one who has become awakened, only one who has become one with the ultimate law, only one who has himself become the dhamma. Not a religious person but one who himself has become religion itself. And how will you judge? -- the same criterion continues: it brings peace.
Why are you here with me? Be here only if my presence brings peace to you. Be here only if listening to me a chord starts vibrating in you which brings peace. Be here only if your love for me helps you to transcend the world of dualities; otherwise being here is of no use.
My presence cannot be for all; it can be only for the chosen few, only for those who have really come thirsty, inquiring, who really want to risk all to know God, who are ready to die for truth, who are ready to become sacrifices.

IT IS BETTER TO CONQUER YOURSELF
THAN TO WIN A THOUSAND BATTLES.

And in peace is victory. When peace surrounds you within and without, you are overflowing with peace, you have come home, you have conquered yourself, you are a master.
IT IS BETTER TO CONQUER YOURSELF THAN TO WIN A THOUSAND BATTLES. One buddha is far more significant and valuable than a million Adolf Hitlers. And this victory is something which is a real victory, because all other victories will be taken away from you. Alexander the

Great dies like any beggar dies; he cannot take anything with him. He has conquered the whole world, and now going as a beggar....

It is said: there are three instances in Alexander's life which are significant. One is the meeting with the great mystic, Diogenes. Diogenes was laying naked on the bank of a river taking a sunbath. It was early morning... and the early sun and the beautiful riverbank and the cool sand. And Alexander was passing by; he was coming to India. Somebody told him, "Diogenes is just close by and you have always been inquiring about Diogenes" -- because he had heard many stories about the man. He was really a man worth calling a man! Even Alexander, deep down, was jealous of Diogenes.
He went to see him. He was impressed by his beauty -- naked, undecorated, with no ornaments. And he himself was full of ornaments, decorated in every possible way, but he looked very poor before Diogenes. And he said to Diogenes, "I feel jealous of you. I look poor compared to you -- and you have nothing! What is your richness?"
And Diogenes said, "I don't desire anything -- desirelessness is my treasure. I am a master because I don't possess anything -- nonpossessiveness is my mastery, and I have conquered the world because I have conquered myself. And my victory is going with me, and your victory will be taken away by death."

And the second story: When he was going back from India.... His teacher had told him, "When you come back

from India, bring a sannyasin, because that is the greatest contribution of India to the world."

The phenomenon of a sannyasin is uniquely Indian. Nowhere else has the idea of transcending the world totally captured the minds of people as it has in this country.

Aristotle was the teacher of Alexander. Aristotle had asked him, "Bring a sannyasin when you come back. I would like to see what a sannyasin is like, what it is all about."

After conquering India, when he was going back he remembered. He inquired where to find a sannyasin. People said, "Sannyasins are many but real sannyasins are very few. We know one."

In Alexandrian reports his name is given as Dandamesh -- it may be a Greek form of some Indian name. Alexander went to see the man -- again the same beauty as Diogenes, the same peace. Whenever awakening happens it brings something similar. Around every buddha you will find the same spring, the same fragrance, the same peace.

Again, as he entered into the energy field of Dandamesh, he was tremendously affected, as if he had entered into a perfumed garden. He remembered Diogenes immediately. He asked Dandamesh, "I have come to invite you -- come with me. You will be our royal guest, every comfort will be provided for, but you have to come with me to Athens."

Dandamesh said, "I have dropped all coming, all going."

He was talking of something else; Alexander could not understand immediately. He was saying that, "Now there is no more coming in the world and no more going out of the world. I have transcended all coming and going." What in the East we call AVAGAMAN -- coming and going; coming into the womb and then going into death.

Alexander said, "But this is a commandment -- I command you! You have to follow. This is the order from the great Alexander!"
Dandamesh laughed. The same laughter -- again Alexander remembered Diogenes -- the same laughter. Dandamesh said, "Nobody can command me, not even death."
Alexander said, "You don't understand -- I am a dangerous man!" He pulled out his sword and he said, "Either you will come with me or I will cut off your head."
Dandamesh said, "Do it, cut off the head -- because what you are going to do now, I have done years before. When the head falls, you will see it falling on the earth and I will also see it falling on the earth."
Alexander said, "How will you see it? You will be dead!"
Dandamesh said, "That is the point: I cannot die anymore, I have become a witness. I will witness my death as much as you will witness. It will happen between us two -- you will be seeing, I will be seeing. And my purpose in the body is fulfilled: I have attained. There is no need for the body to exist anymore. Cut off the head!"
Alexander had to put his sword back in the sheath -- you cannot kill such a man.

And the third story is:
When Alexander was dying he remembered both Diogenes and Dandamesh, and he remembered their laughter, their peace, their joy.
And he remembered that they had something that goes beyond death, "And I have nothing."

He wept, tears came to his eyes, and he said to his ministers, "When I die and you carry my body to the cemetery, let my hands hang out of the casket."
The ministers asked, "But this is not the tradition! Why? Why such a strange request?"
Alexander said, "I would like people to see that I came empty-handed and I am going empty-handed, and all my life has been a wastage. Let my hands hang out of the casket so everybody can see -- even Alexander the Great is going empty-handed."

These stories are worth meditating on.
Buddha says: IT IS BETTER TO CONQUER YOURSELF THAN TO WIN A THOUSAND BATTLES.

THEN THE VICTORY IS YOURS.

No other victory is yours. It can't be taken from you -- that's why it is yours.

IT CANNOT BE TAKEN FROM YOU,
NOT BY ANGELS OR BY DEMONS,
HEAVEN OR HELL.

Nobody can take it away from you. Remember, only that which cannot be taken away from you is yours. Anything that can be taken away from you is not yours. Don't cling to it, because the clinging will bring misery to you. Do not be possessive of anything that can be taken away from you because your possessiveness will create anguish for you. Abide with that which is really yours, which nobody can

take away from you. It cannot be stolen, you cannot be robbed of it, you cannot go bankrupt as far as it is concerned. Even death cannot take it.

Krishna says: NAINAM CHHINDANTI SHASTRANI -- you cannot cut it by weapons, swords cannot penetrate it, arrows cannot reach to it, bullets are absolutely powerless as far as it is concerned. NAINAM DAHATI PAVAKAH -- neither fire can burn it.

When on a funeral pyre your body will be burned, YOU will not be burned -- if you have known yourself, if you have understood what this consciousness is within you. If you have conquered your consciousness, then the body will be burned, turned to ashes, but you will not be burned, you will not be touched even. You will remain forever -- you are eternal. But this eternity can be known only when you become a master on your own.

Don't waste your time in mastering others, in conquering power, prestige, in conquering the world. Conquer yourself. The only thing worth conquering is your own being.

BETTER THAN A HUNDRED YEARS OF WORSHIP,
BETTER THAN A THOUSAND OFFERINGS,
BETTER THAN GIVING UP A THOUSAND
WORLDLY WAYS
IN ORDER TO WIN MERIT,
BETTER EVEN THAN TENDING IN THE FOREST
A SACRED FLAME FOR A HUNDRED YEARS --
IS ONE MOMENT'S REVERENCE
FOR THE MAN WHO HAS CONQUERED HIMSELF.

A tremendously significant sutra. Meditate over it slowly.
BETTER THAN A HUNDRED YEARS OF WORSHIP... IS a single MOMENT'S REVERENCE FOR THE MAN WHO HAS CONQUERED HIMSELF. Why? -- because in the temples you will be worshipping just stones. And by worshipping the stones -- either in the temple or in Kaaba -- by worshipping statues and pictures, by worshipping dead scriptures, following rituals and formalities, you will not have any taste of buddhahood.
But ONE MOMENT'S REVERENCE FOR THE MAN WHO HAS CONQUERED HIMSELF is far more valuable. Why? -- because the moment you bow down to the man who has conquered himself, the moment you bow down to a buddha, something of the buddha, something of the vibe penetrates you, stirs your asleep heart, penetrates your being like a ray of light into the dark night of your soul, brings you the first glimpse of the divine.
It is not possible in the temples, in the mosques, in the churches, in the synagogues, in the gurudwaras. It is possible if you are in the vicinity of a Nanak, but not in a gurudwara. It is possible if you are in a love affair with Jesus, but not in a church. It is possible if you have surrendered to a buddha, if you have said to a buddha, "BUDDHAM SHARANAM GACHCHHAMI -- I go to the feet of the Buddha, I surrender myself." But it is not possible in a Buddhist temple; before the statue of Buddha it is not possible. You will have to find a living buddha -- there is no other way. There is no shortcut.
BETTER THAN A THOUSAND OFFERINGS, BETTER THAN GIVING UP A THOUSAND WORLDLY

WAYS... IS ONE MOMENT'S REVERENCE FOR THE MAN WHO HAS CONQUERED HIMSELF.

Why do you worship in the first place? Why do you offer flowers, food to the statues? Why do you renounce A THOUSAND WORLDLY WAYS? -- because of greed and fear. Either it is fear or it is greed, or maybe it is both, because greed and fear are not different -- two aspects of the same coin. Greed is fear hidden, fear is greed hidden. And not only the worldly people are greedy, the so-called otherworldly are also as greedy or maybe they are even more greedy. Their greed is such that it cannot be satisfied by this world. Their greed is such that they are desiring heavenly pleasures: only paradise can satisfy them, this world is not enough. And that's what your so-called saints go on teaching to you. They say, "Why are you wasting your time in momentary pleasures? Follow us! We will show you the way to find pleasures which will last forever."

But this is pure greed! The worldly man seems to be less greedy because he is satisfied with the momentary, and the otherworldly is so greedy that he wants something permanent which lasts forever. The worldly is greedy, the otherworldly is greedy.

Your priests are very greedy people, your monks are very greedy people.

One day a Protestant minister came into Bonatelli's barbershop and got a haircut. When Bonatelli was finished, the minister reached for his wallet but the barber shook his head and smiled. "Put-a your wallet away, Reverend," said the Italian. "I never charge a man of the cloth."

The minister thanked him and left, but he soon returned and presented the pious barber with a Bible.
A few hours later, Father Rourke entered the Italian's shop and he, too, got a haircut. Once again the barber refused to accept any payment. "Forget it, Father," he said. "I no take-a money from a priest."
Father Rourke left shortly thereafter and returned with a crucifix which he presented to Bonatelli as a token of his appreciation.
Toward evening a rabbi entered the shop. He also got a haircut. When the rabbi reached into his pocket, the barber waved the money aside. "That's okay, Rabbi," said Bonatelli. "I no accept-a pay from men who do-a da Lord-a's work."
So the rabbi left, and came back with another rabbi!

People live through greed or through fear. A few people are afraid of hell, hence they are worshipping; and a few people are greedy for heaven, hence they are worshipping.

A Sufi story says:
Jesus came into a town. He saw a few people sitting very sad, in deep agony; he had never seen such a lot of sad people. He asked, "What has happened to you? What calamity has fallen upon you?"
And they said, "We are afraid of hell, we are trembling. We don't know how we can save ourselves from hell -- that is our fear, that is our constant agony. We cannot sleep, we cannot rest, unless we have found a way."
Jesus walked away from those people. Just a little further ahead he found another group sitting under a tree, very sad,

in great anxiety, just as the first lot. Jesus was very puzzled. He asked, "What is the matter? What is happening in this town? Why are you looking so sad? Why do you look so tense? You will go mad if you remain in this state any longer! What has happened to you?"
They said, "Nothing has happened to us. We are afraid that we may lose heaven, we may not be able to enter it. And we have to get it, whatsoever the cost. That is our anxiety and that is our tension."
Jesus left those people also. Sufis say: Why did Jesus leave these people? -- because these are the religious people! He should have taught them the way to avoid hell, and how to enter heaven, but he simply turned away from them.
He found a third group in a garden, a small group of people who were dancing, singing, rejoicing. He asked, "What ceremony is going on? What festival are you having?"
They said, "No special ceremony -- just our gratefulness to God, gratefulness for what he has given to us. We were not worthy of it."
Jesus said, "To you I will talk, with you I will stay. You are my people."

This story is not related to Christians, but the Sufis have a few beautiful stories about Jesus. In fact, they understand Jesus far more deeply than the so-called orthodox church. This is a beautiful story. It says neither those who are living through fear nor those who are living through greed are going to enter into the kingdom of God, but only those who are living in tremendous joy, thankfulness and gratitude. And where will you learn gratitude? If you have not seen a buddha, you will not know what gratitude is. Where will

you learn to celebrate if you have not come across a buddha? A buddha is celebration, a buddha is a festival, an ongoing festivity, a dance that goes on and on, that knows no ending, a song that continues forever.

If you have come across a buddha, then a moment's reverence, says Buddha, is enough.

Drop all your fear, drop all your greed. Learn how to be a disciple. Learn how to imbibe the spirit of someone who has reached his innermost center, who does not live anymore on the circumference, who has become enlightened, whose being is a light.

Learn to open your eyes towards that light. Learn to say: BUDDHAM SHARANAM GACHCHHAMI, SANGHAM SHARANAM GACHCHHAMI, DHAMMAM SHARANAM GACHCHHAMI. Three surrenders: one surrender to the one who has become awakened; the second surrender is to the company who lives in the company of the awakened -- because the perfume of the awakened one starts filtering into the company, the blessed company that lives with the awakened one; and the third surrender is to the law, the ultimate law, through which the sleepy one has become awakened and the other sleepy ones are becoming awakened.

These three surrenders... and a single moment's reverence is more valuable than a hundred years of worship, than a thousand offerings....

BETTER THAN GIVING UP A THOUSAND WORLDLY WAYS IN ORDER TO WIN MERIT, BETTER EVEN THAN TENDING IN THE FOREST A SACRED FLAME FOR A HUNDRED YEARS -- IS ONE

MOMENT'S REVERENCE FOR THE MAN WHO HAS CONQUERED HIMSELF.

TO REVERE SUCH A MAN,
A MASTER OLD IN VIRTUE AND HOLINESS,
IS TO HAVE VICTORY OVER LIFE ITSELF,
AND BEAUTY, STRENGTH AND HAPPINESS.

To revere such a person is to know the secretmost phenomenon in existence. Bowing down to a buddha a miracle happens: something starts flowing from the buddha to the heart of the disciple, an invisible river, a river of light.

A MASTER OLD IN VIRTUE AND HOLINESS.... What does this sutra mean: OLD IN VIRTUE AND HOLINESS? There is a paradox: holiness is as new as the dewdrops in the early morning sun on the lotus leaf, and holiness is as ancient as the Himalayas. It is both, because it is eternal. It is from the beginning to the end, but it is new, too, every moment new, renewing itself. It is not a dead thing just sitting there; it is an alive process. It is not a stagnant pool, it is a river rushing towards the ocean. So it is new every moment; hence every buddha is young forever.

Have you ever seen any statue of Buddha as an old man of eighty-two years? No. Have you ever seen any statue of Mahavira as old, or Rama, or Krishna as old? There are no statues of Buddha, Krishna, or Mahavira as old, although they all lived to a very old age, all passed the age of eighty. Why don't we have their statues as old men? To represent the eternal youth of truth, the eternal freshness of truth.

And still what they say is the ancientmost: AES DHAMMO SANANTANO... so ancient that in fact there has never been a beginning. SANANTANO means beginningless -- forever it has been.

To represent this there is told another phenomenon: Lao Tzu is said to have been born old. Buddha died when he was eighty-two and Lao Tzu was born when he was eighty-two. He was born eighty-two years old; he lived in his mother's womb for eighty-two years. A beautiful story. Not that he really lived -- because one has to think of the woman also! -- but it says something. It says that truth is so ancient, it is always old.

These stories are beautiful.

It is said that when Zarathustra was born... he is the only child in the whole history of humanity about whom such a story is told. When he was born -- every child cries when he is born -- Zarathustra laughed. Beautiful! Not that he could have really done it. No child can do it -- it is physiologically impossible -- the child has to cry. Through crying he clears his chest and the breathing system. He cannot laugh, he cannot even breathe; first he has to cry. If the child does not cry for a few seconds, a few minutes, that means he is not going to live at all. Then he has to be forced. The doctor hangs him upside down and gives him a good slap on the bottom to help him cry. If he cries, that means he is going to live. If he cries, that clears the chest -- because much mucus gathers in the chest while he is in the mother's womb. He does not breathe in the mother's womb so the whole breathing system remains clogged with mucus. So each child physiologically has to cry; through crying he gets rid of the mucus. Laughter is not possible.

But it is very symbolic that Zarathustra laughed. What does it symbolize? It symbolizes that this whole life is just illusory, only worth laughing at. It is ridiculous! He knows from the very beginning it is ridiculous. The real life is something totally different.

TO REVERE SUCH A MAN, A MASTER OLD IN VIRTUE AND HOLINESS, IS TO HAVE VICTORY OVER LIFE ITSELF.... By revering a buddha, by respecting a buddha, by trusting a buddha, you are conquering life itself. And you will attain to beauty, strength and happiness. In that surrender you will become beautiful, because the ego is gone and the ego is ugly. And you will become strong, because the ego is gone -- the ego is always weak and impotent. And you will become happy for the first time, because for the first time you have seen a glimpse of truth, for the first time you have seen a glimpse of your own being. The buddha is a mirror: when you bow down you see your original face reflected in the buddha. Let your heart be full of the prayer:

BUDDHAM SHARANAM GACHCHHAMI,
SANGHAM SHARANAM GACHCHHAMI,
DHAMMAM SHARANAM GACHCHHAMI.

Enough for today.

The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 3

Chapter #10

Chapter title: Vast as the sky

21 August 1979 am in Buddha Hall

The first question:
Question 1
BELOVED MASTER,
THE WESTERN MIND IS SO ORIENTED TOWARD ANALYSIS, THE LEFT HEMISPHERE OF THE BRAIN -- THE EASTERN MIND JUST THE OPPOSITE, THE INTUITIVE RIGHT HEMISPHERE. THE WEST IS FASCINATED BY THE EAST AND THE EAST BY THE WEST. EQUAL AMOUNTS OF BOTH -- IS THIS THE HARMONY OF WISDOM AND THE TRANSCENDENCE OF OPPOSITES?

Prem Dhanesh, the transcendence of opposites is not a quantitative phenomenon, it is a qualitative revolution. It is not a question of equal amounts of both; that will be a very materialistic solution. Quantity means matter. Equal amounts of both will give you only an appearance of synthesis but not a real synthesis -- a dead synthesis, not alive, not breathing, not with a heart beating.
The real synthesis is a dialogue: not equal amounts of both, but a loving relationship, an I/thou relationship. It is a question of bridging the opposites, not putting them together in one place.
Both are important, immensely important. Neither analysis can be discarded nor intuition. Discard analysis and you become outwardly poor, starved, unhealthy. And when one is outwardly poor, starved, unhealthy, how can he go inwards? It is impossible.

The outward poverty prevents the inward journey. You are so obsessed with food, clothes, shelter, you don't have time and space to go in, to think about the higher things of life.

In the Upanishads there is a beautiful story. Shvetketu, a young man, came back from the university full of knowledge. He was a brilliant student, he had topped the university with all the medals and all the degrees that were possible, available. He came back home with great pride. His old father, Uddalak, looked at him and asked him a single question. He said to him, "You have come full of knowledge, but do you know the knower? You have accumulated much information, your consciousness is full of borrowed wisdom -- but what is this consciousness? Do you know who you are?"
Shvetketu said, "But this question was never raised in the university. I have learned the Vedas, I have learned language, philosophy, poetry, literature, history, geography. I have learned all that was available in the university, but this was not a subject at all. You are asking a very strange question; nobody ever asked me in the university. It was not on the syllabus, it was not in my course."
Uddalak said, "You do one thing: be on a fast for two weeks, then I will ask you something."
He wanted to show his knowledge, just a young man's desire. He must have dreamed that his father would be very happy. Although the father was saying, "Wait for two weeks and fast," he started talking about the ultimate, the absolute, the Brahman.
The father said, "You wait two weeks, then we will discuss about Brahman."

Two days' fast, three days' fast, four days' fast, and the father started asking him, "What is Brahman?" In the beginning he answered a little bit, recited what he had crammed, displayed. But by the end of the week he was so tired, so exhausted, so hungry, that when the father asked, "What is Brahman?" he said, "Stop all this nonsense! I am hungry, I think only of food and you are asking me what Brahman is. Right now, except food nothing is Brahman."
The father said, "So your whole knowledge is just because you were not starved. Because you were taken care of, your body was nourished, it was easy for you to talk about great philosophy. Now is the real question. Now bring your knowledge!"
Shvetketu said, "I have forgotten all. Only one thing haunts me: hunger, hunger -- day in, day out. I cannot sleep, I cannot rest. There is fire in my belly, I am burning, and I don't know anything at all. I have forgotten all that I have learned."
The father said, "My son, food is the first step towards Brahman. Food is Brahman -- ANNAM BRAHMA." A tremendously significant statement. India has forgotten it completely. ANNAM BRAHMA: food is God, the first God.

If you drop the analytical mind, science disappears. If you drop the analytical mind, you can't be affluent; you are bound to be poor and hungry, and you will lose your first contact with God.
The West is in that contact; nothing is wrong about it. This orientation in analysis is a significant step towards knowing God. I am not against it. But one should not stop at it. Food

is not an ultimate value, it is a means to an end. And if you have a meditative pilgrimage you start transforming food into prayer.

It depends. The painter eats the same food, but it becomes painting in him. The poet also eats the same food, it becomes poetry in him. The lover also eats the same food, it becomes love in him. The murderer also eats the same food, it becomes murder and destruction in him. Alexander, Genghis Khan, Adolf Hitler, Gautam Buddha, Jesus Christ and Krishna, they were not eating different kinds of food; the food is the same, more or less. But in Adolf Hitler it becomes destruction, in Gautam Buddha it becomes compassion. Food is raw energy; it depends on you how you transform it. You are the transformer; you are really significant, not what you eat.

Money is not bad in itself. That's my basic approach towards existence: money is neutral, it depends on you. In the hands of a man of understanding, money is tremendously beautiful. It can become music, it can become art, it can become science, it can become religion. It is not money that is bad, it is the person. The stupid person, if he has money, does not know what to do with it; his money creates more greed. Money can free you from greed, but the stupid person changes money into more greed. It becomes anger, it becomes sexuality, it becomes lust. The more money the stupid person has, the more stupid he becomes, because he becomes more powerful to do stupid things.

With the wise, everything is transformed into wisdom. The analytical mind is not bad, the scientific approach towards reality is not bad -- but it is only a means, it can't

be the end. The end is self-knowledge, the end is to know God, the end is to know the eternal, the deathless. AES DHAMMO SANANTANO: that is the end, to know the ultimate law which pervades, permeates the whole existence -- because by knowing it, one is liberated. Truth liberates.

The East has contributed greatly, immensely towards that ultimate end. But without means, how can you reach the end? And without the end what is the point of having all the means? It is a question of deep dialogue between East and West, it is a question of a marriage, not a quantitative combination of these two different approaches, not half East, half West, not a little bit of science and a little bit of religion. Human life is not that mathematical; it is poetic. What is needed is a dialogue, an I/thou relationship, a love affair between East and West, a deep embrace. It is not a question of equal quantities; the WHOLE West and the WHOLE East meeting and merging into each other -- not half East, half West -- the whole East and the whole West melting into each other in a deep love relationship. Then only, the real synthesis, the transcendence of opposites, will be possible.

When two lovers meet in deep orgasmic joy, there is transcendence. The attraction is there: the East feels fascinated by the West, the West is fascinated by the East, but the danger is that the people from the West who are too fascinated with the East will drop being Western, they will become Eastern; and the people who are fascinated by the West will drop being Eastern and will become Western. So nothing has changed; there has been no meeting, there has been no merger, just the same problem again. People have

simply changed their places: now the Eastern is standing in the Western hemisphere and the Western is standing in the Eastern hemisphere. Now the Westerner is meditating and the Easterner is studying in Oxford, in Cambridge, in Harvard, and becoming a scientist, a physicist. This is not going to help because there is no meeting happening.

My effort here is not to change the Western mind into the Eastern, not to change the Eastern mind into the Western, but to let here be a meeting of both -- not in part but in totality. And remember, when two wholes meet, it becomes one whole. When two totalities meet, it becomes one totality: that is transcendence. It is urgently needed, because without it there is no hope for humanity, no future for humanity.

What we are trying to do here is of immense importance for the future of man. It is not an ordinary experiment -- in fact there is no other experiment which is more important than this. You may not be aware that you are participating in something which can save the world. Otherwise the division between the Eastern and the Western is going to kill humanity. The East is poor, too poor, and the West is becoming too rich, and the rift is becoming bigger and bigger every day. This rift is bound to create, sooner or later, a third world war -- which will be destructive to both. Before it happens we have to spread a new vision, we have to give birth to a new humanity, a man who is neither Eastern nor Western but both together simultaneously; not in equal amounts, not half Eastern, half Western -- fully Western, fully Eastern.

The second question:

Question 2
BELOVED MASTER,
I WANT TO BECOME A SANNYASIN, BUT I CANNOT BECAUSE I AM ALREADY A PRACTICING CATHOLIC. HOW CAN I ACCEPT TWO MASTERS? AND AM I ALLOWED TO ASK QUESTIONS BEFORE I BECOME A SANNYASIN?

Alexander, there is no question of accepting two masters. It is not a question of masters, it is a question of surrender. If you are surrendered to Christ, you are surrendered to me. If you are surrendered to me, you are surrendered to Christ, to Buddha, to Mahavira, to Krishna. The question is of surrender. You are taking the question from the wrong end. If you know how to surrender, then all the masters are one. Then you will find Christ in Buddha, and Buddha in Christ. The surrendered heart becomes so deeply harmonious that it can see that Krishna and Christ are not different. Certainly their language is different -- Krishna speaks Sanskrit, Christ speaks Aramaic. Certainly they use different metaphors, different parables. They are different fingers but pointing to the same moon. If you can see the moon, will you be worried about the fingers? If you can see the moon, will you be obsessed with the finger -- whether the finger is that of Krishna or Christ or Buddha or Lao Tzu? What does it matter? Once the moon is known, the fingers are forgotten. To become obsessed too much with the finger is a state of pathology. The Hindu is ill, the Mohammedan is ill, the Christian is ill. They have become fascinated too much, obsessed with the fingers.

There is only one moon, but it is reflected in a thousand and one lakes. Don't become too much attached to the reflection in the lakes, don't become too much attached to the lake! The lake has nothing to do with the moon; even if the lake disappears, the moon remains. The lake may become disturbed, the reflection may be lost, but the moon is there.

Yes, there are different lakes, and they have different kinds of water. One lake is salty, another lake is sweet; one lake has a bluish tinge to its color, another lake is a little green -- and so on, so forth. One lake is very deep. The other is very shallow. But these differences don't make any difference to the moon reflected in those lakes.

If you are really a practicing Catholic you will not hesitate even for a single moment in becoming a sannyasin.

Because you are hesitating, let me say to you: you are not a practicing Catholic. And what do you mean by "practicing Catholic"? Because you go every Sunday to the church? Because you do the Lord's Prayer every night? Because you read the Bible every day for a certain period of time? What do you mean by being a practicing Catholic? Then why are you here? For what? If you have found the answer, you need not be here. If you have not found the answer, remember, you have still to inquire, still to journey....

I am offering my hand and you say, "How can I hold two masters' hands?" Do you think you are holding Christ's hand? Look again! Your hands are empty. If you cannot hold the hand of a living master, how can you hold the hand of a master gone for two thousand years? You cannot even be certain whether he ever existed or not. There are people who think that it is only a story, that there has never

been an historical person like Christ. There are people, great scholars, who think that this is only an ancient folk drama, this whole story of Jesus has never been a reality. How are you going to drop these doubts? And if you look into the story, it will create a thousand and one doubts in you. Jesus walking on water, Alexander, can you really believe it? And when I say "really" I mean REALLY. Can you really believe it -- somebody walking on water? Can you really believe Jesus, touching blind people's eyes and giving them sight? Can you really believe Jesus bringing Lazarus back to life from death? Do you believe Jesus is born out of a virgin mother? Is it possible? Do you believe that Jesus came back from death after three days, resurrected?

Look deep down: you will have a thousand and one doubts. In fact, it is so difficult to believe even a living master, how to believe in a dead master? And around dead masters stories are bound to be created by the disciples, out of their foolishness. They think that by creating these stories they will help the message to spread. And for a time being it may be so -- there were days when Jesus became important only because he was born out of a virgin mother. Buddha was not born out of a virgin mother, Mahavira was not born out of a virgin mother, Krishna was not born.... So it was something rare, unique; nobody else could claim it, it impressed people. But as people became more and more educated, as intelligence grew, as people became more and more thinkers, the same thing became the problem. Now one hesitates even to mention it.

Resurrection helped Christianity to spread all over the world, because Jesus was the only one who came back

from death: of course, he has firsthand knowledge about what happens after death. Buddha, Mahavira, they are alive and talking about death and beyond, but they don't have any authentic experience. Jesus has. This helped Christianity to spread all over the world. But now the same thing has become a disadvantage. Now to talk about resurrection is to be laughed at.

What do you mean that you are a practicing Catholic? If you were really a practicing Catholic, there are only two alternatives: either you would not have been here, there would have been no need; or if you had felt the presence of Christ-consciousness here, then there would have been no hesitation on your part in becoming a sannyasin. That will be really becoming a Catholic, that will be becoming a christ.

Don't be a Christian; that is not enough. Unless you are a christ, nothing has happened. Try to be a christ, not to be a Christian. The Christian is only a believer, and the believer is always blind. The christ has eyes. And remember, when I use the word 'christ' I don't mean Jesus only. Christ is a state of ultimate consciousness: in the East we call it the state of being a buddha, the state of being a JINA. These are the same words. Jesus is only one of the christs -- Buddha is another, Lao Tzu is another, and there have been so many, and there will be so many. It is a long procession of lights.

And there is always a living christ somewhere or other. You can call him a buddha, you can call him a christ; it simply depends what language you are using. But don't be a fanatic, don't be sectarian; that creates stupidity, that does

not help in growing, it does not help in attaining more consciousness.

As an experiment, two scientists decided to mate a male human with a female gorilla. They agreed only someone really stupid would submit to such an act, so they went down to the docks and grabbed Fanelli who had just gotten off the boat. "We will give you five thousand dollars to go to bed with a gorilla," proposed one of the scientists. "Will you do it?"
"Okay, I do it," agreed Fanelli. "But on three conditions."
"What are they?" asked the men of science.
"First-a, I am-a only gonna do it-a once," said the Italian. "Second-a, nobody can-a watch. And-a third-a, if a kid is born, it is-a gotta be raised a Catholic."

Alexander, enough of Catholics, enough of Protestants, enough of Hindus and Mohammedans. Now be finished with all that nonsense. Let a new humanity emerge, where Jews and Hindus and Jainas and Buddhists will not be constantly fighting, quarreling, trying to destroy each other, trying to impose their own ideas upon others; where man will be free to choose. You don't seem to be free to choose. Your being a Catholic seems to be like chains on your feet, your being a Catholic seems to be like a prison wall around you. You are not free.
You say, "I want to be a sannyasin...." Then who is preventing you? You want to be a sannyasin yet your being a Catholic prevents you. It is a wall, it is not a bridge. True religion is always a bridge and never a wall.

McGuinty sat in the confessional. "Father," he said to the priest, "I don't feel I need forgiveness for my various adulteries."
"Why not?" asked the astonished priest.
"Well," said McGuinty, "The only married women I have relations with are all Jewish!"
"Oh, you are right, my son!" said the priest. "That's the only way to screw the Jews."

You are allowed to do the same thing to a Jew which you are not allowed to do to a Christian. You are allowed to do happily, welcomingly, something to a Mohammedan which you are not allowed to do to a Hindu. What kind of religiousness is this? What kind of humanity have we created? Neurotic it is, psychotic it is. We need a healthier human being.
My sannyasin is not getting involved in a sect; this is not a sect because we don't have any ideology. I don't preach any ideology. Even atheists are here and they are sannyasins and they don't believe in God. And I don't make it a basic requirement. There are no basic requirements, except your longing for truth -- but that is not a thing that makes you sectarian. In fact, the inquiry for truth, the longing for truth, makes you absolutely nonsectarian.
And a religious person is nonsectarian. He is simply religious -- not Christian, not Hindu. He cannot afford to be Hindu or Christian. How can he afford to be so limited? He cannot afford to get involved in prejudices; he cannot believe in conclusions already arrived at by others. He is on his own journey: he wants to know truth with his own eyes, he wants to hear God with his own ears, he wants to feel

life and existence with his own heart. His search is individual.
Sannyasins are not part of a sect. This is the meeting of individuals; we have met because we are on the same journey. There is no ideology binding my sannyasins with each other; it is just because of the same inquiry for truth that accidentally we have met on the same road. We are fellow-travelers. Nothing binds one sannyasin to another sannyasin; there is no bondage of belief, tradition, scripture. And in fact sannyasins are not connected with each other at all directly -- their connection is with me. One sannyasin is connected with me, another sannyasin is connected with me, hence they are connected with each other via me. There is no other organization. I am functioning only as a center and they are all connected with me, hence they feel connected with each other.
That's how a commune arises, a SANGHA is born. A commune can be alive only when the buddha is present, when the christ is present. Once the christ is gone, the commune disappears and becomes a community. The commune disappears and becomes a sect. I would not like my sannyasins to become a sect ever.
Alexander, you also ask, "And am I allowed to ask questions before I become a sannyasin?"
You have already asked a question, and I have already answered it. Yes, you are absolutely welcome. In fact, after becoming a sannyasin it becomes more and more difficult to ask questions -- they look so stupid. The longer you are here, the less you ask. And those who have been here longest have completely forgotten to ask anything. Don't be

worried about that. You can ask questions just for questions' sake; you need not be a sannyasin.
And in fact I am more interested in questions which come from nonsannyasins, because then I can seduce them.

The Russian rabbit fled across the border at Brest and did not stop until a Polish rabbit assured him he was in Poland.
"Why are you running?" asked the Polish rabbit.
"Because they are castrating all the camels in Russia," said the Russian bunny.
"But you are not a camel, you are a rabbit!"
"Yes -- but they castrate first and ask questions afterwards."

The third question:
Question 3
BELOVED MASTER,
IN REBIRTHING A PART OF ME THAT HAD BEEN KNOWLEDGE BUT NOT KNOWN HAPPENED. FIRST THERE WAS PAIN AND FEAR, THEN AN EXPLOSION IN ME THAT FELT LIKE A WILD ANIMAL, FOLLOWED BY TREMENDOUS RELIEF AND JOY. I FELT THAT A DARK CLOUD I HAVE CARRIED A LONG TIME PASSED OUT OF ME. YET STILL I KNOW NOTHING OF WHO I AM. PLEASE COMMENT.

Prem Gyanam, "Who am I?" is not really a question; hence it can never be answered, neither by others nor by yourself. Then what is it? It is a koan. "Who am I?" is utterly absurd. By asking it, don't hope that one day you will get the answer. If you go on asking, "Who am I? Who am I?" -- if

you make it a meditation, as Raman Maharshi used to say to his disciples.... He used to give only one simple meditation: just sit and repeat, first loudly, then not so loudly, then just in your throat; then even the throat is not to be used, just deep down in your heart let it resound: "Who am I? Who am I?" Go on asking....

And people used to think that if they follow the instructions rightly, one day suddenly they will know the answer. That is not true; you will never come to the answer. But by asking it, first all your answers that you had before, ideas about yourself, will disappear too.

"Who am I?" is like a thorn. It can pull out the thorn that is in your feet. You can use this thorn; you can use this thorn to pull out the thorn that is already hurting you in the foot. When both the thorns are out, you can throw both of them. You need not keep the second one because it has been such a blessing to you, it pulled out the first. You need not put it in the place of the first just out of reverence, gratitude. "Who am I?" is just a subtle device; it is as absurd as Zen koans.

Zen masters say to the disciples, "Go and meditate: what is the sound of one hand clapping?" Now, one hand cannot clap. The master knows it, the disciple knows it -- that one hand cannot clap -- but the master insists, "Meditate on it. Go crazy meditating -- ask and ask and ask, and let the question go deeper and deeper. Let it sink in your heart, in your very soul."

When the master says, the disciple has to do it. Sometimes ten years, sometimes twenty years pass, and the disciple goes on asking this absurd question, knowing perfectly well that one hand cannot clap. And the master says, "If you

come across some answers, bring them to me." And sometimes the disciple invents answers, because he gets tired of the question. Sometimes he hopes, "Maybe this is the answer," and he brings it to the master. He says, "The sound of running water, that is one hand clapping."

And the master hits him with the staff on his head and says, "You fool! This is not the answer. Go back" -- because the sound of running water is not one hand clapping, the sound is because of the rocks. Remove the rocks and the sound will disappear. So there are two things clashing, not one thing.

Then he goes and he meditates. And while he is meditating he hears the distant call of a cuckoo, and he thinks "This is it! This MUST be -- so beautiful, so tremendously otherworldly. This is the celestial music; this must be the real thing." And he comes running, and is beaten again. Zen masters are really experts in beating... not only beating; sometimes throwing you out of the window, sometimes closing the door in your face. They can do anything to wake you up, their compassion is such. And you are again given a good beating, and the master shouts that you are utterly stupid: "This is not it. Go again and meditate." And so on, so forth, it continues, continues, many answers. And no answer is ever accepted; no answer can ever be accepted.

Sometimes it happens, even before the disciple has said what answer he has got, the master starts beating him -- because it is not a question of what answer he brings; that is utterly irrelevant. Whatsoever answer he has brought is going to be wrong. All answers are wrong.

But one day he comes and the master hugs him, because he can see in his eyes, the way he walks, the grace that surrounds him, the climate that he has brought with himself, the silence: no question, no answer. Not that he has brought any answer; on the contrary, this time he has come even without the question, he has forgotten the question itself. He is not asking any more. He comes utterly silent, not even a ripple in his mind. And the master recognizes it immediately.

Sometimes it has happened that the disciple has not turned up and the master had to seek and search for the disciple, because he felt deep down in his heart that the question had disappeared. And now the disciple is feeling, "Why bother the master unnecessarily? What is the point? There is no answer, no question." And the silence is such, and it is so tremendous, that he does not want to come out of it.

And the master comes and says to him, "Now that you have the answer, what are you doing here? Why didn't you turn up? I have been waiting for you."

Once it happened:

When Rinzai was taking leave of his master -- because the master had said, "You go for a three-year pilgrimage, go to all the temples and all the monasteries" -- and before he was leaving, he started beating him. Rinzai said, "But I have not said anything, I have not done anything. What kind of farewell is this? I am going for a three-year pilgrimage on foot" -- in those ancient days it was dangerous -- "I may come back, I may not come back." The master said, "That's why. I may not have another chance to beat you. I am suspicious. You are just on the

verge of that great silence descending. Just the last part of the question, not even 'Who am I?' but only the question mark is there. And any day it will disappear, and then nobody knows whether you will come or you may not come. And I am an old man; where will I come and search and seek you? This is my last opportunity to beat you -- I cannot miss it!"
And yes, it was so; it was the last opportunity. Rinzai came back after three years, but he was enlightened. He came back and slapped the master and said, "You rascal! You were right. Just once I also want to hit you. You have been beating me at least for twenty years. Just for once...!"
The master was laughing and he said, "You are entitled. You can do it whenever you feel like doing it, but just remember that I am a very old man."

Gyanam, you say, "Yet still I know nothing of who I am." Nobody has ever known. Then what is the difference between a buddha and you? You also don't know who you are, the buddha also does not know who he is -- then what is the difference? He is not bothered by it. He laughs at it, he takes it for granted that life is a mystery. There is no question and there is no answer.
Life is not a question-answer game. It is not a puzzle to be solved, it is a mystery to be lived.

"Pa, I wanna go to college," said Leon.
"Do you know what is what?"
"Huh?"

"Do you know what is what? Go into the bathroom and think for a few minutes, and if you find out what is what, I send you to college."
Leon went into the bathroom, thought a few minutes, came out and said, "Pa, I don't know what is what."
"Sure you don't know what is what. Go out and get yourself a job and when you find out what is what I send you to college."
Leon left, went to a nearby bar, and began drinking. He met Alice, a blonde sitting at the bar. Soon they wound up at her apartment. After a few drinks she said, "Excuse me while I slip into something more comfortable."
Alice returned a few moments later, completely nude. Leon looked at her and said, "What is this?"
"What is what?"
"If I knew what's what I would be in college, not here."

Now you tell me what is what. This is a koan. This Leon's pa must have been a Zen master: what is what.
Now you are asking, "Who am I?" You are yourself, you are you. To ask, "Who am I?" means you are asking for some identity, whether "I am A or B or C or D." You are simply yourself! You cannot be A, you cannot be B, you cannot be C. You are just yourself, you are nothing else. So there is no way to answer it.
Then why is this question given to you? This question is given to you so that it can destroy; it is like a hammer, it can destroy all your old identities. For example, you think, "My name is Ram, so I am Ram." When you ask, "Who am I?" the question will arise, "What about Ram? I am Ram!" But you can see that that is only a name; it is not your

reality, it is a given name from the outside. Your parents had to call you something: they called you "Ram." They could have called you "Rahim," they could have given you any name, and any name would have been as relevant as Ram, because you are a nameless reality. So asking, "Who am I?" you will forget this identity with Ram.

Then deep down somebody says, "I am a Jaina," "I am a Hindu," "I am a Jew." That too is an accidental identity -- accidents of birth -- you are not it. How can you be a Jew? What does it mean to be a Jew or a Hindu? Just that you have been brought up by Hindus or Jews, that's all. If a Jewish child is taken away from his home and is brought up by Hindus he will never come to know, never will dream that he is a Jew. Although born of Jewish parents he will never become aware of it -- unless he is told. He will think that he is a Hindu. He may even fight for Hinduism with a Jew, he may kill a Jew for the sake of Hinduism, not knowing at all that he himself is a Jew.

Now in India there are millions of Christians. They think they are Christians, but they have always lived here; their parents were Hindus, their parents' parents were Hindus. For centuries they have been Hindus! Now they have been bribed, persuaded, convinced, converted, and they have become Christians. They can kill Hindus; if the need arises they can fight.

There are millions of Mohammedans in India; they have all been converted forcibly. At least Christians have been persuaded sophisticatedly -- but millions of Hindus have been forced at the point of daggers. The choice was: "You can live as a Mohammedan or you have to die." And who wants to die? Lust for life is so deep that it is better to live,

even if you have to live as a Mohammedan it's okay. Now those millions of Mohammedans who live in India basically have the blood of Hindus. But they can kill Hindus -- they have been killing -- and they are being killed by Hindus. Hindus are killing their own children; now they are called Mohammedans. Just change the label... and such a great change happens just by changing the label.

When you ask, "Who am I?" you will come across that point. You will see that you are neither a Mohammedan nor a Hindu nor a Christian; these are accidents of birth, upbringing. If you have been born in Russia you would not have been either Hindu, Christian or Mohammedan; you would have been a communist, a practicing communist -- just as you are a practicing Catholic now. You would have denied God, you would have denied prayer, you would have denied the whole religion -- because the state is powerful, and nobody wants to go against the state; it is dangerous.

The state has never been so powerful as it is in Russia today. The individual has never been reduced to such impotence as he has been in communist countries. He cannot pray according to his own choice, he cannot go to the church or to the temple according to his own will; the state decides everything. If the state says, "This is so," this is so. You cannot defy the state, otherwise the consequences are great. You will be thrown into imprisonment or sent to Siberia or you may be simply killed. Or, even more dangerous, you may be forced to live in a mental hospital where you will be given electric shocks, insulin shocks; you can be declared to be mad. If you are not communist in Russia you can be declared

insane. And you are absolutely helpless; if the doctors say you are insane, you are insane. There is no way to fight with them.

Mulla Nasruddin was dying, on his deathbed, almost in a coma. The doctor came to see him. The doctor was drunk; he took his pulse but could not find any pulse because he was holding the hand in the wrong way. He looked at Nasruddin's face and said to his wife, "I'm sorry to say it, but your husband is dead."
At that very moment, Nasruddin opened his eyes and said, "What! I am alive!"
The wife said, "You keep quiet. He knows better, he is a doctor, an M.D., Ph.D., F.R.C.S. You have some nerve to deny an authority! Keep quiet!"

That's how it is in Soviet Russia: if the psychologist says you are insane, you are insane. You know you are not, but you are utterly helpless; the monster of the state is so huge, and you are caught in the teeth of the monster. If you were born in Russia you would not be Catholic, you would not be Protestant, you would not be Hindu, you would not be Mohammedan.
When you meditate on "Who am I?" you will come across this point, and it will dissolve. And the deeper you will go... then deeper questions will come: first sociological, theological, then biological. You have a man's body or a woman's body: the question will arise, "Am I a man or a woman?" The consciousness is neither. The consciousness cannot be male or female. The consciousness is simply consciousness; it is just the capacity of being a witness.

Soon you will pass that barrier too; you will forget that you are man or woman.
And so on, so forth. When all the old identities are dropped, nothing remains, only the question resounds in the silence: "Who am I?" The question cannot go on, on its own; it needs some answers, otherwise it cannot persist. A point comes when asking becomes absurd... the question also evaporates. That is the moment which is called self-knowing -- ATMAGYAN. That is the moment when, without receiving any answer, you simply know, you feel, who you are.
Prem Gyanam, go on inquiring. A few dark clouds have disappeared from your being: feel grateful. There are many more; they all have to disappear. These are all dark clouds -- Catholic, Protestant, Christian, Hindu, Mohammedan, Jaina, Buddhist, communist. These are all dark clouds -- Indian, Chinese, Japanese, German, English. These are all dark clouds -- white, black, man, woman, beautiful, ugly, intelligent, stupid. These are ALL dark clouds! Anything that you can become identified with is a dark cloud.
Let them all go. The beginning has happened. But don't be in a hurry and don't wait for any answer -- there is none. When all questions and all answers have been left behind and you are alone, totally alone, absolutely silent, knowing nothing, no content, no object to know -- that purity of consciousness, that pure sky of consciousness, that's what you are.

The last question:
Question 4
BELOVED MASTER,

WHAT IS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MASTERY OVER THE SELF AND CONTROL?

Divya, they are contraries. Mastery over the self has no self in it; it is utterly selfless. Mastery is there, but there is no self to master; there is nothing to master or to be mastered, there is only pure consciousness. In that purity you are part of God; in that purity you are the lord of existence itself. But there is no self.

When we say "self-mastery" we are using a wrong language. But nothing can be done because all language is wrong at those heights; in those moments of plenitude no word is adequate. In control there is self. In control there is more self than ever. The uncontrolled person has not that much self, that much ego -- how can he have? He knows his weaknesses.

That's why you will come across a very strange phenomenon: your so-called saints are more egoistic than the sinners. The sinners are more human, more humble; the saints are almost inhuman because of their control -- they think they are suprahuman. Because they can control their instincts, they can go on long fasts, they can remain sexually starved for years or for their whole life, they can remain awake for days together, not a single moment's sleep -- because they can have such control over the body, over the mind, it naturally gives them a great ego. It feeds their idea that, "I am somebody special." It nourishes their disease.

The sinner is more humble. He has to be; he knows he cannot control anything. When anger comes he becomes angry. When love comes he becomes love. When sadness

comes he becomes sad. He has no control over his emotions. When he is hungry he is ready to do anything to get food; even if he has to steal he will do it. He will find every possible way.

A famous Sufi story:
Mulla Nasruddin and two other saints went for a pilgrimage to Mecca. They were passing through a village, it was the last phase of their journey. Their money was almost finished; just a little bit was left. They purchased a certain sweet called halva, but it was not enough for all the three and they were too hungry. What to do? -- and they were not even ready to divide it because then it will not fulfill anybody's hunger. So everybody started bragging about himself that, "I am more important to existence, so my life has to be saved."
The first saint said, "I have been fasting, I have been praying for so many years; nobody here present is more religious and holy than I am. And God wants me to be saved, so the halva has to be given to me."
The second saint said, "Yes, I know, you are a man of great austerities, but I am a great scholar. I have studied all the scriptures, my whole life I have devoted in the service of knowledge. And the world does not need people who can fast. What can you do? -- you can only fast. You can fast in heaven! The world needs knowledge. The world is so ignorant that it cannot afford to miss me. The halva has to be given to me."
Mulla Nasruddin said, "I am not an ascetic, so I cannot claim any self-control. I am not a great knowledgeable person either, so that too I cannot claim. I am an ordinary

sinner, and I have heard that God is always compassionate to the sinners. The halva belongs to me."
They could not come to any conclusion. Finally they decided that, "We all three should sleep without eating the halva, and let God decide himself. So whosoever is given the best dream by God, in the morning that dream will be decisive."
In the morning the saint said, "Nobody can compete with me anymore. Give me the halva -- because in the dream I kissed God's feet. That is the ultimate that one can hope -- what greater experience can there be?"
The pundit, the scholar, the knowledgeable person laughed and he said, "That is nothing -- because God hugged me and kissed me! You kissed his feet? He kissed ME and hugged me! Where is the halva? It belongs to me."
They looked at Nasruddin and asked, "What dream did you have?"
Nasruddin said, "I am a poor sinner, my dream was very ordinary -- very ordinary, not worth even telling. But because you insist and because we have agreed, I will tell you. In my sleep God appeared and he said, 'You fool! What are you doing? Eat the halva!' So I have eaten it -- because how can I deny his order? There is no halva left now!"

Self-control gives you the subtlest ego. Self-control has more self in it than anything else. But self-mastery is a totally different phenomenon; it has no self in it. Control is cultivated, practiced; with great effort you have to manage it. It is a long struggle, then you arrive at it. Mastery is not

a cultivated thing, it is not to be practiced. Mastery is nothing but understanding. It is not control at all.
For example, you can control anger, you can repress it, you can sit on top of it. Nobody will ever know what you have done, and you will always be praised by people that in such a situation where anybody would have become angry, you remained so calm and collected and cool. But you know that all that calmness and coolness was on the surface: deep down you were boiling, deep down there was fire, but you repressed it in the unconscious, you forced it deep down into your unconscious and you sat upon it like a volcano, and you are still sitting on it.
The man of control is the man of repression. He goes on repressing. Because he goes on repressing, he goes on accumulating all that is wrong. His whole life becomes a junkyard. Sooner or later, and it is going to be sooner than later, the volcano explodes -- because there is only a certain limit you can contain. You repress anger, you repress sex, you repress all kinds of desires, longings -- how long can you go on repressing? You can contain only so much, then one day it is more than you can control: it explodes.
Your so-called saints, men of self-control, can be provoked very easily. Just scratch a little, just scratch, and you will be surprised: the animal comes up immediately. Their saintliness is not even skin-deep; they are carrying many demons in them, they are somehow managing. And their life is a life of misery, because it is a life of constant struggle. They are neurotic people and they are on the verge of insanity, always on the verge. Any small thing can just prove the last straw on the camel. They are not religious in my vision of life.

The religious man controls nothing, the religious man represses nothing. The religious man understands, tries to understand, not to control. He becomes more meditative: he watches his anger, his sex, his greed, his jealousy, his possessiveness. He watches all these poisonous things that surround you. He simply watches, tries to understand what anger is, and in that very understanding he transcends. He becomes a witness, and in his witnessing the anger melts as if the sun has risen and the snow has started melting. Understanding brings a certain warmth; it is a sunrise inside you and the ice starts melting around you. It is like a flame inside you and darkness starts disappearing.

The man of understanding, meditation, is not a man of control -- just the opposite. He is a watcher. And if you want to watch, you have to be absolutely nonjudgmental. The man who controls is judgmental, continuously condemning, "This is wrong"; continuously praising, "This is good, this is evil, this will lead to hell, this will lead to heaven." He is constantly judging, condemning, praising, choosing. The man of control lives in choice, and the man of understanding lives in choicelessness.

It is choiceless awareness that brings real transformation. And because nothing is repressed, no ego arises, no self arises. And because understanding is a subjective, interior phenomenon, nobody knows about it, nobody can see it except you. And ego comes from the outside, from other people, what they say about you: it is their opinion about you which creates the ego. They say you are intelligent, they say you are so saintly, they say you are so pious -- and naturally you feel great. Ego is from the outside. It is given by others to you. Of course, they say one thing in front of

you and they say something else, just the opposite, behind your back.
Sigmund Freud used to say that even if for twenty-four hours we decide that every person on the earth will say only the truth, ONLY the truth, then all friendship will disappear, all love affairs will dissolve, all marriages will go down the drain. If a decision is taken that the whole humanity will practice only truth and nothing else only for twenty-four hours.... When a guest knocks on your door you will not say, "Come in, welcome, I was just waiting for you. How long it has been that I have not seen you! How long I have suffered. Where have you been? You make my heart throb with joy." You will say the truth that you are feeling. You will say, "So this son-of-a-bitch has come again! Now, how to get rid of this bastard?" That is deep inside, that you are controlling. You will say it to somebody else behind the back.
You watch yourself, what you say to people to their face and what you say behind their back. What you say behind the back is far truer, closer to your feeling, than what you say to the face. But ego depends on what people say to you, and it is very fragile -- so fragile that on each ego it is written: Handle with Care.

Pieracki, a Polack, Odum, a black, and Alvarez, a Mexican, were out of work and living together. Pieracki came home one night and announced he had got a job. "Hey, fellas, wake me up tomorrow at six," he said. "I have to be at work by six-thirty!"

While Pieracki slept, Odum said to Alvarez, "He got a job because he is white. We can't get one because I am black and you are brown."
So during the night they put shoeblack all over Pieracki. Then they agreed to wake him late.
Next morning when Pieracki arrived at work, the foreman said, "Who are you?"
"You hired me yesterday," he replied. "You told me to be here at six-thirty!"
"I hired a white man -- you're black!"
"I'm not!"
"Yes, you are! Go and look in the mirror!"
The Polack rushed over to the mirror, looked at himself and exclaimed, "My God! They woke up the wrong man!"

Your ego depends on mirrors. And every relationship functions as a mirror, every person you meet functions as a mirror, and this ego goes on controlling.
And why does it control in the first place, Divya? It controls because the society appreciates control, because the society gives you more ego if you control. If you follow the ideas of the society, their morality, their puritanism, their ideas of holiness, it praises you more and more. More and more people come to pay respect to you; your ego goes higher and higher, soars higher.
But remember, ego will never bring any transformation to you. Ego is the most unconscious phenomenon that is happening in you; it will make you more and more unconscious. And the person who lives through the ego is almost drunk with it; he is not in his senses.

Fernando was getting married. There was a big wedding feast and the wine flowed like water. Things were going fine until Fernando couldn't find his beautiful bride. After looking over the guests, he found his pal, Luis, was also missing.
Fernando started searching the premises. He looked into the bridal chamber and discovered Luis making love to his bride. Fernando closed the door softly, and crept down the stairs to his guests.
"Queek! Queek! Everybody come look!" he shouted. "Luis ees so drunk he theenk he ees me!"

The ego keeps you almost in a drunken state. You don't know who you are because you believe what others say about you. And you don't know who others are because you believe what others say about others. This is a very make-believe illusory world in which we live.
Wake up! Become more conscious. By becoming conscious you will become a master of your own being. Mastery knows nothing of self, and the self knows nothing of mastery. Let that be absolutely clear to you.
And, Divya, my teaching is not for self-control, self-discipline. My teaching is for self-awareness, self-transformation. I would like you to become as vast as the sky -- because that's what really you are.
Enough for today.

Talks given from 22/08/79 am to 31/08/79 am
English Discourse series
10 Chapters
Year published: 1990
The original tape and book title was "The Book of the Books, Vols 1 - 6". Later reissued as twelve volumes under the present title.

The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 4
Chapter #1
Chapter title: Better than a hundred years
22 August 1979 am in Buddha Hall

BETTER THAN A HUNDRED YEARS OF MISCHIEF
IS ONE DAY SPENT IN CONTEMPLATION.

BETTER THAN A HUNDRED YEARS OF
IGNORANCE
IS ONE DAY SPENT IN REFLECTION.

BETTER THAN A HUNDRED YEARS OF IDLENESS
IS ONE DAY SPENT IN DETERMINATION.

BETTER TO LIVE ONE DAY WONDERING
HOW ALL THINGS ARISE AND PASS AWAY.

BETTER TO LIVE ONE HOUR SEEING
THE ONE LIFE BEYOND THE WAY.

BETTER TO LIVE ONE MOMENT IN THE MOMENT OF THE WAY BEYOND THE WAY.

Gautama the Buddha has raised the most important question for all those who are capable of inquiring into truth, into life, into existence. The most important question of all questions is: What is true happiness? And is there a possibility to achieve it? Is true happiness possible at all, or is all momentary? Is life only a dream, or is there something substantial in it too? Does life begin with birth and end with death, or is there something that transcends birth and death? Because without the eternal there is no possibility of true happiness. With the momentary, happiness will remain fleeting: one moment it is here, the other moment gone, and you are left in great despair and darkness.

That's how it is in ordinary life, in the life of the unawakened. There are moments of bliss and there are moments of misery; it is all mixed, hodge-podge. You cannot keep those moments of happiness that come to you. They come on their own and they disappear on their own; you are not the master. And you cannot avoid the moments of misery; they too have their own persistence. They come on their own and they go on their own; you are simply a victim. And between these two -- happiness and unhappiness -- you are torn apart. You are never left in ease.

This being torn apart into all kinds of dualities.... The duality of happiness and unhappiness is the most fundamental and the most symptomatic, but there are a thousand and one dualities: the duality of love and hate, the

duality of life and death, day and night, summer and winter, youth and old age, and so on, so forth. But the fundamental duality, the duality that represents all other dualities, is that of happiness and unhappiness. And you are torn apart, pulled into different, polar opposite directions. You cannot be at ease: you are in a dis-ease.

According to the buddhas man is a dis-ease. Is this dis-ease absolute -- or can it be transcended?

Hence the basic and the most fundamental question is: What is true happiness? Certainly the happiness that we know is not true; it is dream stuff and it always turns into its own opposite. What looks like happiness one moment turns into unhappiness the next.

Happiness turning into unhappiness simply shows that the two are not separate -- maybe two aspects of the same coin. And if you have one side of the coin, the other is always there hidden behind it, waiting for its opportunity to assert -- and you know it. When you are happy, deep down somewhere is the lurking fear that it is not going to last, that sooner or later it will be gone, that the night is descending, that any moment you will be engulfed into darkness, that this light is just imaginary -- it can't help you, it can't take you to the other shore.

Your happiness is not really happiness but only a hidden unhappiness. Your love is not love but only a mask for your hate. Your compassion is nothing but your anger -- cultivated, sophisticated, educated, cultured, civilized, but your compassion is nothing else than anger. Your sensitivity is not real sensitivity but only a mental exercise, a certain attitude and approach practiced.

Remember: the whole humanity is being brought up with the idea that virtue can be practiced, that goodness can be practiced, that one can learn how to be happy, that one can manage to be happy, that it is within your power to create a certain character which brings happiness. And that is all wrong, utterly wrong.

The first thing to be understood about happiness is that it cannot be practiced. It has only to be allowed, because it is not something that you create. Whatsoever YOU create is going to remain something smaller than you, tinier than you. What YOU create cannot be bigger than you. The painting cannot be bigger than the painter himself and the poetry cannot be bigger than the poet. Your song is bound to be something smaller than you.

If you practice happiness you will be always there at the back, with all your stupidities, with all your ego trips, with all your ignorance, with all your chaos of the mind. With this chaotic mind you cannot create a cosmos, you cannot create grace. Grace always descends from the beyond; it has to be received as a gift in tremendous trust, in total surrender. In a state of let-go true happiness happens.

But we have been told to achieve, to be ambitious. Our whole mind has been cultivated to be that of an achiever. The whole education, culture, religion, they all depend on this basic idea that man has to be ambitious; only the ambitious man will be able to attain fulfillment. It has never happened, it will never happen, but so deep is the ignorance that we go on believing in this nonsense.

No ambitious person has ever been happy; in fact, the ambitious person is the unhappiest in the world. But we go on training children to be ambitious: "Be the first, be at the

top, and you will be happy!" And have you ever seen anybody at the top AND happy together? Was Alexander happy when he became a world conqueror? He was one of the unhappiest men who has ever lived on the earth. Seeing the blissfulness of Diogenes he became jealous. Becoming jealous of a beggar...?

Diogenes was a beggar; he had nothing, not even a begging bowl. At least Buddha had a begging bowl with him and three robes. Diogenes was naked and with no begging bowl. In the beginning he used to carry a begging bowl; he must have got the idea from the East. He's exactly a man like Buddha, Mahavira -- more like Mahavira. Mahavira also lived naked with no begging bowl; his hands were his begging bowl.

Diogenes was going to the river one day with his begging bowl. He was thirsty, it was hot, and he wanted to drink water. And then on the way, just when he was on the bank, a dog passed him by, running, panting, jumped into the river, had a good bath, drank to his heart's content. The idea arose in Diogenes' mind: "This dog is freer than me -- he does not have to carry a begging bowl. And if he can manage, why can't I manage without a begging bowl? This is my only possession, and I have to keep an eye on it because it can be stolen. Even in the night once or twice I have to feel whether it is still there or gone."

He threw the begging bowl into the river, bowed down to the dog, thanked him for the great message that he had brought for him from God.

This man, who had nothing, created jealousy in Alexander's mind. How miserable he must have been! He confessed to

Diogenes that, "If ever again God is giving me birth, I will ask him, 'This time, please don't make me Alexander -- make me Diogenes.'"

Diogenes laughed uproariously, and he called the dog -- because they had become friends by now, they had started living together -- he called the dog and he said, "Look, listen, what nonsense he is talking about! NEXT life he wants to be Diogenes! Why next life? Why postpone? Who knows about the next life? Even the next day is uncertain, the next moment is not certain -- what to say about the next life! If you really want to be a Diogenes, you can be right this moment, herenow. Throw your clothes into the river! Forget all about conquering the world! That is sheer stupidity and you know it.

"And you have confessed that you are miserable, and you have confessed that Diogenes is in a far better, more blissful state. So why not be a Diogenes right now? Lie down on the bank of the river where I am taking my sunbath! This bank is big enough for both of us."

Alexander could not accept the invitation, of course. He said, "Thank you for your invitation. Right now I cannot do it, but next life...."

Diogenes asked him, "Where are you going? And what will you do even if you have conquered the world?"

Alexander said, "Then I will rest."

Diogenes said, "This seems to be absolutely absurd -- because I am resting right now!"

If Alexander is not happy, if Adolf Hitler is not happy, if Rockefellers and Carnegies are not happy, the people who have all the money of the world, if they are not happy, the

people who have all the power in the world, if they are not happy....

Have you watched Jimmy Carter's photographs? All the smile has disappeared now; now those teeth are not showing. He had really a beautiful smile, but where has it all gone? He must have been far happier than he is now. Every day his face is becoming more and more sad; more and more anxiety, anguish, is being shown.

Just this morning I looked in the latest TIME. His face seems to have become too old just within these two years, as if he has aged twenty years. He must be suffering from nightmares. Where are all those hopes that he will be happy when he becomes the president?

Just watch people who have succeeded in the world and you will drop the idea of success. Nothing fails like success. Although you have been told that nothing succeeds like success, I say to you that nothing fails like success. Happiness has nothing to do with success, happiness has nothing to do with ambition, happiness has nothing to do with money, power, prestige. It is a totally different dimension.

Happiness has something to do with your consciousness, not with your character. Let me remind you. Character is again cultivation. You can become a saint and still you will not be happy, if your sainthood is nothing but a practiced sainthood. And that's how people become saints, Catholics, Jainas, Hindus. How do they become saints? They practice inch by inch, in detail, when to get up, what to eat, what not to eat, when to go to bed....

These people even come here sometimes and ask me why I don't give a certain discipline to my sannyasins. I give them

consciousness, not character. I don't believe in character at all. My trust is in consciousness. If a person becomes more conscious, naturally his character is transformed. But that transformation is totally different: it is not managed by the mind -- it is natural, it is spontaneous. And whenever your character is natural and spontaneous it has a beauty of its own; otherwise you can go on changing... you can drop your anger, but where will you drop it? You will have to drop it within your own unconscious. You can change one side of your life, but whatsoever you throw in will start expressing itself from some other corner. It is bound to be so. You can block a stream with a rock; it will start flowing from somewhere else -- you cannot destroy it. Anger is there because you are unconscious, greed is there because you are unconscious, possessiveness and jealousy are there because you are unconscious.

So I am not interested in changing your anger; that will be like pruning leaves of a tree and hoping that the tree will disappear one day. It is not going to be so; on the contrary, the more you prune the tree the thicker will be the foliage. Hence your so-called saints are the unholiest persons in the world, pretenders, pseudo. Yes, if you look from the outside they look very holy -- too much holy, saccharin, too sweet, sickeningly sweet, nauseating. You can only go and pay your respect to them and escape. You can't live with your saints even for twenty-four hours -- they will bore you to death! The closer you are to them, the more puzzled, perplexed, confused you will be, because you will start seeing that from one side they have forced anger: it has entered into another side of their life.

Ordinary people are angry once in a while, and their anger is very fleeting, very momentary. Then again they are laughing, again they are friendly; they don't carry wounds too long. But your so-called saints, their anger becomes almost a permanent affair; they are simply angry, not at anything in particular. They have repressed anger so much that now they are simply angry, in a state of rage. Their eyes will show, their noses will show, their faces will show, their very way of life will show....

Lu Ting ate at a Greek restaurant because Papadopoulos, the owner, made really good fried rice. Each evening he would come in he would order "flied lice."
This always caused Papadopoulos to fall down with laughter. Sometimes he would have two or three friends standing nearby just to hear Lu Ting order his "flied lice."
Eventually the Chinese's pride was so hurt that he took a special diction lesson just to be able to say "fried rice" correctly.
The next time he went to the restaurant he said very plainly, "Fried rice, please."
Unable to believe his ears, Papadopoulos asked, "What did you say?"
Lu Ting shouted, "You heard what I said, you fluckin' Gleek!"

It won't make much difference -- from "flied lice" now it is "fluckin' Gleek"! You close one door, another immediately opens. This is not the way of transformation.
To change your character is easy; the real work consists in changing your consciousness, in becoming conscious --

more conscious, more intensely and passionately conscious. When you are conscious it is impossible to be angry, it is impossible to be greedy, it is impossible to be jealous, it is impossible to be ambitious.

And when all anger, greed, ambition, jealousy, possessiveness, lust, disappear, the energy involved in them is released. That energy becomes your bliss. Now it is not coming from outside; now it is happening inside your being, in your innermost recesses of being.

And when this energy is available you become a receptive field, you become a magnetic field. You attract the beyond -- you can call it "God." Buddha never calls it "God," he calls it "the beyond"; that is his name for God. When you become a magnetic field, when all the energy that is unnecessarily being wasted by you in your unconsciousness gathers, pools inside you, when you become a lake of energy, you start attracting the stars, you start attracting the beyond, you start attracting God himself.

And the meeting of your consciousness with the beyond is the point of bliss, true happiness. It knows nothing of unhappiness, it is pure happiness. It knows nothing of death, it is pure life. It knows nothing of darkness, it is pure light, and to know it is the goal. Gautama the Buddha went in search of this and one day, after six years' struggle, he attained to it.

You can also attain to it, but let me remind you: by saying that you can attain to it I am not creating a desire to attain it. I am simply stating a fact: that if you become a pool of immense energy, undistracted by any worldly thing, it happens. It is more a happening than a doing. And it is better to call it bliss than happiness, because happiness

gives you the feeling as if it is something similar to that which you know as happiness. What you know as happiness is nothing but a relative state.

Benson went to Krantz's clothing store to buy himself a suit. He found just the style he wanted, so he took the jacket off the hanger and tried it on.
Krantz came up to him. "Yes, sir. It looks wonderful on you."
"It may look wonderful," said Benson, "but it fits terrible. The shoulders pinch."
"Put on the pants," said Krantz. "They are so tight, you will forget all about the shoulders!"

One day I saw Mulla Nasruddin walking on the road in great despair, almost ready to burst out crying. I asked him, "What is the matter? Why are you so miserable?"
He said, "My shoes are very small -- I need two sizes bigger -- and they hurt like hell."
I said, "Nasruddin, then why don't you change them?"
He said, "That I cannot do."
I asked him, "Why can't you? You have the money."
He said, "I have the money, but there is much more involved in it. The whole day I suffer from these shoes, and when in the evening I go home, I throw these shoes away and I fall on my bed... it is such a relief, as if one has come to paradise! And that is the only joy in my life! I cannot change these shoes -- in twenty-four hours that is the only moment of joy. If I change these shoes, that moment will also disappear. Then there is nothing left."

What you call happiness is just a question of relativity. What buddhas call happiness is something absolute.

An Englishman, a Frenchman, and a Russian were trying to define true happiness.
"True happiness," said the Englishman, "is when you return home tired after work and find a gin and tonic waiting for you."
"You English have no romance," countered the Frenchman. "True happiness is when you go on a business trip, find a pretty girl who entertains you, and then you part without regrets."
"You are both wrong," concluded the Russian. "Real true happiness is when you are home in bed at four o'clock in the morning and there is a hammering at the front door and there stand members of the secret police who say to you, 'Igor Zhvkovski, you are under arrest,' and you are able to reply, 'Sorry, Igor Zhvkovski lives next door!'"

Your happiness is a relative phenomenon. What Buddha calls happiness is something absolute, unrelated to anybody else. It is not in comparison with somebody else; it is simply yours, it is inner. And it is a happening: the beyond descending in you, the ocean falling into the dewdrop. And when the ocean falls in the dewdrop, the dewdrop disappears, its boundaries disappear. It becomes as unbounded as the ocean itself; it becomes oceanic.
Bliss is an oceanic state... when you disappear as an ego, bounded, small, and become huge, enormous, as huge and enormous as the universe itself.

The sutras:

BETTER THAN A HUNDRED YEARS OF MISCHIEF IS ONE DAY SPENT IN CONTEMPLATION.

As far as Buddha is concerned whatsoever you are doing is mischief. Why? Even if you are doing some religious ritual it is mischief. Even if you are doing something that you think is public service it is mischief. In fact, the public servants are the greatest mischievous people in the world. If the public servants disappear from the world, the world will be a far better place to live in. The social reformers and the political revolutionaries and the religious missionaries, these are the real mischief-mongers. They don't allow you to live in peace, they go on dragging you from one stupidity into another. Of course they keep you occupied -- that is their attraction.

You are afraid of being unoccupied because whenever you are unoccupied you have to face yourself, and that you want to avoid, because you have repressed so many uglinesses in you that to look inside is to look into hell. You don't want to look in. You are continuously escaping from yourself, so any escape is good.

Somebody says, "Become a public servant. Let service be your motto!" and you say, "Okay, so I will serve people." Whether they want to be served or not, that is not the point. Even if they don't want to be served you have to serve them against themselves. Whether they want your truth or not, that is not the point. It has to be given, it has to be forced down their throats!

That has been done by the religious people: at the point of the sword people have been converted from one religion to another religion -- against their will! They don't want to go to paradise, at least not to YOUR paradise, but you are bent upon sending them to paradise -- your compassion is such that you are ready to kill them or be killed!

A missionary was teaching in a small school and he was saying that every Christian child should make it a point that at least one act of public service should be done per week. One small boy asked, "For example, what kind of things should we do?"
The missionary gave a few examples. He said, "For example, some old woman wants to cross the street and the traffic is too much -- hold her hand, help her to cross the street." And so on, so forth.
Next Sunday he inquired, "How many of you did some act of public service?"
Three boys -- the strongest and the biggest in the class -- stood up. They said, "We did one act of public service."
The missionary was very happy. "So you say...." He asked the first boy, "What did you do?"
He said, "I helped an old woman, a very old woman, to cross the street."
He patted the boy and he said, "You are a good boy. Go on doing such good acts." He asked the next boy, "What did you do?"
He said, "I also helped a very old woman to cross the street."
The missionary was a little puzzled that both could find two very old women, but there are many old women -- it is

possible. He patted the second boy also, but not so heartily. With a little suspicion he said, "Good. Go on doing."
Then he asked the third.
The third said, "I also helped a very very old woman to cross the street."
Now it was too much! Such a coincidence can't be, that three very very old women wanted to cross the street. And he asked, "What day, what time?" It was the same day and the same time and the same street! So he said, "You please explain -- how could you find three such very very old women?"
They said, "They were not three -- it was only one woman, very very old. We all three helped her."
He said, "That too is good, but were three persons needed?"
They said, "Three? Although she was old, she made so much fuss because she never wanted to go to the other side! But we DID manage. When one has to do some public act, some public service, one has to do it. She was shouting and cursing and calling the policeman, but we were determined to do it and we did it!"

As far as Buddha is concerned, whatsoever you are doing is mischief because whatsoever you are doing is done out of unconsciousness. His definition of mischief is: any act done unconsciously. And any act done consciously is virtue. Your life is almost a vicious circle: one mischief leads to another and that one leads to still another. Mischiefs grow out of mischiefs -- only mischiefs can grow out of mischiefs. And you go on living and moving in circles and you don't know what else to do. You do good -- at least you think you are doing good -- but the good never happens;

otherwise the world would have been overflowing with good.
So many people are doing good -- parents doing good to children, and where are the good children? Husbands are doing good to wives -- and wives are really after husbands to transform them, to change them, to make them saints. But where are those husbands and where are those wives and where are those children? Everybody is trying to do good according to his own idea -- and he himself is living in deep darkness.
But the idea that "I am doing good" helps your ego to be strengthened, although you go on moving in the same circle -- because intelligence is needed to be original, to do something new. You know only a few things, a few tricks, and the older you get, the more difficult it becomes to learn new things.
They say you can't teach new tricks to old dogs....

Kramanakis immigrated to New York. He got a job through relatives who taught him to say "Apple pie and coffee" in English so he could order in a restaurant. The next day, Kramanakis walked into a diner.
"What'll you have?" asked the waitress.
"Apple-a pie anna coffee," said the immigrant.
Since that was all he could say he was forced to eat apple pie and coffee every day for a month. When he complained to his cousins, they taught him to say "ham sandwich." Armed with the new addition to his vocabulary he said to the waitress, "Ham sandwich."
"White or rye?" asked the girl.
"Apple-a pie anna coffee," said the Greek.

Just watch your life: "Apple-a pie anna coffee, apple-a pie anna coffee...." You go on doing, repeating, the same thing, every day, day in, day out, year in, year out. Your whole life is a very small circle: the same anger, the same greed, the same fight, the same words, the same reasons, the same motives. Is this the way to grow? Is this the way to become conscious? Is this the way to know your original face? Are you hoping that moving in these small circles continuously, mechanically, robotlike, you will attain to bliss?
Drop all such hopes!

Rabbi Glucksman was seated next to a Baptist minister on a flight to New York. The stewardess approached them and said, "May I serve you a cocktail?"
"I will take a whisky sour," said the rabbi.
"And you, Reverend?" asked the hostess.
"Young lady," said the clergyman, "before I let liquor touch my lips I would just as soon commit adultery."
"Miss," said Rabbi Glucksman, "as long as there is a choice, I will have what he is having."

Not only do you go on moving in the same small circles, you repeat, you imitate other people and their stupidities. You are constantly repeating, you are constantly looking around at what is being done by whom. You don't live a life from within; you are imitators. Your whole interest is exhibition: how to show that you are better than others, how to show that you are richer than others, how to show that you are more intelligent than others. In fact, it is only the unintelligent person who ever compares himself with

others. The really intelligent never compares, because each individual is unique and comparison is impossible.

Mrs. Zimmer hired an interior designer to have the house redecorated.
"Alright," said the decorator, "how would you like it done? Modern?"
"Me, modern? No!" said Mrs. Zimmer.
"How about French?"
"French? Where would I come to a French house?"
"Perhaps Italian Provincial?"
"God forbid!"
"Well, madam, what period do you want?"
"What period? I want my friends to walk in, take one look, and drop dead, period!"

People are living just to impress. They must be really very poor inside, because only people suffering from inferiority complex want to impress others. A really superior person never compares himself with anybody else. He knows he is incomparable; not only that, he knows others are also as incomparable as he is. He is neither superior nor inferior. This tremendous revolution is possible only by one secret key, and that is becoming more alert. The more alert you are, the less you repeat. The more alert you are, you find new ways of doing things, you find new styles of living your life. The more alert you are, the more creative you are, and only creative people know what happiness is. What you create is not the point -- just being creative. It may be poetry, it may be music, it may be sculpture, it can be

anything, but just the process of being creative brings you to the point where you meet God.

All the religions of the world say God is the creator. If he is really the creator, then the only way to meet him will be to become a creator in some measure. Of course you can't be a creator like God, but you can be a small creator in your own way. When the poet is creating, when the painter is creating, in those moments of creativity they are one with God. Those are the moments when they know what God is. But poets and painters and sculptors are only in those heights for moments, only for moments do they know those plenitudes.

The mystic, the buddha, the master, lives on that height twenty-four hours a day, because his creativity is subtle; his creativity is not visible, his creativity is invisible. He creates consciousness. First he creates consciousness in himself, then he starts creating consciousness in others. That's how the master and the disciple gather together, that's how a buddhafield is created. That's how thousands of seekers surround a buddha... because he creates something that cannot be seen but can only be felt by those in whom the buddha has penetrated, in whose heart he has stirred something dormant and has made it dynamic. A buddha creates consciousness first in himself and then in those who are ready and available and trusting and surrendered.

BETTER THAN A HUNDRED YEARS OF MISCHIEF IS ONE DAY SPENT IN CONTEMPLATION.

'Contemplation' is not the right word; but that is a problem, how to translate Eastern insight into Western languages. Contemplation means thinking of one subject

concentratedly. That is not what Buddha means when he uses the word DHYANA. Dhyana means a state of no-mind, a state of no-thought; it is just the opposite of contemplation. Contemplation cannot be the right word to translate it. But I can understand the problem, the difficulty of the translators -- there are no other words. Dhyana is one of those words which cannot be translated.

It was very intelligent of Chinese translators that they left the word unchanged. Dhyana became CH'AN in China; they never translated it. It took a little different form because dhyana is Sanskrit. Buddha used not Sanskrit but a local language of Bihar, Pali. In Pali dhyana is JHAN; in Chinese it became ch'an, left untranslated because Chinese translators came to understand that it cannot be translated; better to describe it rather than translate it. And so it happened in Japan: when it reached Japan, ch'an became Zen; first jhan and then ch'an and then Zen -- but it was left untranslated.

The best thing will be for Western languages also to leave a few words untranslated, because you don't have any equivalent, and whatsoever words you have, have their own connotations.

Dhyana is not contemplation; contemplation is the purest form of thinking. Dhyana is going beyond thought, beyond the purest even, coming to a state where all thought ceases. You are utterly conscious, but there is no content to your consciousness.

Buddha says: BETTER THAN A HUNDRED YEARS OF MISCHIEF IS ONE DAY SPENT IN CONTEMPLATION. Just one day is enough; if a person can remain in dhyana for twenty-four hours that's enough --

he will become a buddha. But it is immensely difficult to remain twenty-four hours in dhyana.
Mahavira has said: Even if one can remain for forty-eight minutes -- and my calculation is also exactly the same -- if one can remain in a state of no-mind continuously for forty-eight minutes, that's enough to become enlightened.
But the ordinary mind cannot remain alert even for a few seconds, what to say of minutes! You try: just sit silently, keep a watch close by, and you will be surprised that even seconds are not without thoughts. Only once in a while for a split second there is no thought. But the moment you see there is no thought, this thought arises: you say, "Aha!" -- finished! You say, "There is no thought!" and the mind has played a trick upon you, it has come from the back door. And if you listen silently you will see the mind laughing -- it has deceived you! No-thought is still a thought, the idea of no-thought is still a thought.

BETTER THAN A HUNDRED YEARS OF IGNORANCE
IS ONE DAY SPENT IN REFLECTION.

By "ignorance" Buddha does not mean absence of knowledge. Because the knowledgeable person is not the goal, so ignorance has to be understood in a new way -- with Buddha's meaning, with his color, with his fragrance. We call a person ignorant because he is uneducated: he cannot read, he cannot write, he does not know the three R's, he is not informed at all, he is very primitive. We call him ignorant. And we call him, the man who has a B.S., M.S., Ph.D.... and you know the meaning? B.S. means

bullshit, M.S. means more of same, Ph.D. means piled high and deep. We call that man a man of knowledge. These are the people who fill our universities. And if you really want to see their faces, go and attend some convocation. Then you will see all the buffoons parading in black gowns, in strange hats.... These people are thought to be knowledgeable.

When Buddha says "ignorant" he simply means a person who does not know himself. It is not a question of becoming more informed or less informed, educated or uneducated. Kabir is not ignorant although he is uneducated. Kabir has said: MASI KAGAD CHHUYO NAHIN -- I have never touched paper or ink. And that is how it is: he never touched paper or ink, he was not able to read or write.

When somebody asked Kabir, "You can't read -- you have not read the Vedas, Upanishads, Gita, and all the great scriptures?" Kabir laughed and said, "LIKHA-LIKHI KI HAI NAHIN -- the truth has nothing to do with the scriptures because it has never been written and cannot be written. It is not written anywhere! It is unexpressed, so what is the point of reading the scriptures? The scriptures themselves say: I have heard that it cannot be expressed. Then what is the point?"

But Kabir is not ignorant. Buddha will recognize Kabir as a buddha. Kabir IS a buddha, so is Farid, so is Raidas, so is Mohammed, so is Christ. Christ is also absolutely uneducated; Mohammed is also absolutely uneducated, uninformed.

Then ignorance has a totally different meaning: not absence of the so-called knowledge but absence of self-knowledge.

Not knowing oneself is ignorance. Then you can know all: you can become a walking ENCYCLOPAEDIA BRITANNICA, but that won't help. If you know yourself, then you are a man of wisdom.

BETTER THAN A HUNDRED YEARS OF IGNORANCE IS ONE DAY SPENT IN REFLECTION.

And reflection has to be understood literally. Again, in English reflection has the meaning of contemplation, thinking. Buddha means literally reflection -- as the moon is reflected in the lake, your face is reflected in a mirror. Be so silent, without any waves, without even a ripple; let your consciousness become a lake, utterly silent, undisturbed, so that the whole sky, the whole firmament, can be reflected in you. Being in a state of no-mind you become a mirror, you start reflecting that which is.

And that's what God is... this total existence with its immense beauty and benediction. If you are a mirror, it will be reflected in you, and that will make you wise, that will make you a master, that will make you the awakened one. But people go on believing what others have said. Beliefs are not going to help you. Beliefs are poisonous; they keep you blind. Because of your beliefs you never inquire on your own. And your beliefs are false, they are not really trust; a belief can only be superficial. You can believe in the Gita or the Koran or the Bible, but deep down the doubt persists; it is not so easy to uproot the doubt.

The doubt is uprooted only when YOU know. How can it be uprooted if Jesus knows? How can it be uprooted if Mohammed knows? He MAY know, but who knows whether he is right or wrong, and who knows that he is not deceived, and who knows he's not deceiving others? What

guarantee is there? What is the proof that Buddha is right? Except that Buddha says, "I have attained," there is no other proof. But that is going in circles, that is the question itself: How to believe that Buddha is right? And we have only one proof: Buddha says, "I have arrived." But how to believe that what he says is right?
Deep down the doubt will persist; your belief will be only a cover-up. It is like you have a wound oozing with pus, stinking, and you cover it with roses -- but deep down in the roses the pus is accumulating. The roses will not be able to transform it. They can hide it for a few moments, their fragrance may not let others know the stink that is arising out of the wound, but how long...? Sooner or later they will be stinking too! Rather than roses changing your pus, your pus will change the roses. And that's what happens: belief never transforms your doubt, your doubt transforms your belief itself.

The young rabbi finally decided that he must talk to the richest member of his congregation, no matter how much it hurt.
"Why," asked the rabbi, "must you fall asleep when I am preaching?"
"Let me explain something," answered the millionaire. "Would I fall asleep if I did not trust you?"

That's what has happened to millions of people: they have fallen asleep because they trust; there is no need to be awake. Buddha knows -- what is the need for you to be awake? Christ knows -- it is enough for you to be a Christian, there is no need to be a Christ.

But I say to you: unless you are a Christ nothing is going to happen. By being a Christian you are simply deceiving yourself and others, and you are wasting precious time, because in the same time you can become Christ himself. Don't remain satisfied by being Christians or Hindus or Jainas or Buddhists. Become a Buddha, become a Christ, become a Mohammed, become a Mahavira! Less than that is not going to help, less than that is not liberation.
And that is possible through reflection. If you become a no-mind, the whole that surrounds you will be reflected in you. And when YOU will know, then only you will know, and that knowing disperses all doubts. When all doubts have gone within your heart, all darkness disappeared and you are full of light, then life has been lived, life has been known. That is bliss. The beyond has reached to you, you have reached the beyond. Now God is within you and you are within God.

BETTER THAN A HUNDRED YEARS OF IDLENESS IS ONE DAY SPENT IN DETERMINATION.

Again there is some possibility of misunderstanding because of the translation. Buddha does not mean by "determination" what is meant in English by the word. He means decisiveness, not determination. Determination gives you a feeling of will, willpower. Determination gives you the idea of deciding through the mind. Decisiveness is a totally different phenomenon: it is of the heart. Not that you have decided by the mind, but your heart feels a kind of commitment -- it is a love affair.

In love you don't determine. You don't say to your woman that, "I have determined to love you." Or do you say it? If you say to some woman, "I have pulled all my energy together; I have created a great determination in myself that I am going to love you," that woman will never see you again... because love and determination means love is false. Love has a decisiveness about it, a commitment, an involvement, but not determination. It has no will; in fact, even if you want to determine against it you cannot. It is a mad, mad thing.
So is religion: it is not a question of determination, it is a question of falling in love with this tremendous beauty of existence. It is falling in love with this mysterious world.

BETTER TO LIVE ONE DAY WONDERING
HOW ALL THINGS ARISE AND PASS AWAY.

If you can wonder you are going to fall into love. Each child is born wondering... and we destroy his wonder sooner or later. By the time a child is four we have killed, massacred his wonder. And the method that we use to kill his wonder is: we start stuffing him with information.

D.H. Lawrence, one of the great men of insight of this age, was walking in a garden with a small child. And as small children ask, the child asked, "Can you tell me one thing -- why the trees are green?"
Now such questions can be asked only either by children or by mystics, either by children or by buddhas. What kind of question is this? You will never ask it, because it will look so foolish to ask why trees are green. And in fact you

already know why they are green; you know, because it is chlorophyll that makes them green.

D.H. Lawrence also knew about chlorophyll. He could have said it to the child, and children are very easily trusting.... If you say, "It is because of this," they will say, "Okay." And in fact, they don't much care about the answer; by the time you are answering them they have become interested in some other question. They are intrigued by something else -- a butterfly, a flower, a cloud floating in the sky. They have already bypassed the question.

When a child asks he does not ask to be answered, remember. When a child asks he is simply talking out loud to himself, he is thinking out loud, he is wondering out loud, that's all. When he says, "Why are the trees green?" he is not saying it inside, he is thinking aloud. It is not really a question. He is puzzled by the mystery, he is wondering WHY the trees are green, he is not waiting for any answer; it is pure wonder, he is intrigued.

D.H. Lawrence is a great poet, a great novelist -- almost on the verge of being a mystic. Had he been in India, had he been in the East, he would have become a buddha. About these two persons I feel very certain they would have become buddhas if they had been in the East: Friedrich Nietzsche and D.H. Lawrence. About these two persons I feel absolutely certain. They were so much on the verge, just one step more....

Lawrence looked at the trees, stood there in silence with closed eyes for a few seconds, then told the child, "The trees are green because they are green." And the child was satisfied. But Lawrence continued to think, "What kind of

answer is this that I have given to the child? -- the trees are green because they are green. It is a tautology. It is illogical!" But it is tremendously significant. Lawrence is saying that life is a mystery to be lived, a reality to be experienced, not a question to be answered, not a problem to be solved. It is so.

That's how Buddha used to say it to his disciples: his word is TATHATA, suchness. If you had asked him the same thing he would have said, "Such is the case. Trees are green... it is so." Nothing more can be said about it -- because the more said, the more you become informed, knowledgeable, the less is the possibility to know. "It is so" -- it does not close the door to you, it simply opens the door of the mystery.

Buddha says: BETTER TO LIVE ONE DAY WONDERING HOW ALL THINGS ARISE AND PASS AWAY. If you can attain again your childhood wonder you will be my sannyasins. I am not here to help you to know more, I am here to help you to WONDER more. And the only way to wonder more is to take away all your knowledge. Your knowledge is a disturbance in your wondering. It does not allow you to wonder, because before you wonder it immediately supplies you with an answer. It is because of scientific knowledge that man has lost his immense quality, his great quality of wonder. And that is the greatest treasure a man has got. No animal wonders; it is only man who is given the gift to wonder.

Real religion is rooted in wondering and real religion helps you to wonder more and more and more. A moment comes in the life of the mystic when he becomes simply wonder.

Each small thing fills him with tremendous wonder... a pebble on the shore, a seashell, the cry of a distant cuckoo, a lonely star in the evening, ANYTHING... a child giggling, a woman crying tears of joy, anything... just the wind passing through the pine trees, the sound of running water, anything... and he is full of wonder. God comes to him as wonder, God comes to him as mystery.
If you sit by the side of a mystic, don't sit to learn more from him. Sit to drop all knowledge. Sit by the side of a mystic to be filled by his wonder, to become a child again. Jesus says: Unless you are born again you shall not enter into my kingdom of God. Again he says: Unless you are like small children you will not enter into my kingdom of God. He is talking about the same wonder.

BETTER TO LIVE ONE HOUR SEEING
THE ONE LIFE BEYOND THE WAY.

Each sutra is so tremendously significant! Meditate on each word. And Buddha is progressing very slowly so that you can absorb the spirit. First he says: dhyana, a state of no-mind. Then he says: the mirrorlike quality of your consciousness, which is a by-product of dhyana. Then he says: decisiveness -- a love affair, your heart falling in tune with existence. Then he says: wondering. And now he says: seeing.
The eyes that can see grow in wonder -- not in knowledge, not through scripture, but through innocence. Become mystified with existence!
Our whole education is based on demystifying existence. The pedagogue believes that one day we will have

destroyed the whole mystery of existence because we will have gathered all the answers for all the questions. This is the most irreligious belief there is -- and your education creates irreligion. Your education, even if it is called religious education, is not religious because it demystifies existence, it supplies you with answers.

Real religion takes away all the answers, makes your questions bigger and bigger, and finally transforms your questions into wonder, into a quest. And in wonder, if you can live in wonder, you will attain to that insight, those eyes, which can see.

This seeing has been called in the East DARSHAN -- seeing with innocence, looking with innocence. Then just a nazunia flower by the side of the hedge is enough... and you are transported into another world. Then you will dance when the clouds are raining, you will dance in the rain and you will know something of buddhahood. Then you will dance in the full-moon night and you will know something of buddhahood. Then you will dance around a rosebush because the roses have bloomed, and you will know something of buddhahood. Your life will become a constant singing, dancing, celebration.

BETTER TO LIVE ONE HOUR SEEING THE ONE LIFE BEYOND THE WAY. Then one hour is enough, there is no need to live for millions and millions of lives, because it is not a question of length, how long you live. The West is too much concerned with length. Make people live longer: a hundred years, a hundred and fifty years, two hundred years, three hundred years. And it is possible, because there are a few people who live....

In the Kashmir valley there is a small tribe: they live very easily up to a hundred and fifty. And in Russia there are many people who have gone beyond a hundred and fifty. There are a few people who are a hundred and eighty and one person who is two hundred years old. Now scientists are continuously searching: what are the secrets? Why do these people live so long? What do they eat? What do they drink? What is their pattern of life? Why do they live so long? And sooner or later they will find the secrets and man will live three hundred years, four hundred years, five hundred years. You are very fortunate that they have not found the secrets yet! Just think of yourself living three hundred years -- seventy is enough to make one fed up with life!

And remember, suicide is not allowed yet anywhere. To commit suicide is the greatest crime, if you are caught before committing it. Of course if you have committed, then it is finished; nobody can catch hold of you. They cannot punish your ghost! Just think of yourself living seven hundred years.... Within seventy years all is finished -- life is so futile. To live for seven hundred years will be sheer torture and they won't allow you to die.

Now there are many people hanging between life and death, particularly in America and in Europe -- more in America. They are not alive, because they cannot move, they cannot do anything, they cannot even think, they cannot eat. Everything is being done by others; they are just lying down on the beds, on oxygen. They may not even have their own heart -- maybe a plastic heart pumping their blood. They may not have kidneys; machines may be doing their work.

Now, these people are called alive! They are neither alive nor dead -- and it is better to be this way or that. Hanging in between, they are in a kind of limbo. But the West is very much interested, mind as such is very much interested, in lengthening life. But those who know, they are not interested in long life; they are interested in intensifying life, in making it more intense, total.

That's why Buddha says: BETTER THAN A HUNDRED YEARS OF MISCHIEF IS ONE DAY SPENT IN dhyana. BETTER THAN A HUNDRED YEARS OF IGNORANCE IS ONE DAY SPENT IN mirrorlike REFLECTION. BETTER TO LIVE ONE DAY WONDERING HOW ALL THINGS ARISE AND PASS AWAY. BETTER TO LIVE ONE HOUR SEEING THE ONE LIFE BEYOND THE WAY.

If you can allow wonder to happen, then sooner or later out of your wonder will grow eyes, new eyes -- not these eyes which can see only objects but eyes which can see the invisible, that life which is beyond. Call it divine life, eternal life, or whatsoever name you prefer.

BETTER TO LIVE ONE MOMENT....

See, Buddha is going continuously to make it shorter and shorter: from a hundred years to one moment.

BETTER TO LIVE ONE MOMENT IN THE MOMENT OF THE WAY BEYOND THE WAY.

It is enough to live in a single moment, but totally herenow -- no past, no future -- your whole energy diving deep in

the herenow is enough to have the taste of God, to have the taste of truth: truth which is of the way and yet beyond the way.
AES DHAMMO SANANTANO -- this is the eternal law.
If one can live in wonder, seeing, totally in the moment, one has come home. Bliss happens, descends, you are overflooded with bliss and benediction. It is not your creation, it comes as a gift from the beyond.
Enough for today.
The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 4
Chapter #2
Chapter title: Via transcendence
23 August 1979 am in Buddha Hall

The first question:
Question 1
BELOVED MASTER,
CAN INTELLECTUAL ACTIVITY BE CREATIVE?

Anand Savita, intellect is something pseudo, something false. It is a substitute for intelligence. Intelligence is a totally different phenomenon -- the real thing.
Intelligence needs tremendous courage, intelligence needs an adventurous life. Intelligence needs that you are always going into the unknown, into the uncharted sea. Then intelligence grows, it becomes sharpened. It grows only when it encounters the unknown every moment. People are afraid of the unknown, people feel insecure with the unknown. They don't want to go beyond the familiar.

Hence they have created a false, plastic substitute for intelligence -- they call it intellect.
Intellect is only a mental game; it cannot be creative. Intellect is imaginative, but not creative. Intelligence is creative. Intelligence creates because intelligence makes you capable of participating with God. God is the source of all creativity. You can be creative only when you are EN RAPPORT with God, when you are rooted in the very existence, when you are part of divine energy. You cannot be creative on your own; you can be creative only as a medium of God.
When the poet creates he is only a medium, a hollow bamboo on the lips of God. And suddenly the hollow bamboo is no longer a hollow bamboo -- it becomes a flute. The emptiness of the bamboo becomes full of song, dance, celebration.
Creativity means you have to disappear, you have to allow God to be, you have to get out of the way. Intellect is egoistic; intelligence is humble, egoless. The difference is subtle; because both the words come from the same root, hence one can easily be deceived. Beware, be alert!
Intellect is not intelligence. Intelligence is creative, intellect is only a pretender. In the name of creativity it goes on producing rubbish.
You can go and look in the universities and see what kind of creative work goes on there. Thousands of treatises are being written; Ph.D.s, D.Phil.s, D.Litt.s, great degrees are conferred on people. Nobody ever comes to know what happens to their Ph.D. theses; they go on becoming rubbish heaps in the libraries. Nobody ever reads them, nobody is ever inspired by them. Yes, a few people read them; they

are the same type of people who are going to write another thesis. The would-be Ph.D.s will be of course reading them. But your universities don't create Shakespeares, Miltons, Dostoevskys, Tolstoys, Rabindranaths, Kahlil Gibrans. Your universities create just junk, utterly useless. This is intellectual activity that goes on in the universities. Intelligence creates a Picasso, a Van Gogh, a Mozart, a Beethoven.

Intelligence is a totally different dimension. It has nothing to do with the head; it has something to do with the heart. Intellect is in the head; intelligence is a state of heart-wakefulness. When your heart is awake, when your heart is dancing in deep gratitude, when your heart is in tune with existence, in harmony with existence, out of that harmony is creativity.

Savita, there is no possibility of any intellectual creativity. It can produce rubbish, it is productive; it can manufacture, but it cannot create. And what is the difference between manufacturing and creating? Manufacturing is a mechanical activity. Computers can do it -- they are already doing it, and doing it in a far more efficient way than you can hope from man. Intelligence creates, it does not manufacture.

Manufacturing means a repetitive exercise; what has already been done, you go on doing again and again. Creativity means bringing the new into existence, making a way for the unknown to penetrate the known, making a way for the sky to come to the earth.

When there is a Beethoven or a Michelangelo or a Kalidas, the skies open, flowers shower from the beyond. I am not telling you anything about Buddha, Christ, Krishna,

Mahavira, Zarathustra, Mohammed, for a certain reason: because what THEY create is so subtle that you will not be able to catch hold of it. What Michelangelo creates is gross; what Van Gogh creates can be seen, is visible. What a buddha creates is absolutely invisible. It needs a totally different kind of receptivity to understand.

To understand a buddha you have to be intelligent. Not only that Buddha's creation is of tremendous intelligence, but it is so superb, it is so supramental, that even to understand it you will have to be intelligent. Intellect won't help even in understanding.

Only two kinds of people create: the poets and the mystics. The poets create in the gross world and the mystics create in the subtle world. The poets create in the outer world: a painting, a poem, a song, music, a dance; and the mystic creates in the inner world. The poet's creativity is objective and the mystic's creativity is subjective, totally of the interior. First you have to understand the poet, only then can you understand one day -- at least HOPE to understand one day -- the mystic. The mystic is the highest flower of creativity. But you may not see anything that the mystic is doing.

Buddha has never painted a single picture, has never taken the brush in his hands, has not composed a single poem, has not sung a single song, nobody has ever seen him dancing. If you watch him he is just sitting silently; his whole being is silence. Yes, a grace surrounds him, a grace of infinite beauty, of exquisite beauty, but you will need to be very vulnerable to feel it. You will have to be very open, not argumentative. You cannot be a spectator with a buddha; you have to be a participant, because it is a

mystery to be participated in. Then you will see what he is creating. He is creating consciousness, and consciousness is the purest form, the highest form possible, of God's expression.
A song is beautiful, a dance is beautiful, because something of the divine is present in it. But in a buddha the whole of God is present. That's why we have called Buddha "Bhagwan," we have called Mahavira "Bhagwan" -- the whole of God is present.
But students won't be able to see it. Disciples will be able to decipher a little bit, and devotees will be able to drink out of it.
Intellectual activity can make you experts in certain things, useful, efficient. But intellect is a groping in the dark; it has no eyes, because it is not yet meditative. Intellect is borrowed, it has no insight of its own.

The subject was lovemaking. For weeks Arthur had successfully answered all the questions asked him on the television quiz show. He was now eligible for the jackpot prize of one hundred thousand dollars. For this one question he was allowed to call an expert. Arthur of course chose a world-famous professor of sexology from France.
The jackpot question was, "If you had been king during the first fifty years of the Assyrian empire, which three parts of your bride's anatomy would you have been expected to kiss on your wedding night?"
The first two answers came quickly. Arthur replied, "Her lips and her neck."
Now, stumped for the answer to the third part of the question, Arthur turned frantically to his expert. The

Frenchman threw up his hands and groaned, "Alors, mon ami, do not ask me. I have been wrong twice already."

The expert, the knowledgeable, the intellectual, has no insight of his own. He depends on borrowed knowledge, on tradition, on convention. He carries libraries in his head, a great burden, but he has no vision. He knows much without knowing anything at all.
And because life is not the same ever -- it is constantly changing, moment to moment it is new -- the expert always lags behind, his response is always inadequate. He can only react, he cannot respond, because he is not spontaneous. He has already arrived to conclusions; he is carrying ready-made answers -- and the questions that life raises are always new.
Moreover, life is not a logical phenomenon. And the intellectual lives through logic; hence he never fits with life and life never fits with him. Of course life is not at a loss; the intellectual himself is at a loss. He is always feeling like an outsider -- not that life has expelled him; he himself has decided to remain outside life. If you cling too much to logic you will never be able to be part of the living process that this existence is.
Life is more than logic: life is paradox, life is mystery.

Gannaway and O'Casey arranged to fight a duel with pistols. Gannaway was quite fat, and when he saw his lean adversary facing him he objected. "Debar!" he said, "I am twice as large as he is, so I ought to stand twice as far away from him as he is from me."
Absolutely logical, but how can you do it?

"Be aisy now," replied his second. "I will soon put that right." And taking a piece of chalk from his pocket he drew two lines down the fat man's coat leaving a space between them.
"Now," he said, turning to O'Casey, "fire away, and remember that any hits outside that chalk line don't count."

Perfectly mathematical, perfectly logical -- but life is not so logical, life is not so mathematical. And people go on living in their intellects very logically. Logic gives them a feeling as if they know, but it is a big "as if," and one tends to forget it completely. Whatsoever you go on doing through intellect, it is only inference. It is not an experience of truth, but just an inference based on your logic -- and your logic is your invention.

Cudahy, grogged to the gills, stood watching the Saint Patrick's Day parade. Unconsciously he dropped his lit cigarette into an old mattress that was lying at the curb. Just then the grey-haired members of the Women's Nursing Corps came strutting by. At the same time, the smoldering mattress began giving off a dreadful smell.
Cudahy sniffed a couple of times and declared to a nearby cop, "Officer, they are marching those nurses too fast!"

Intellect may arrive at certain inferences, but intellect is an unconscious phenomenon. You are almost behaving sleepily.
Intelligence is awakening, and unless you are fully awake, whatsoever you decide is bound to be wrong somewhere or other. It is bound to be so, it is doomed to be wrong,

because it is a conclusion arrived at by an unconscious mind.

To bring intelligence into activity you don't need more information, you need more meditation. You need to become more silent, you need to become more thoughtless. You need to become less mind and more heart. You need to become aware of the magic that surrounds you: magic that is life, magic that is God, magic that is in the green trees and the red flowers, magic that is in people's eyes. Magic is happening everywhere! All is miraculous, but because of your intellect you remain closed inside yourself, clinging to your stupid conclusions arrived at in unconsciousness or given to you by others who are as unconscious as you are.

Savita, intelligence is certainly creative because intelligence brings your totality into functioning -- not only a part, a small part, the head. Intelligence vibrates your whole being; each cell of your being, each fiber of your life starts dancing, and falls in a subtle harmony with the total. That's what creativity is: to pulsate in absolute harmony with the total. That's how one becomes a Buddha, Christ, Zarathustra. These are the real creative people.

Something like this is happening right now, here. If you are a disciple you will be able to feel something of it. If you are a devotee you will be able to drink out of this source that has become available to you. And then creativity will come to you, things will start happening on their own. Your heart will start pouring songs of joy, your hands will start transforming things. You will touch mud and it will become a lotus. You will be able to become an alchemist. But it is possible only through great awakening of intelligence, great awakening of the heart.

The second question:
Question 2
BELOVED MASTER,
EVERYONE WANTS TO LOVE AND TO BE LOVED. WHY? "FIRST SIGHT OF LOVE, LAST SIGHT OF WISDOM." IS IT TRUE?

Bal Krishna Bharti, love is prayer groping towards God. Love is poetry born out of the sheer joy of being. Love is song, dance, celebration: a song of gratitude, a dance of thankfulness, celebration for no reason at all... for this tremendous gift that goes on showering on us, for this whole universe, from the dust to the divine. Love is not what you understand it to be, hence the question.
You ask, "Everyone wants to love and to be loved. Why?" Because love is religion at its highest; love is the supremost religion. Love is the search for God -- of course, an unconscious search in the beginning, stumbling, groping in the dark. The direction may not be right, but the intention is absolutely right.
Love is not the ordinary thing that you understand by it; it is not just a biological attraction between a man and a woman. It is that too, but that is only the beginning, just the first step. Even there, if you look deep down, it is not really an attraction between man and woman, it is an attraction between masculine energy and feminine energy. It is not an attraction between A and B; far deeper mysteries are involved even in ordinary love affairs.
Hence nobody can define love. Thousands of definitions have been tried -- all have failed. Love remains indefinable,

very elusive, very mercurial. The more you want to grasp of it, the more difficult it becomes, the farther away it goes. You cannot catch hold of it, you cannot manage to know what exactly it is, you cannot control it. Love remains unknowable. Man wants to know, because knowledge gives power. You would like to be powerful over love, but that is impossible; love is far bigger than you. You cannot possess it, you can only be possessed by it. Hence those people who want to possess love never come to know anything of it. Only those who are courageous enough, only those who are gamblers, who can risk their very life and be possessed by some unknown energy, are able to know what love is.

Love is the first step towards God -- hence it appears mad to those who are hung up in their heads. And because people don't understand the whole mystery of love, because they try to understand it through the mind.... It can be understood only through the heart. Remember: all that is great is available to the heart. The heart is the door to all great values of life, to all ultimate values, and the head is only a useful mechanism, a gadget -- good in the marketplace but utterly useless in a temple. And love is a temple, it is not a marketplace. If you drive love into the marketplace it is reduced into ugly sexuality.

That's what people have done: rather than raising love to God, they have reduced love into ugly, animalistic sexuality. And the strange thing is, the same people -- the priests, the politicians, the puritans -- the same people who have reduced love into an ugly phenomenon, are against sex, are enemies of sex. And they are the people who have destroyed a tremendously potential power!

Love is a lotus hidden in the mud. The lotus is born out of mud, but you don't condemn the lotus because it is born out of mud; you don't call the lotus muddy, you don't call the lotus dirty. Love is born out of sex, and then prayer is born out of love, and then God is born out of prayer. Higher and higher and higher one goes on soaring.
But the priests and the puritans have reduced the whole phenomenon into sexuality. And once love becomes sex it becomes ugly, one starts feeling guilty about it. And it is because of that guilt that this saying, this proverb: First sight of love, last sight of wisdom.... If you ask me, I will change it a little bit. I will say: First sight of love, first sight of wisdom.
But it depends how you look at it. If you look at the potential of it, at the highest possibility that it can reach, then love becomes a ladder. If you look only at the mud and you are utterly blind to the future of the mud, then certainly love becomes something ugly and great antagonism arises in you. But to be antagonistic to love is to be antagonistic to God.

On returning from his honeymoon, Michael phoned his father at the office.
"Good to hear from you, son. Tell me, how is married life?"
"Dad, I am really upset. I think I married a nun."
"A nun?" asked the startled father. "What do you mean?"
"Ah, you know, Dad, none in the morning and none at night."
"Oh, that!" groaned the older man. "Come for dinner Saturday and I will introduce you to the mother superior."

Once love is reduced to sexuality only, of course then the first sight of love is the last sight of wisdom. But it depends on you: why reduce it to sexuality? Why not change the baser metal into gold? Why not learn the alchemy of love? That's what I am teaching here.
And the priests, who don't know anything about love -- because they have never loved, they have renounced the world of love -- they go on making great systems of thought against it.

The priest stood before a hushed crowd of attentive villagers and spoke to them, "You must not use-a the pill." A lovely signorina stepped forward and said, "Look, you no play-a the game, you no make-a the rules!"

These are the people who don't play the game but they make the rules. For centuries the priests have been making rules. It is the priesthood all over the world that has condemned a great potential source, in fact the only source, of energy. Once it is condemned, you are condemned; your whole life will become meaningless. Once sex energy is not allowed to grow to its natural heights you are going to live a miserable life.
Bal Krishna Bharti, love is the greatest gift of God. Learn the art of it. Learn the song of it, the celebration of it. It is an absolute need: just as the body cannot survive without food, the soul cannot survive without love. Love is the nourishment of the soul, it is the beginning of all that is great, it is the door of the divine.

The third question:

Question 3
BELOVED MASTER,
I KNOW THAT GOD IS LOVE, BUT THEN WHY AM I SO AFRAID OF HIM?

Sudharma, you don't know that God is love. You have heard me saying again and again that God is love; hence you have started repeating it. It is parrotlike. I KNOW God is love, hence it is impossible to be afraid of God. How can you be afraid of love?

Fear and love cannot exist together; their coexistence is impossible. In fact, it is the same energy that becomes fear that becomes love. If it becomes fear, there is no more energy available to become love; if it becomes love, fear disappears. It is the same energy! The same energy in a chaotic state is called fear; and when it becomes a cosmos, when it is in deep accord, it is called love. You still don't know that God is love.

You say, "I know that God is love...."

You have heard, but you don't know. This is information as far as you are concerned; it is not yet knowing, it is not your own authentic experience. And remember always that unless something becomes your own authentic experience, it is not going to transform you; hence the problem.

You say, "I know that God is love, but then why am I so afraid of him?"

You are bound to be afraid of him because you don't KNOW that God is love. You have been told by the priests for centuries that God is constantly watching you, that God wants you to be this way and not that way, that these are the ten commandments of God, follow them. And if you

don't follow them, God has prepared for you a great hell. The father preparing hellfire for his own children? -- impossible, even to conceive.
The priests have made God so ugly just to dominate people, because people can be dominated only through fear. Remember this: the whole trade secret of the priests, Hindu, Christian, Mohammedan, Jaina, Buddhist -- their philosophies differ but their trade secret is the same. That trade secret is: always keep people afraid, trembling. If people are afraid, they are ready to submit. If people are afraid, they are ready to be slaves. If people are afraid, they cannot gather courage to rebel. Fear keeps them impotent; fear is a psychological process of castration. For centuries it has been done: fear has been the greatest weapon in the hands of the priests and they have used it very liberally.

The Goldbergs' son, Jake, refused to take school seriously. He never did homework and was constantly playing hooky. The principal suggested they send him to a Yeshiva. The Goldbergs did, but after a few weeks he was expelled. The Goldbergs knew that Catholic parochial schools were very strict, so they decided to send Jake to one. They enrolled him in Christ-the-King School for Boys, and warned their son to behave and to do his lessons, because this was his last chance. If he was thrown out now he would be sent to a school for delinquents.
After a week of parochial school, Jake came home with terrific grades. Miraculously he had been converted into a well-behaved, serious student.
"How come you changed all of a sudden?" asked Goldberg.

"Well," he answered, "when I saw some man hanging on a cross in every room, I figured I had better not be a wise guy anymore."

Make people afraid, keep them always trembling. Let them know that God is dictatorial, a very angry God, jealous, and is absolutely unable to forgive if you disobey.
Disobedience is the greatest sin in the eyes of the priests; hence Adam and Eve were expelled. They had not done much of a sin. What had they really done? Nothing much to talk about, but priests have been talking about it for centuries. And God was so angry that not only Adam and Eve were thrown out of the Garden of Eden, paradise -- with them the whole humanity!
You are suffering because Adam and Eve disobeyed. You have not done anything wrong; you are suffering for their sin because you are descendants. The sin is so great -- not only the persons are punished, but for thousands and thousands of years their descendants have to be punished too.
And what was the sin really? Why is so much fuss made about it? It was so innocent, it was so natural, that I cannot conceive how Adam and Eve could have avoided it. If anybody is responsible for it, God himself is responsible. There were millions of trees in the Garden of Eden and there was only one tree which God did not want Adam and Eve to eat from -- only one tree, the forbidden. And the reason why it was forbidden also seems to be very ugly. The reason is: if you eat the fruit of the tree of knowledge, you will become like God and God is very jealous. Look at the reason why the tree was prohibited. The reason is that if

you eat from the tree, from this tree, the tree of knowledge, you will become immortal, like gods. You will know as much as God knows -- and that is intolerable! So God has protected that tree especially for himself -- he must be eating from the tree of knowledge -- and prohibited Adam and Eve.

Now this is exactly what every father goes on doing. He smokes and he prohibits the children: "Don't smoke -- this is bad. This is bad for you!" But because the father looks so beautiful smoking, the children become enchanted. They would also like to be like the father -- and he looks so manly when he is puffing on his cigar, he looks so proud! He never looks so proud as when he is puffing on his cigar, resting in his chair, reading the newspaper. The children become attracted. When the father is not there they also sit on the same chair, spread the same newspaper, although they cannot read, and start puffing. And it gives them great joy because it gives them great ego.

In fact, to prohibit is to invite. To say to children, "Don't do it!" is to ask for trouble.

I used to live with a family. There was a problem: the father was a smoker, a chainsmoker -- a very well-known professor in a university. And he was afraid: he asked me, "What to do?"

I said, "Do one thing...." He had only one son growing up and he was afraid that sooner or later the son would start smoking. I said, "If you listen to me, the best way is to give the son cigarettes, offer him the cigarettes yourself and tell him to smoke as much as he wants."

He said, "What are you saying? Are you mad or are you joking?"
I said, "Then leave it to me -- I will manage it."
I offered the son a cigarette. He said, "But you don't smoke."
I said, "That is another matter -- don't you worry about me. But YOU learn! It is one of the most beautiful things in life!"
He again asked, "But then why don't you smoke?"
I said, "You leave me out of it -- I am not a very intelligent person. Look at your father! And if I am stupid, are you going to be stupid?"
I had great difficulty in convincing him because the question he was again and again asking was, "You tell me to smoke, but why don't YOU smoke?"
I said, "You try, then you will know!"
So he tried, and he knew, and he threw the cigarette. And he said, "Now I know why you don't smoke. Then why did you insist? Then why did you try to convince me? It is nauseating, sickening!" He coughed and tears came to his eyes -- and that was that, and it was finished.
And I told his father never to say to the child, "Don't smoke."

Remember the ancient story of Adam and Eve. If I had been God I would have taken Adam and Eve to the tree of knowledge and would have forced them to eat to the point that they should have started vomiting, and that would have been the end of the whole story. But God told them not to eat from this tree. That was an invitation -- no serpent is needed.

The serpent is an invention of the priests so that God can be avoided; the responsibility can be thrown on the poor serpent. The serpent is simply poor; the serpent has nothing to do with it, the serpent is absolutely innocent. Have you ever seen any serpent persuading any woman for anything? And why should the serpent be interested? If he wanted to eat, nobody was prohibiting him. Why should he seduce Eve to eat the fruit of the tree of knowledge? What is he going to gain if Eve and Adam become knowledgeable? No, the serpent is an invention so that the responsibility can be thrown on him.

But if you go deep into the story it is simple: God is responsible. First you force an order on people, and just your forcing creates a resistance in them, creates a great urge to disobey. Then disobedience is sin; the greatest sin is disobedience. And then you have to create hell and all kinds of punishments, and you have to keep people afraid. The story was invented by the priests to make man afraid. The priests never wanted man to become intelligent, because intelligent people are dangerous -- dangerous to the status quo, to the establishment, dangerous to the vested interests. The priests wanted the people to remain utterly ignorant, unintelligent. For centuries they did not allow people to read scriptures. In many religions women are still not allowed.

And still a very deep conspiracy goes on. The conspiracy is that all the scriptures are in languages which are dead; nobody understands them, only the priests. Priests remained powerful for centuries because they were the only ones knowing. The scriptures were in ancient Sanskrit, Hebrew, Arabic, Greek, Latin -- ancient languages which

are no longer spoken. There is even suspicion that there are a few languages which were never spoken. For example, Sanskrit seems to be one of the languages which has never been a spoken language. It has always been the language of the scholars, not of the people; of the pundits, not of the masses.

In India there were two languages: one was called Prakrit; PRAKRIT means "the natural," that which is spoken by the people. And Sanskrit literally means "the refined," "the aristocratic," which is spoken only by the scholars and academicians in the universities. All the great scriptures were written in Sanskrit.

It was left to Mahavira and Buddha to speak for the first time in the language of the people -- and the brahmins of India have never been able to forgive these two persons for that sin. To speak in the language of the people means the power of the priests is gone. If people become knowers, if they know what is written in the scriptures, they will not be so easily befooled. In fact, you can worship the Vedas only if you don't understand them. If you understand them, ninety-nine percent is just rubbish. One percent is pure gold, certainly, but ninety-nine percent is pure rubbish. But if you don't understand them, all is gold. In darkness, anything can be given to you with the words, "It is gold -- worship it!" And for centuries the Vedas have been worshipped.

Priests wanted you to worship the scriptures, not to understand them -- because if you understand the scriptures, sooner or later, one thing is going to become clear to you: that the scripture is not the real source. Sooner

or later, you are bound to stumble upon the truth that, "Krishna is speaking from a meditative state, Christ is speaking from a meditative state. What he is speaking is secondary -- from where he is speaking is primary. Unless I reach to that state of consciousness I will not be able to understand the words, because those words in themselves are empty; the meaning can only come through experience." Scriptures were prohibited; it was a sin.... Only the brahmins, the priests, the highest caste, were allowed to read them -- all over the world.

The conspiracy still continues. Still the prayers are done in dead languages, you don't know what you are saying. How can you feel anything when you don't know what you are saying? How can it come out of your feeling and out of your heart? Your prayer becomes just like a gramophone record: "His Master's Voice' -- a repetition. And you hope that by repeating dead rituals you will arrive somewhere. You will simply waste your life.

And then great fear arises: "I don't know from where I come, who I am, where I am going. All around is darkness and darkness, infinite darkness, and not a single light in life." Then you have to go to the priest and bow down to him. You have to ask for guidance.

This is the trade secret: keep people afraid. And you can keep people afraid only if you keep them ignorant. Let them remain trembling, then they will always be ready to touch your feet, ready to obey you -- because you represent God, and disobeying you is dangerous, very dangerous. They will be thrown in hell for eternity.

Greenberg, shabbily dressed and carrying two paper bags, was stopped by a customs inspector.
"What have you got in those bags?" the official asked.
"I got twenty-five thousand dollars here, which I am bringing to Israel to donate."
"C'mon," sneered the official, "you don't look like you got the price of a meal; how could you be donating twenty-five thousand dollars to the state of Israel?"
"Well, you see, I had a job in a men's room, and when the men came in I said to them, "Give to help Israel or I will cut off your balls.'"
"Alright, so you got twenty-five thousand dollars in one bag, but what is in the other bag?"
"Some men did not want to donate."

That's what priests have been doing: destroying your guts, destroying your courage, destroying your self-respect, destroying your self-trust.
Sudharma, you say, "I know that God is love, but then why am I so afraid of him?" You are still surrounded by the nonsense that priests have stuffed your head with; you are full of that rubbish. It takes time to get rid of it, it really takes a long time, because it has been going on for centuries. It has been such a long long, ugly history that it is a rare phenomenon to find a person who can escape out of it.
My whole effort here is to help you to escape out of it. I am against the whole business of priesthood. I want you to stand face-to-face with God without any priests, without any priesthood. God is yours, you are God's; there is no need of any mediator. The function of the master is not to

become a mediator between you and God. Just the contrary: the function of the master is to withdraw all that comes in between you and God. He himself at the last point withdraws; between you and your God he stands no more. He stands only to a certain extent, while other things are being removed. When everything else is removed, he removes himself; that is the last thing the master does. And the moment the master removes himself, he no longer stands between you and God, that is the moment you know that the whole existence is love. It is the stuff called love that the universe is made of.

Jesus says: God is love. I say to you: Love is God. When Jesus says: God is love, it is possible God may be many more things too; love is only one attribute. When I say: Love is God, I say love is the ONLY quality. There is nothing else in God except love; in fact it is another name of love. You can drop the name "God," nothing will be lost. Let love be your God.

But you will have to get rid of the priests. You will have to get rid of your so-called religions, churches, temples, rituals, scriptures. There is much garbage which has to be got rid of. It is a great work, because you have been told that this is very precious. The garbage has been imposed upon you as if it is gold and, because it has been told to you so many times, you have become conditioned.

People become conditioned to seeing certain things. When there is a certain conditioning, you look at things through that conditioning and it appears like that.

Two men were sitting under a tree; one was a Hindu, another was a Mohammedan. Birds were singing, it was a

beautiful spring morning. They both listened for a time, then the Hindu said, "Can you hear? All the birds are resounding the sound aum. I can hear it. I have been practicing aum for thirty years, and now I have become capable of deciphering it very easily. All the birds are resounding with the same sound: the soundless sound, the ancient sound of the Hindus, OMKAR."
The Mohammedan laughed and he said, "Nonsense! I have also been practicing my prayers. The birds are not saying aum, they are saying AMIN."

Mohammedan prayers, Christian prayers, end with amin; Christians call it AMEN, Mohammedans call it amin. Hindu prayers end with aum. There is certainly a truth somewhere, partially expressed by all the three. When the mind becomes absolutely silent a certain sound is heard. If you are a Hindu you will interpret it as aum, if you are a Mohammedan as amin, if you are a Christian as amen, but nobody can say for certain what it is. In fact it can be interpreted in so many ways -- it is your interpretation that is imposed on it.
If you ask a real mystic, one who is neither Hindu nor Mohammedan nor Christian, he will say, "Sit silently by my side and listen. There is no need to interpret it at all, because whatsoever we say about it will be our imposition, it will be our idea imposed on the sound. Just listen, sit silently -- I am listening to it, you also listen. I know it, you will know it. There is no need to say anything about it."

It is said, once it happened:

A great mystic, Farid, met Kabir, another great mystic. For two days they sat silently together. Yes, sometimes they laughed, giggled for no reason at all, and sometimes they hugged each other and kissed, but not a single word was spoken. Almost a thousand people had gathered -- the disciples of both -- with great expectations that something will be communicated, and nobody wanted to miss such a great opportunity. Kabir saying something to Farid is bound to be something rare, or Farid saying something to Kabir is bound to be something which is only heard once in a century.

But two days passed, and the disciples became fed up and bored. And the more they were bored, the more the mystics were giggling and laughing and hugging and kissing. And then the time of departure came; Farid had to leave. Kabir went out of the town to give him a farewell, just to say goodbye. They again hugged, they again giggled, and then they departed.

The disciples of Farid followed Farid and the disciples of Kabir followed Kabir back home. When they were alone they asked, the disciples of Farid asked, "What went wrong? You are continuously talking to us -- what happened? Why did you become dumb? For two days why didn't you speak, and what is all this giggling?"

Farid said, "There was no need to say anything, because I am hearing the same thing that he is hearing, I am seeing the same thing that he is seeing, so what is the point of saying anything to him? It would have been absolutely foolish on my part. When I can see he is hearing the same, seeing the same, being the same, we are encountering the same reality, what is the point of saying it?"

Then they asked, "Then why did you giggle?"
And he said, "We giggled because of you, because you were getting so bored! We were laughing at you. You had come to hear us talk -- you were foolish, you missed a great opportunity. Two masters were there, utterly silent; two pools of silent energy, two doors open simultaneously to God -- and you missed. And you wanted some words, some noise. You could have sat in silence, you could have become part of our silence. You could have fallen EN RAPPORT with us. You didn't do that -- you were bored, you were fed up, you were yawning. And just seeing you we giggled, we laughed at what kind of fools we have gathered!"

Nothing can be said; when you know, there is no way to express it. But if you want to express, then the word that comes closest to God is "love'. Even that is just approximate, but very close. And the word "God' has become associated with wrong people, with wrong notions. In fact, many people feel offended the moment you utter the word "God'. I have no attachment to that word; you can drop it.
But remember love; I cannot tell you to drop that, because without love you will never reach God. Without God you can love, and God is bound to come in whether you know or not, whether you believe in God or not. Belief is not a requirement: love is an absolute necessity, a must.
Sudharma, you have heard me say God is love. Experience it, and then all fear will disappear. And start dropping the priests and the centuries of wrong conditioning. They have made you afraid.

In fact, priests are the enemies of God, because the more people are afraid of God, the less is the possibility of their knowing God ever -- because fear is a wall, not a bridge. Love is a bridge, not a wall. Of course, fear helps the priests to live and exploit you, but it deprives you of God. Priests are in the service of the Devil. If there is somebody like a Devil, then priests are in HIS service; they are not in the service of God.
That's why so many religions are there, yet the earth remains irreligious, utterly irreligious; so many temples and so many churches and mosques, and yet you don't see the fragrance of religion. You don't see people's faces full of grace, their eyes full of silence, their feet dancing, their lives showing that God is. They may say that they believe in God, but their life says something else, totally different. Their life shows absolute irreligiousness; dishonesty, inauthenticity, insincerity, hate, anger, greed -- nothing of prayer, nothing of love, nothing of compassion, nothing of meditativeness.
Sudharma, meditate, love -- and forget the priests, drive them out of your being. You are suffering from hang-ups.

The fourth question:
Question 4
BELOVED MASTER,
WHAT IS THE DEFINITION OF A PESSIMIST?

Shivananda, a pessimist is an optimist who has become frustrated with his optimism. He hoped too much and failed, he dreamed too much and could not achieve anything substantial.

The pessimist is an optimist standing on his head; they are not different fellows -- that's what I want to make clear to you. Unless you have been an optimist you can never be a pessimist. First you have to become an optimist.

And each child is brought up with great optimism. All parents think that they have great children. Ask any mother: she thinks she has the unique child; the most superior, rare, incomparable. Each mother brags about the child. Parents bring up children with great optimism that they are going to be Alexander the Greats or Jesus Christs or Gautam Buddhas.

But slowly slowly life proves just the contrary. Slowly slowly, the child becomes aware of his ordinariness. He becomes aware that these great dreams, that these great ambitions, cannot be fulfilled. And by the time one is coming closer to forty, forty-two, pessimism starts settling -- gloom, darkness....

Now medical science is aware that most heart attacks happen nearabout forty to forty-four, between those four years. Most people go mad between those four years, forty to forty-four. Psychologists, psychoanalysts, are aware that that is the most dangerous time. If you can remain sane beyond forty-four, that means you will remain sane. But many people fall flat.

And don't think that if you are sane even beyond forty-four... that does not mean that you are very intelligent. It may only be that you are very dull and it takes a long time for you to understand. It may only be that you are very insensitive. It may only be that you are foolhardy, that you don't listen to life, what life is saying, that you go on hoping.

But sooner or later, a person starts feeling that life has gone down the drain. Optimism turns sour and becomes pessimism. Optimism, that hopefulness, turns upside-down; a hopelessness settles in. Then everything looks dark and dismal. First you used to count the roses, now you start counting the thorns. First you used to say, "How beautiful this roseflower and what a miracle! It grows amongst thousands of thorns." You were poetic, you had some aesthetic sense; you still believed that life is going to be a fulfillment.

But soon the day comes when the roses start fading away and you start counting the thorns, and you cannot believe in the roses anymore. You start saying, "It is impossible! The rose must be a dream, the rose must be MAYA, illusion, hallucination. How is it possible amongst thousands of thorns, how is a rose possible?" It looks contradictory, it looks illogical, it cannot happen in the nature of things. You start counting nights; before, you used to count days. The optimist says, "There are two days, and between two days just a small night to rest." And the pessimist counts the nights; he says, "There are two long nights -- nightmares, ugly dreams, tortures -- and just a small day sandwiched between the two." Life is the same: you can count the days or you can count the nights. If you count the days you are an optimist, if you count the nights you are a pessimist, but there is really no difference.

The optimist can become a pessimist, the pessimist can become an optimist. They are not contraries; they are two points on the same spectrum.

One has to go beyond both, Shivananda. A sannyasin has to go beyond both -- neither hope nor hopelessness. No need

to count days, no need to count nights. Be a watcher! No need to count thorns, no need to count roses. Be a watcher....
I don't teach you optimism. In the West it is very fashionable nowadays; it is called "positive thinking." That is a new name for optimism; the old name has become a little too out of fashion, out-of-date. The new name is positive thinking. I don't teach you positive thinking, because positive thinking carries the negative in its wake. I teach you transcendence -- neither positive nor negative. Be a watcher: witness both. When there is day, witness the day, and when there is night, witness the night -- and don't get identified with either. You are neither the day nor the night; you are the transcendental consciousness. Become more and more centered there in that transcendence.
True religion is not positive, nor is it negative. It is neither via negativa nor via positiva; it is via transcendence.

One September morning after Labor Day, Levin and Ostrow met for lunch. They had not seen each other for several months.
"I have just lived through a summer I never thought I would see," said Levin. "June was a disaster -- never have I seen a June like that. When July came, I realized that June was terrific, because with July I went right into the cellar. July was so bad...."
"For heaven's sake!" interrupted Ostrow. "Why are you coming to me with these piddling matters? You wanna hear real trouble? I got it. Yesterday my only son came home, told me he is gonna marry another fella. My boy is a homosexual! What could be worse than that?"

"I will tell you," said Levin, "August!"

Just wait! There are people who are continuously looking for the negative -- and if you look for the negative you will find it, because the negative is there in the same proportion as the positive. If you look for the positive, you will find the positive. But by finding the positive you cannot destroy the negative; the negative is there, side by side. They are always together like negative and positive poles of electricity. You can't have electricity with one pole, you will need both.
Life needs both: thorns and roses, days and nights, happiness/unhappiness, birth/death.
Be a witness to it all and you will know something that is beyond birth, beyond death; something that is beyond darkness and beyond light; something that is beyond happiness, beyond unhappiness. Buddha has called it peace, nirvana.

The last question:
Question 5
BELOVED MASTER,
I CANNOT TRUST ANYBODY. WHY?

Sargam, I will just tell you a story. Meditate over it.
The hired boy gets the youngest girl in the farmer's family to go out into the hayloft with him. She comes back and tells her sister, "Say, the hired boy sure knows some good tricks!"
The sister goes out to the hayloft too, and comes back saying the same, followed by the mother, and finally the

farmer himself who has heard his wife's remark that, "The hired boy certainly knows some tricks."
When the boy sees the farmer coming, he thinks fast and begins doing cartwheels and acrobatic tricks all over the walls of the barn. The farmer watches him and then goes back and tells his assembled wife and daughters, "Guess you are right. That boy sure knows some fancy tricks."
"God almighty!" cry the wife and daughters. "Did he fuck you too?"

Sargam, meditate over it. If you can't trust anybody that means you must be deceiving others. It is not a question of others, it is a question of you. You must be deceiving, and if you are deceiving, how can you trust? You can trust only if you allow others to trust you.
It is better to be deceived than to deceive, because if you deceive, you lose the greatest treasure of your life: you lose the capacity to trust. And let me repeat: the capacity to trust is the greatest treasure of life, because without it neither love is possible, nor prayer is possible, nor God is possible.
Enough for today.
The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 4
Chapter #3
Chapter title: Be quick to do good
24 August 1979 am in Buddha Hall

BE QUICK TO DO GOOD.
IF YOU ARE SLOW,
THE MIND, DELIGHTING IN MISCHIEF,
WILL CATCH YOU.

TURN AWAY FROM MISCHIEF.
AGAIN AND AGAIN, TURN AWAY,
BEFORE SORROW BEFALLS YOU.

SET YOUR HEART ON DOING GOOD.
DO IT OVER AND OVER AGAIN,
AND YOU WILL BE FILLED WITH JOY.

A FOOL IS HAPPY
UNTIL HIS MISCHIEF TURNS AGAINST HIM.
AND A GOOD MAN MAY SUFFER
UNTIL HIS GOODNESS FLOWERS.

DO NOT MAKE LIGHT OF YOUR FAILINGS,
SAYING, "WHAT ARE THEY TO ME?"
A JUG FILLS DROP BY DROP.
SO THE FOOL BECOMES BRIMFUL OF FOLLY.

DO NOT BELITTLE YOUR VIRTUES,
SAYING, "THEY ARE NOTHING."
A JUG FILLS DROP BY DROP.
SO THE WISE MAN BECOMES BRIMFUL OF VIRTUE.

Once I was staying in Varanasi. A professor of the Hindu university came to see me. He asked me, "Do you believe in hell?"
I said, "I don't need to believe in hell, because hell IS. Belief is needed when you don't see something as existent.

Hell is so existential, hell is so much, so much present, there is no need to believe in it."
He said, "Where is it?"
I told him, "You live in it! You are born in it, you breathe in it, you will die in it -- if you don't make great effort to get out of it."

Man is oblivious of the hell because he is born in it. It is all over the place; he is surrounded by it. Like a fish in the ocean, man lives in hell. The fish also never becomes aware of the ocean unless she is thrown out of the ocean by some accident or is caught by someone. Once separated from the ocean, for the first time the fish comes to know that she has been in the ocean all along.
Unless you know something of paradise you will never become aware that you have been living in hell -- not only living in hell but creating it, helping it to be there, feeding it, strengthening it. You are its creator and you live in the world you create, and you can't live in any other world. The only place to live is the place that you create around yourself. And that which you create around yourself first has to exist at the center of your being; only then can it become the circumference.
The hell exists first at the center of your being, then it spreads, becomes a circumference. First it exists in you, as you, then it becomes your relationship, your world.
Hell is not something geographical; it is something psychological. Hell is another name of a diseased mind, of a mind in anguish, turmoil, of a mind suffering nightmares, of a mind living basically in unconsciousness. The

unconscious mind is what hell is all about, and the conscious mind is going beyond the hell.

Don't believe in the old children's stories that hell is somewhere else; that too is a strategy of the mind to postpone. The mind always tries to postpone; it uses all methods, ways, and means to postpone things. It says, "Yes, hell is deep down below the earth, far far away. You need not worry -- it happens only after death. Right now, there is no question about it, no need to waste time about it. At the time of death, you can decide where to go. If you remember God you will go into heaven, if you don't remember God you will go into hell."

And then you are living as if hell is somewhere else. It is herenow. ALL is herenow, hell and heaven both.

A buddha lives in heaven. He walks along with you, he sits amidst you. He lives on this earth, in this very body, but for him it is a totally different experience. This very body the buddha, this very earth the lotus paradise -- that is HIS experience. That is the experience of all the buddhas, of all the awakened ones.

But for you it is just a dream, a fiction, a mythology. For you: this very body the hell, this very earth the fire of hell. You can't see the lotus paradise -- you don't have the eyes to see it. Those eyes have to be created; those eyes are not given by birth. Only the potential is there; you have to grow them, you have to endeavor to achieve them, you have to become them. The seed is there but you have to find the right soil. And the basic strategy of the mind is to keep you deluded, to tell you that hell and heaven are all beyond, somewhere else.

The function of the master is to bring you here and now again and again. The mind tries to slip. There are two possibilities for the mind to get away from the herenow: either to move in the past, in the memories -- the golden past and those golden days of Rama and Krishna, those beautiful days -- or to move into the future, into some utopia, when there will be a classless society on the earth or there will be a paradise somewhere far away beyond the clouds. But it keeps you away from the present moment. And the present moment is the only reality there is; there is no other moment. It is always present.

The past is no more, the future not yet. Whatsoever is, is the present. And mind takes you away from it in a thousand and one ways. It is always going on trips. The mind can only exist either in the past or in the future; the mind cannot exist in the present. Let this sink deep in your heart: the mind cannot exist in the present. If you are utterly herenow, the mind disappears and with the disappearance of the mind, there is no hell.

The disappearance of the mind is what paradise is: to live in the present, without the mind. It does not mean to live in the present absentmindedly. When I say "without the mind" I don't mean absentmindedly -- just the contrary! To live consciously is to live without mind, to live without thoughts, but with great alertness. And you can live with great alertness only when thoughts have been dropped, because the energy involved in the thoughts is released, is available. You become overflowing with energy. Then you have a tremendous vitality, intensity, passion. Your life is not lukewarm; your life is such a flame that just to be for a

single moment is enough. A single moment of that conscious intensity is longer than eternity itself.
These sutras of Buddha are simple but immensely helpful for the seeker.

BE QUICK TO DO GOOD.

Mind will tell you continuously, "Postpone it. There is always tomorrow. Why be in such a hurry? You can do it tomorrow." And the tomorrow never comes. The person who postpones any good act for tomorrow is postponing it forever; he will never be able to do it. If you postpone it today, you are learning a habit of postponing. Today you say, "Tomorrow." You are creating a pattern of life, a style of life. Tomorrow will come as today again and the habit will say, "We will do it tomorrow."

I have heard an ancient parable:
A man worshipped God for many many years, and one day God appeared to him.
He asked only for one thing. He said, "Give me something -- that's why I have been worshipping you -- something which can fulfill all my wishes. Whatsoever I ask should be fulfilled, immediately."
God gave him a seashell, a beautiful seashell, and he said, 'You ask anything from this seashell and immediately, instantly, it will be fulfilled."
He tried -- it was so. He was immensely happy. He asked for a big palace and it was there. He asked for beautiful women and they were there, and he asked for good food and it was there. Since that day he lived in absolute luxury.

But one day everything got disturbed. A sannyasin, a wandering monk, stayed with the man. The wandering monk said to him, "I have heard about your secret, but that is nothing. I have also worshipped God, far longer than you, and you are a householder, I am a monk -- of course he was more gracious to me. He has also given me a big seashell. Look at this seashell. This is double the size of your seashell."

It was. And the monk said, "Whatsoever you ask, the seashell gives you double. If you ask for one palace it makes two palaces for you. It always gives you double."

Man's greed is such that the man became greedy. Now one seashell was enough; he could have asked twice or thrice, there was no problem. But a greedy man is blind -- greed IS blind. He became infatuated.

He told the monk, "You are a monk, you have renounced the world, give your seashell to me and you can have my small seashell. For your purposes that is enough. I am a householder."

So the seashells were exchanged. Early in the morning, after taking the bath, the man worshipped and asked the seashell to give him one lakh rupees. The seashell said, "Why one lakh? I can give you two lakhs!"

The man was immensely happy. He said, "Good, give me two lakhs."

The seashell said, "Why two lakhs? I can give you four lakhs."

Now the man was a little puzzled, disturbed. He said, "Okay, give me four lakhs."

The seashell said, "I will give you eight lakhs."

And so on, so forth it went on -- but nothing was given! Promises and promises... and whatsoever he asked, the promise was doubled. He rushed to catch hold of the monk because in the morning, early morning, he was to leave. He had already left....

This is a beautiful parable. That's how mind functions: the seashell of the monk -- tricky. It always goes on giving you great promises, but tomorrow, not today. And tomorrow never comes. And, slowly slowly, hoping becomes your very life, just hoping and waiting. And death comes... and no hope is ever fulfilled.

Mind is very much afraid of doing good. Why is mind afraid of doing good? For two reasons. One: to do good is nonnourishing to the mind; mind is nourished by doing evil, by doing bad. For example, if you say no, mind is strengthened; if you say yes, mind is not strengthened. Hence mind is never interested in saying yes to anything. Mind is basically atheistic. It enjoys saying no; no is its power. Negativity is its food; it eats negativity. Positivity is its death.

Try to say no and you start feeling powerful. Whenever you say no, whenever you can manage to say no, you feel powerful. Whenever you have to say yes you feel humiliated, as if something has been done against yourself. To say a total yes is to destroy the mind totally, and to remain in a total no is to remain in the mind, in the ego. The ego is another name of the mind. The ego is the center of the mind; nonego is the center of your being. At the very core of being there is no idea of "I"; but in the center of the mind, I, I, I.... The only noise that goes on is that of the ego.

The more you say no, the more you can feel your ego. "No" defines your ego.
Watch -- and you will see the facticity of what I am saying. I am not propounding any theory; it is a simple statement of a fact of life. Observe -- it is not a question of believing or not believing -- observe and you will know. Say yes, feel yes, and suddenly there is no ego.
The greatest good is saying yes to existence and life. That's what religion is. And the greatest no is saying no to God, to life, to existence; that gives you great power, but power to the ego.
In fact, the ego is so cunning, the mind is so clever, that even religious people are deceived by it. Religious people go on saying no to life. They try to say yes to God, but the mind persuades them, "How can you say yes to God unless and until you have said no to life? Say no to life!"
That's how the idea of renunciation arose: "Say no to your wife, your husband, your children. Say no to your family, say no to your society, say no to the world. Turn your back towards the world and escape into the Himalayas. Only then can you say yes to God."
The cunning mind goes on deceiving even the so-called religious. Even the so-called saints and mahatmas are nothing but playthings in the hands of the ego. Ego is very subtle, very cunning; clever are its ways. Unless you are very intelligent you will not be able to get out of its clutches. You will get out from one point and it will catch hold of you from another point. You will throw it from the front door, it will come from the back door.
The so-called saint feels greatly satisfied as far as the ego is concerned: he is a saint, he is holy; "holier-than-thou" is

written all over his face. You will not find greater egoists anywhere than you will find in the monasteries. The popes and the SHANKARACHARYAS, the priests, those who have renounced everything, naturally they feel great, egoistic. They have renounced the world -- what have YOU done? They have renounced money, power, prestige. But all this renunciation is nothing but a very clever game of the mind.

The truly religious person is one who says yes to life because life is God's, who says yes to the earth because the earth is part of heaven, who says yes to the body because the body is only a shelter for the soul. And a beautiful shelter it is, a beautiful home it is, a beautiful servant it is. The really religious person knows how to say yes to all. His yes brings transcendence, his yes brings egolessness, his yes brings a state of no-mind.

Look at it from another angle: if you say no, mind has immediately much to do. If you say no, you will have to find arguments to support your no. No means arguments, no means logic. The more you say no, the more you have to be argumentative. If you say yes, there is no need for any argument. Yes is a full stop; no is only a beginning of a logical process. The person who says no becomes more and more argumentative. The person who knows how to say yes to life, love, existence, becomes less and less argumentative.

And to be less and less argumentative is to be more harmonious; to be more and more argumentative is to be more and more quarrelsome, violent. Argument simply means your mind is in a discord; no argument means the mind has attained a deep harmony. And out of that deep

harmony is good; out of inner discord is evil. You do bad because you are divided. Whenever you are undivided, good starts happening through you; not that you have to do it -- it starts happening.

Buddha says: BE QUICK TO DO GOOD.

Why "be quick" -- do it immediately? Mind will say, "Tomorrow. Wait. Let us think about it." And thinking never comes to any conclusion, remember; thinking has never come to any conclusion. Ten thousand years of philosophizing and there is not a single conclusion in philosophy. They have not arrived at any truth; they are still continuing. The same arguments go on being repeated in different forms and different ways, and philosophy goes on moving in a vicious circle. The philosopher remains inconclusive, and to remain inconclusive your whole life means not to live at all.

Life is possible only out of decisiveness, out of commitment, involvement; otherwise you are always a spectator, you never participate in anything. How can you participate unless logically you prove to yourself, to your heart's content, that this is so?

It is said about Immanuel Kant, a great philosopher, that a woman had asked him that she would be immensely happy if he would accept her as his wife. She had to gather much courage to ask this, because Immanuel Kant was not a romantic person at all, very unromantic, absolutely unromantic. His life was not a life of spontaneity; he is an example of a mechanical life. His whole life he followed a certain routine religiously.

At ten o'clock in the night he would go to bed; that means exactly ten, not one minute before, not one minute after. His servant... he had only one servant. Who else would agree to live with such a person? -- only a servant. His family deserted him; he was so mechanical, such a drain, such a drag on the whole family. The servant used to simply tell him the time -- not "Now go to sleep"; he would simply come and declare, "It is ten o'clock," and that was it. He would jump immediately into his bed. Even if there were visitors, he would not even say goodbye to them. He would go into the bed, under his blanket, and the servant would declare to the visitors, "Now you go please. He has gone to sleep."

At exactly five o'clock he had to be dragged out of the bed. Sometimes it was too cold and he was too tired, but the routine had to be followed -- even if he was ill, the routine had to be followed. The servant was told that maybe sometimes he will feel weak, tempted to sleep a little longer, but he is not to listen. He has to be dragged out, even against his will. Even if he is saying, "No, I want to sleep," the servant has to pull him out. It sometimes used to be a fight, a quarrel. The servant had to beat him to bring him out of the bed -- that was his duty.

The woman must have been rare! -- but you can always find crazy people everywhere. She must have been crazy to fall in love with this man. This man was not a man but a machine. And do you know what Immanuel Kant did? He listened to her and he said, "I will think it over." And he thought for three years! -- all the pros and all the cons. He wrote a long long treatise, what are the advantages of being married and what are the disadvantages. And finally he

arrived at a very poor conclusion, almost not a conclusion at all. There was one point more in favor, and that was the point that by being married you will know what marriage is -- good or bad -- that you will know. That much is more in favor.

So he went, knocked on the woman's door. The father opened the door and asked, "Why have you come?"

He said, "I have decided, because one point more is in favor. There are three hundred points in all: three hundred against, three hundred and one for -- so I have decided to marry."

The father laughed. He said, "It is too late. She is already married -- and not only married, she has a child too! You came a little late."

But that's how philosophers function. I even wonder that he could reach a conclusion within three years. It is a miracle -- philosophers never come to any conclusion. It must have been a very nonphilosophic moment in which he arrived at the conclusion.

Ten thousand years of history is enough proof: philosophy remains inconclusive. Philosophy knows only how to question -- no answers. Each answer in its turn becomes ten more questions.

The mind is very happy to argue, to think. The mind is very unhappy to conclude, because once you conclude, mind is not needed. Conclusion means the death of the mind. If you have concluded about the ultimate truth, the mind has to commit suicide.

The mind is very much afraid of saying yes and the mind is very much afraid of doing good, because the good can be

done only in a state of egolessness. The good is a by-product of a state of no-mind. Try to understand it -- and when I say try to understand it I am not saying try to think it over. I am simply saying, listen from the heart, with a loving heart.

These sutras can be understood only by the heart. They have come out of the greatest heart that has lived on the earth, and they can be understood only by the heart.

BE QUICK TO DO GOOD. The mind is always quick in doing bad. If you want to be angry the mind never says, "Tomorrow," it says, "Do it right now." If you want to donate, if you want to give something to a poor man, the mind says, "Wait! First inquire whether he is really poor or he has a bank balance. And first look... he looks so healthy, why give to him?"

Mind is miserly in sharing anything; sharing is very difficult for the mind. It hoards, it collects; it becomes, slowly slowly, a junkyard. It can't leave anything -- useful, useless, it goes on collecting. Who knows, whatsoever is useless today may become useful tomorrow.

To do good means to share, to love, to serve, to be compassionate. And these are things which the miserly mind cannot do. But it will not say, "I don't want to do it," because that will not be very diplomatic. The diplomatic way is "tomorrow" -- postpone. Mind is a bureaucrat, and not an ordinary bureaucrat but a Russian bureaucrat.

I have heard:

At a disarmament conference in Geneva, an American delegate, stretching his legs under the table, accidentally

bumped the knee of a Russian lady interpreter sitting directly across from him. He smiled an apology.
The lady neither spoke nor smiled. She turned to the communist diplomat next to her and asked him something. The diplomat turned to his superior and whispered something to him. The chief then got up, left the table and went to the phone center. The meeting was recessed.
Two and a half hours later it was resumed. The ranking diplomat returned to the table, spoke to his assistant, who whispered something to the lady interpreter, who looked across at the American delegate and said, "Your place or mine?"

This is direct from the Kremlin! This is how bureaucracy works, and this is how mind functions. It says, "Wait, let me think it over." And then it goes on and on to no end, and meanwhile it keeps promising you, "Wait! Tomorrow you can do it."
But see: the same mind when it is a question of doing something wrong never tells you to postpone. It says, "Do it right now. Who knows about tomorrow? This man has insulted you -- hit him back, hit him hard! If a brick is thrown at you, answer with a rock!"
Gurdjieff remembers that when his grandfather was dying -- he was only nine years old -- the grandfather called him. He loved the boy very much and he told the boy, "I don't have much to give to you, but departing from the world I would like to give you something. I can only give you one piece of advice that has helped me; it was given to me by my father, and he was also dying when he gave it to me. I am dying. You are too young, you may not be able to

understand it right now, but remember, a day will come when you will understand. Whenever you find yourself capable of following my advice, follow it, and you will never be in misery. You can avoid the hell of life."

And what was the advice? Just this sutra -- not exactly in these words. He said to Gurdjieff, "Remember one thing: if you want to do any bad thing, postpone it for tomorrow; and if you want to do something good, do it immediately -- because postponement is a way of not doing. And bad has not to be done, and good has to be done. For example," the old man said, "if somebody insults you and you feel angry, enraged, tell him that you will come after twenty-four hours and answer him."

Gurdjieff remembers, "That advice transformed my whole life. Although I was too young, only nine years old, I tried it just out of curiosity. Some boy would insult me or would hurt me or would say something nasty, and I would remember my old dying grandfather and I would tell the boy, 'I will have to wait; I have promised an old man. After twenty-four hours I will answer you.'

"And it always happened," Gurdjieff remembers, "that either I would come to conclude that he was right, that whatsoever he had said LOOKED nasty but it was true about me.... He was saying, 'You are a thief,' and that is true, I am a thief. He was saying, 'You are insincere,' and that is true -- I am insincere." So he would go and thank the boy: "You pointed out something true about me. You brought up a true facet of my being which was not clear to me. You made me more conscious about myself. I am immensely grateful."

Or, after twenty-four hours' thinking, he would come to conclude that, "That man or that boy is absolutely wrong. It has nothing to do with me." Then there is no point in answer-ing; he would not go back to the boy. If something is utterly wrong, why become enraged? This is a big world, millions of people are there; you cannot go answering everybody, otherwise your whole life will be wasted. And there is no need either.
This is half of the story. If you can postpone the bad for tomorrow you will be able to do the good immediately. And you will never repent -- because if you do bad immediately, you will repent tomorrow; if you do good today you will never repent, there is no question of repentance. This is a simple secret of transforming the hell that you live in into a lotus paradise.

BE QUICK TO DO GOOD.
IF YOU ARE SLOW,
THE MIND, DELIGHTING IN MISCHIEF,
WILL CATCH YOU.

Don't be slow, be quick because mind is very quick; it moves faster than anything else. It moves faster than light! Physicists say nothing moves faster than light and of course, it seems impossible to move faster than light. Light moves one hundred and eighty-six thousand miles in one second -- in one second! But physicists have no idea of the mind yet. They don't yet have such sophisticated instruments to measure the speed of the mind.
Mind moves faster than light. You have to be VERY alert, otherwise mind is bound to ditch you somewhere. Before

you become alert, mind will have already taken you somewhere far away. Mind is always ready to go on a trip, because it is only in trips that it feels alive.

Meditation simply means sitting silently, doing nothing, not even thinking... and the mind disappears. Because you are not on any trip, the mind is no longer needed. Mind is a guide for great journeys. If you are going somewhere, mind is very happy; in your going somewhere the mind can feel enhanced. But if you are not going anywhere, just sitting silently, doing nothing, the mind feels very sad.

And it will happen almost always to meditators that when the mind feels sad, it starts creating boredom for you; that is a strategy of the mind. The mind is saying, "Come on! Let us go somewhere, let us do something. Why are you sitting? Just sitting doing nothing brings boredom!"

It is a trick of the mind! Otherwise, just sitting doing nothing will bring you more freshness. That's the experience of all the awakened ones -- but not yours. This is MY experience. In my room, what am I doing? Sitting silently, doing nothing... spring comes and the grass grows by itself. Nothing has to be done really -- the grass grows by itself. Life goes on by itself, life flows on by itself. You need not push the river.

But in the beginning mind will create boredom; boredom is the mind's trick. The mind is saying, "Look, if you don't follow me you will feel bored. If you don't follow me you will feel utterly meaningless. If you don't follow me you won't have anything to enjoy. Come, come with me and I will take you to great entertainments."

Mind is always bribing you by entertainments: put on the radio, put on the TV, go to the movie or at least to the club,

gossip -- do something. Boredom is a punishment from the mind to you if you are not doing anything. And the greatest problem for the meditator is boredom.

But if you can sit absolutely unconcerned about boredom -- let the boredom be there -- if you don't get disturbed by the boredom, within three to nine months' time the boredom will disappear. And instead of boredom there will come such a bubbling joy, such freshness, that you have never known before. And it is not entertainment because there is nothing: you are simply sitting in an absolute void. And out of that void, the plenitude, out of that void, a new kind of fulfillment....

BE QUICK TO DO GOOD. IF YOU ARE SLOW, THE MIND, DELIGHTING IN MISCHIEF, WILL CATCH YOU. The mind delights in mischief. Why? -- because that is the only way it can live. They say that you cannot write a story about a really good man because there will be nothing to write. A story can be written only about a bad man. It is not accidental that Buddha, Mahavira, Jesus, are not even mentioned in your history books. No ancient history mentions them. Why? There is nothing to mention! They never killed anybody, they never did any nuisance; they were \as if they were not. They were so good as if they never existed!

One of the names of Buddha is 'Tathagata'. TATHAGATA means: coming like a breeze, going like a breeze -- thus came, thus gone -- without disturbing anything, not even a dead leaf. A silent breeze slowly coming with no footsteps and then disappearing. Neither does the coming create any noise nor the going. It is as if you have drawn a line in water; you have not even made it and it has disappeared. It

is like birds flying in the sky: they don't leave any footprints.
But history is full of Genghis Khan, Tamerlane, Nadirshah, Alexander, Adolf Hitler, Mao Zedong. If you do more mischief there is more possibility of your name remaining in history. If you really want to be part of history, if you want to create history, do mischief. Politicians will remain in history because they are the greatest mischief-mongers. Mind is constantly in search of mischief; any opportunity and it cannot miss it. Even if there is no opportunity it will try to create an opportunity.

A doorbell rings at a whorehouse. The madam opens the door and sees a man there with no arms or legs.
"What are you doing at a place like this?" asks the madam.
The cripple looks at her and says, "I rang the doorbell, didn't I?"

No hands, no legs, but still he is ready to go to the whorehouse!

Berquist hid in the closet when Frank, the husband of his girlfriend, returned unexpectedly. While hanging up his coat, Frank spotted the Swede's balls between other garments.
"What the hell are those?" he asked his wife.
"Oh... eh... Christmas bells," she replied.
"Let us hear their peal," said the husband. He gave them a terrific whack with his fist.
A voice gasped, "Yingle, yangle! You sonofabitch!"

Just look at people's lives. Watch yourself, watch others. Become a watcher, and you will be surprised: everybody is in search of some opportunity. And opportunities are there. People are waiting only for opportunities. If they are not doing some evil, that does not mean that they are good people; it may only be that the opportunity is missing. That is my own observation.

When a politician is not in power he is a very good man, a public servant, humble; always ready to bow down and touch your feet; open hospitals and schools. And once he is in power, he is not even ready to recognize you and all that public service disappears. Once he is in power, he has opportunity; now he will do things that he always wanted to do but could not.

This has happened in this country in such a crystal-clear way as it has not happened anywhere else. Before independence, just thirty years ago, all these politicians who have become a nuisance to the country were great public servants, great servants of the country, freedom-fighters. They sacrificed much, they lived simple, humble, poor lives, for the freedom of the country. Their lives were an example to be followed, they were ideals; they were worshipped by the people.

And then came power -- and within seconds the whole thing changed. They became power-hungry, they became power-possessed. Their faces changed, their masks disappeared. Now the opportunity was there.

Lord Acton has said: Power corrupts. I agree and I don't agree. Yes, superficially it seems that power corrupts, but if you go deep into its analysis it is not power that corrupts -- the person has been corrupted always. Power only gives

opportunity; power cannot corrupt. If you are corrupted, then power gives you an opportunity to do that which you always wanted to do but were not able to do.
People think it is money that corrupts people. No, money simply gives opportunity. Poor people look so good; it is not so. Just let them become rich and then see... all their goodness disappears. In fact the newly rich people are far more dangerous than those who are born rich, because those who are born rich are accustomed to riches.

It is said about a prime minister of a king that he accumulated much wealth illegally, behind the king's back; that he became the richest man in the country. Then the king came to know about it.
He called the prime minister and he said, "You have served me well so I cannot punish you because of your services and your devotion, but you have been cheating and you have been accumulating illegal wealth. I will not punish you -- you please resign and leave my country and go wherever you want to go."
The prime minister said, "Before I leave I would like to suggest one thing. Now I have all that I need, in fact more than I need, if you appoint another man your prime minister, he will have to accumulate wealth again. He will harm you more. Now I need not harm you at all."
And it is said the king understood the point. He didn't throw the man out. He said, "That's right, you have already done whatsoever you could, so why bring a new person? And he will go through the whole process again, that is true."

Let a poor man become rich and then see what happens: all his simplicity is gone, all his humbleness is gone.

A man had a talking dog. One day when he was thirsty he went into a bar with his dog and made a bet with the bartender that if his dog could talk he would get a free beer. The bartender agreed, knowing that there was no such thing as a talking dog. He asked the dog what kind of beer his master liked.
"Budweiser," replied the dog, and the startled bartender paid up with the beer.
Then the three of them -- the man, the bartender, and the dog -- got caught up in an animated conversation. The dog ate peanuts while the men drank. At one point the bartender said that he had a headache but had run out of aspirins.
"Does your dog run errands?" he asked.
"Sure," replied the man. So the bartender gave the dog five dollars and sent him off to the store for some aspirins.
The dog didn't come back. The men waited and waited but as no dog came, his owner went out looking for him. He walked the city until he spied the dog in a dark back alley humping another dog.
"My God!" exclaimed the owner. "What the hell are you doing? This is the first time you have ever done this kind of thing!"
"I know," panted the still humping dog. "I have always wanted to, but I have never had the money before!"

It is not power that corrupts. Power brings your corrupted unconscious to the surface, power brings your intrinsic evil into action. Power exposes you, power does not corrupt

you. Power is a good thing in a way: it exposes people. It is like an X-ray: it shows your reality, your naked truth. THE MIND, DELIGHTING IN MISCHIEF, WILL CATCH YOU. Remember it: the mind is very quick. If you don't do good IMMEDIATELY -- the moment the idea of good arises in you, if you don't do it immediately, the mind is going to deceive you, to take you astray, to convince you to do something else.

Feingold immigrated to America and after many years of hard work became a very wealthy man. Now on his deathbed, with his wife Sarah standing by, he started to dispose of his worldly possessions.
"My Cadillac with the pushbutton-motorcycle-cop-detector I leave to my son, Sam."
"Better you should leave it to Joe," said his wife. "He is a better driver."
"Alright," he whispered. "My Rolls Royce I bequeath to my daughter, Linda."
"You better give it to your nephew, Willie," Sarah interrupted. "He is a very conservative driver."
"Alright, give it to Willie. My twelve-cylinder Jaguar I give to my niece, Sally."
"Personally, I think Judy should get it."
Feingold raised his head and shouted, "Sarah, please! Who is dying, you or me?"

If you wait, the mind is going to give you suggestions, "Do this, do that." Do the good immediately -- why wait? And who knows? -- the next moment will never come; this may be the last moment. Act as if this is going to be the last

moment! Act with that urgency, because death can overtake you any moment. Don't listen to the mind. Mind can go on and on postponing things and, before mind allows you to do anything, death may have knocked you down. Do good, because doing good immediately brings joy.

TURN AWAY FROM MISCHIEF.
AGAIN AND AGAIN, TURN AWAY,
BEFORE SORROW BEFALLS YOU.

Because if you do mischief, sorrow is going to follow you like a shadow. It is not that there is a God sitting somewhere who punishes you when you do something wrong; the wrong itself is the punishment, it carries its punishment intrinsically.

That's the whole idea behind the theory of karma. There is no need for any God to judge, to punish, to reward. And just think: if there was a God to judge every person and every person's every act and then dispose accordingly -- punishments to a few, rewards to others -- that kind of God would have gone mad long ago!

No, there is no God disposing rewards and punishments -- that idea is childish. There is a law, not a God, a law like gravitation. If you don't walk rightly, if you are too much drunk, you are bound to fall somewhere. Not that God orders, "Fall!" -- the law of gravitation is enough. If you don't walk rightly you are bound to fall. The law of gravitation takes care of it. If you walk alert, consciously, you don't suffer.

Exactly like that, karma is a scientific law: the law of action. Whatsoever you do has its intrinsic reward or

punishment. When you are angry, it is not that you will suffer in your next life. When you are angry, WHILE you are angry, you are suffering; there is no need for another life to give you punishment. While you are angry you are in a fire, you are poisoning your whole body, you are poisoning your whole system.
Anger is poison.
It may hurt the other, it may not -- it depends on the other -- but it is going to hurt you, certainly.
If you insult a buddha it is not going to hurt him, but before you can insult a buddha you will have to go through much inner turmoil.

A man came and spat on Buddha's face. Buddha wiped his face and asked the man, "Do you want to say something more, or is this all?"
Ananda, his disciple, became furious, naturally. This man comes, Buddha has not done anything to this man, and he spits on the master. Inconceivable! Ananda said to Buddha, "Bhagwan, just give me permission so that I can show this man. He needs to be punished!"
Buddha said, "Ananda, you have become a sannyasin, but you go on forgetting it. And that poor man has suffered already too much. Just look at his face, look at his eyes, bloodshot. Look at his body, trembling. And before spitting on me, do you think he would have been celebrating and dancing and singing? The whole night he has not slept; the whole night he was in an insane state. Spitting on me is just the outcome of that insanity. Feel compassion for the poor man. What more punishment? Is it not enough? And what harm has he done to me? I just had to wipe it. It's so simple.

And don't you get agitated, otherwise you are behaving foolishly. For his wrong, you are punishing yourself -- this is foolishness!"

See the point -- of tremendous significance. Buddha says, "HE has done something wrong. Why are YOU punishing yourself, Ananda? I can see you are boiling! If I were not here to prevent you, you would kill this man! You are getting insane in the same way he was insane."

That man listened to this whole dialogue. He was puzzled, perplexed; he was not expecting Buddha to behave in such a way. He was thinking he would be furious, angry; that's what he wanted. Failing in it he felt very humiliated. It was so unexpected, the compassion and the love that Buddha showed.

And Buddha said to him, "Go home, take a good rest. You are looking tired, you have punished yourself enough. Forget all about spitting -- it has not harmed me. How can it harm me? And this body is made of dust. Sooner or later, it will fall into dust and people will be walking on it, spitting on it, and all kinds of things will happen on this body. People will defecate, urinate.... You have not just done anything very dangerous. Go home, take a good rest."

The man went home. For the first time he was absolutely puzzled: so unexpected was the response of Buddha, he could not understand it. He cried, he wept. He came back by the evening, he fell at Buddha's feet, and he said, "Forgive me!"

Buddha said, "There is no question of me forgiving you, because I was not angry in the first place. How can I forgive you? But it is good -- you look more calm and quiet. I am happy. I cannot forgive you, sorry, because I

was not angry in the first place. But I am happy, tremendously happy, seeing that you have become reconciled, seeing that you have attained to a harmonious state, seeing that you are sane again. Go happily, and remember it: never do such acts again, because that's how you go on creating hell for yourself."

TURN AWAY FROM MISCHIEF. AGAIN AND AGAIN, TURN AWAY, BEFORE SORROW BEFALLS YOU.
Many many times the mind will suggest to you, "Do this, do that." Many many times you are bound to forget. Many many times you will not be able to remember what Buddha has said, what I am saying to you. So you will have to remember again and again. Slowly slowly the remembrance will settle, will become a light in your being. Then you will not be expected to remember; it will be simply there. It will fall on your path as a beam of light. It will show you the way; it will help you to avoid the pitfalls. And once remembering settles deep inside you and mischief becomes impossible, evil becomes impossible, and good becomes natural, spontaneous, you have entered into the lotus paradise.
It is not somewhere else -- it is here. It is a change of your attitude, of your vision. Nothing else changes in the world, everything remains the same, but you are no longer the same. Not that you are transported to another world -- the same world continues, but your vision is no longer the same. You look at the same things in a new way, with a new style. That style is sannyas, that way is sannyas.

SET YOUR HEART ON DOING GOOD.

DO IT OVER AND OVER AGAIN,
AND YOU WILL BE FILLED WITH JOY.

Shift your consciousness from the head to the heart. Mind wants to do mischief, it lives out of mischief; and the heart wants to do good, it lives, nourishes through it.
SET YOUR HEART ON DOING GOOD. Notice the difference! Now he is not saying set your MIND on doing good. Mind cannot be set on doing good; even if you try to do good through the mind you will do evil, you will do bad. It is not within the capacity of the mind to do good.

You can see it happening all over the world. The scientists wanted to do good; that's why they worked for years, researched, and found the source of atomic energy. Albert Einstein wanted to do good. He wrote a letter to the American president, Roosevelt, saying that "Now atomic energy is available and atomic bombs can be made. And just by making atom bombs America will be so powerful that there will be no need to fight. Just the power will be enough -- enemies will become so afraid that Hitler and Tojo and Mussolini will surrender on their own accord." This is what a logical mind thinks. But life does not follow logic, life does not follow mind. Albert Einstein repented his whole life, because deep down he felt he was responsible for Hiroshima and Nagasaki. He had written the letter... and the politicians immediately jumped on the discovery. And once the power reached into the politicians' hands, they didn't care; then they would not listen to Albert Einstein. Then who cares? -- now the power is in their hands.

And do you know, in fact, those who specialize in war matters say that Nagasaki and Hiroshima were not needed at all. Japan was going to surrender within a week; it was only a question of one week more. And if you had tolerated the war for years, what was the hurry? But America wanted to show its power to the world.
Politicians are very juvenile, childish. In fact, if a person is not juvenile and childish he will not be a politician in the first place. When you have something, you want to show it to the world; otherwise what is the point of having it? One hundred thousand people were killed in Hiroshima within five seconds, for no other reason than to show the world that America has the atom bomb.
Albert Einstein lived and died in deep repentance. When he was dying somebody asked, "If God is going to give you another chance, what are you going to do, what are you are going to be? Would you again be a scientist, a physicist, so that you can continue your incomplete work?"
Einstein opened his eyes and said, "No, never! Rather than being a physicist I would like to be a plumber. Enough is enough!"

Science is a mind endeavor, mind effort; hence science has created great power. But the power is turning against man himself. Science has destroyed the whole ecology, it has destroyed the whole planet. It is destroying man -- and in the name of good! And scientists think they are great servants of humanity, they are helping humanity to grow, evolve, to become more and more powerful. They are simply creating a situation in which this planet will become almost impossible to live on. They are creating a situation

where the whole humanity can commit suicide. They can destroy this whole planet... because the whole effort is out of the mind.

We need science which is rooted in the heart and not in the mind. We need a totally different kind of science which is rooted in meditation and not in concentration. We need a totally new quality to science: the quality of religion. Unless science has the flavor of religion, meditativeness, love, unless it arises out of the heart, it is not going to become a blessing to humanity or to the world. It is going to be a curse -- notwithstanding what the scientists think they are doing. They think they are doing great work, great humanitarian work. They are sacrificing their lives for the sake of humanity. And I am not saying that they are insincere people -- they are sincere people, but their orientation is wrong.

Buddha immediately changes the word. First he uses the word 'mind'. Now he says: SET YOUR HEART ON DOING GOOD. DO IT OVER AND OVER AGAIN, AND YOU WILL BE FILLED WITH JOY.

Joy is a by-product just as sorrow is a by-product. Sorrow follows like a shadow when you do something wrong and joy follows like a shadow when you do something good. Let these be the criteria. If you are in misery, remember -- you must be doing something wrong.

But people are very cunning, their minds are very cunning. If you are in misery the mind says, "Others are doing wrong to you, that's why you are in misery." It is not so -- NOBODY can make you miserable. Yes, they can kill you, but nobody can make you miserable. You can kill me but you cannot make me miserable. I will die in the same

blissful state in which I am living. There will be no difference at all. You can poison me but you cannot poison my consciousness. You can destroy the body -- which is going to be destroyed anyway sooner or later -- but you cannot destroy ME. That is beyond destruction.
Nobody can make you miserable and nobody can make you blissful. It all depends on you, it depends totally on you. You are responsible for your misery and you are responsible for your joy. Take this responsibility, accept this responsibility. To accept this responsibility totally, one hundred percent, is to become a religious person, is to be initiated into what I call religion.
The politician always throws the responsibility on the other and the religious person takes the responsibility totally upon his own shoulders.

A FOOL IS HAPPY
UNTIL HIS MISCHIEF TURNS AGAINST HIM.
AND A GOOD MAN MAY SUFFER
UNTIL HIS GOODNESS FLOWERS.

To remind you, Buddha says that sometimes you may see a mischievous person very happy, and vice versa: sometimes you may see a good man very unhappy. But don't be deceived by the appearances. A FOOL IS HAPPY UNTIL HIS MISCHIEF TURNS AGAINST HIM.
It takes a little time. If you sow the seeds, it will take a little time for them to grow and bring fruit. Evil may taste sweet in the beginning but always proves to be poisonous in the end. And the good act may not appear so sweet in the beginning because it takes time for it to flower, it takes a

little time for it to release its fragrance, but in the end it is always sweet.

Buddha has said: If you see a mischievous person happy, just wait a little; soon, sooner or later, you will see that he has dug a grave for himself. And if you find a good man in misery, don't be worried: it is just the uphill task. When you are moving uphill it is a little difficult, arduous; you perspire, you feel tired, but once you have reached the top you can relax and rest.

But fools go on thinking that they are happy because of their mischief. You will be surprised to know that people are very unintelligent in looking into the deep causes of their lives.

In a primitive tribe in Africa, even up to now it is believed that the birth of a child has nothing to do with lovemaking, with intercourse -- because the gap is nine months. For centuries they have been giving birth to children, but they have not connected the cause and effect yet. They think the child is born because of God's grace or the religious ritual that the priest has done on their behalf. When they came to know for the first time that the whole world thinks differently, they laughed; they thought the whole world foolish. What does lovemaking have to do with childbirth? -- because every time you make love you don't get a child. It looks logical! And you make love today and the child comes after nine months -- and those primitive people don't have any calendar yet, any clock; they cannot count time. Nine months is incalculable; they don't know how much time has passed, so they have never been able to connect cause with effect.

And this is the situation about evil and its absolutely inevitable result, sorrow. You may do evil today, and it is very good and everything looks beautiful, and you can't see any bad thing resulting out of it. And deep down you know all these buddhas are wrong -- where is the law of karma? Many times people come to me and they say, "We see that evil people are prosperous. Why? And we also see that good people are suffering. Why? That is proof enough that there is no God, that is proof enough that there is no law of karma. That is proof enough that might is right, whosoever is powerful is right." It is not so. Just one needs a little patience. But fools have their own logic -- foolishness has its own logic, remember.

Gilligan, Frizzoli and Lieberman were telling how they were mistaken for great men.
The Irishman said, "I was walking along the street and a fella yelled, 'Hello, Saint Patrick!'"
The Italian said, "That's nothing. I was standing on a corner, a man passed and said, 'Hello, Mussolini!'"
"That's nothing," said the Jew. "As I walked across the park this morning, a policeman yelled at me, 'Jesus Christ, get off the grass!'"

The fool has his own logic. In fact the fool may be more logical -- at least appear more logical -- than the wise man, because the wise man will be paradoxical.
Buddha says: Remember that it takes a little time for seeds to grow into sprouts, become trees. Wait for the spring, and then the flowers come.

A FOOL IS HAPPY UNTIL HIS MISCHIEF TURNS AGAINST HIM. It always turns against the fool, it is BOUND to turn. It is a natural law, it cannot be avoided, you cannot escape it.

Zimmerman, on a business trip to Tokyo, was having lunch with a Japanese friend.
"You Americans don't know how to make love," said the Oriental. "In Japan we go to bed with wife, begin to make love; after a few minutes we stop, get up for cup of hot tea. Then go back to bed, make love for ten minutes, then get up and have a bowl of rice. Then make love some more, get up, take bath together. Then we finally finish the act."
Two weeks later, back in Brooklyn, Zimmerman got into bed with his wife and began making love to her. Suddenly he stopped and said, "Let us have a glass of tea."
"Are you crazy?" she said.
"Come on," he insisted. Soon they were back in bed and after a little while he stopped and said, "Now we are gonna have a pastrami sandwich."
"Are you nuts?" exclaimed his spouse.
They got back into bed and after a few minutes Zimmerman said, "Now we are gonna take a bath together."
When they finished the Jewish couple went back to the bedroom and wound up their lovemaking.
"Well," said Zimmerman, "what did you think of that?"
"Wonderful," replied his wife. "But where did you learn to screw like a Jap?"

You can go on believing that you are very wise but if you are a fool, you are a fool. Your belief is going to be destroyed sooner or later by life itself. Life knows no exceptions. And this is one of the most fundamental laws. AES DHAMMO SANANTANO -- this is the eternal law: that the evil person is bound to suffer sooner or later, and it is going to be sooner rather than later; and the good man is going to be blessed by all the blessings of existence.

DO NOT MAKE LIGHT OF YOUR FAILINGS,
SAYING, "WHAT ARE THEY TO ME?"
A JUG FILLS DROP BY DROP.
SO THE FOOL BECOMES BRIMFUL OF FOLLY.

Don't make light of your failings. Don't say, "This is a small thing. Just a small thing can't be of much consequence." But drop by drop you can create the whole ocean! The ocean is nothing but an accumulation of drops, so you have to be aware in each single act; in all the details of your life you have to be alert and aware.

DO NOT BELITTLE YOUR VIRTUES,
SAYING, "THEY ARE NOTHING."
A JUG FILLS DROP BY DROP.
SO THE WISE MAN BECOMES BRIMFUL OF VIRTUE.

Remember, life consists of small things, there are no big things. Small things accumulated become big things. A single act may not look very significant either as evil or as good. A single smile may not look very significant, but a

single smile is part of a long process. A single flower is not the garland, certainly, but there will be no garland if there are not single flowers put together.
Do not belittle your failures, do not belittle your good acts. Each and every act is significant: if it is bad you are going to suffer; if it is good you are going to enjoy life. And to enjoy life is the only way to know that God is. It is only in blissfulness that the proof comes that God is. There is no logical proof for God, but when you are overflowing with joy, when you can dance with joy, in that dance a gratitude arises on its own accord. A thankfulness, a prayer, is born, and in that prayer you are reborn. In that prayer not only are you reborn, God is born too.
Life consists of small things, and you have to transform each small thing through your awareness, watchfulness, alertness, into a beautiful act. Then ordinary things can become extraordinary.

A Zen monk was asked, "What did you use to do before you became enlightened?"
He said, "I used to chop wood and carry water from the well."
And then he was asked, "What do you do now you have become enlightened?"
He said, "I chop wood and carry water from the well."
The questioner was puzzled. He said, "There seems to be no difference then."
The master said, "The difference is in me. The difference is not in my acts, the difference is in me -- but because I have changed, all my acts have changed. Their significance has changed: the prose has become poetry, the stones have

become sermons, and matter has completely disappeared. Now there is only God and nothing else. Life now is liberation to me, it is nirvana."

Enough for today.
The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 4
Chapter #4
Chapter title: Truth is very simple
25 August 1979 am in Buddha Hall

The first question:
Question 1
BELOVED MASTER,
WHAT DOES ENLIGHTENMENT FEEL LIKE?

Prem Geetam, enlightenment is not a thought nor a feeling. In fact, enlightenment is not an experience at all. When all experiences have disappeared and the mirror of consciousness is left without any content, utterly empty; no object to see, to think about, to feel; when there is no content around you; the pure witness remains -- that is the state of enlightenment.
It is difficult, almost impossible, to describe it. If you say it feels blissful, it gives a wrong meaning to it -- because bliss is something contrary to misery and enlightenment is not contrary to anything. It is not even silence, because silence has meaning only when there is sound; without the contrast of sound there is no experience of silence. And there is no sound, there is no noise. It is not the experience of one,

because what can "one" mean when only one is left? One can have meaning only in comparison with the other, with many. It is not light because it is not darkness. It is not sweet because it is not bitter.

No human word is adequate to express it, because all human words are rooted in duality... and enlightenment is a transcendence; all duality left behind.

That's why Buddha says it is SHUNYA. When he says it is shunya, void, emptiness, he does not mean that it is emptiness; he simply means it is empty of all content.

For example, a room can be called empty if all furniture has been removed, not a single thing is left inside -- you will call the room empty. It is empty of all that it used to contain before, but it is also full -- full of emptiness, full of roominess, full of itself. But nothing can be said about its fullness, its plenitude, because human language has no word for it. We have been trying for centuries to call it God, to call it nirvana, to call it moksha, but all words somehow fail.

It is difficult to translate something from prose to poetry, more difficult to translate from poetry to prose, because prose is on a lower level, poetry is on a higher level. It is difficult to translate from one language to another language, although all languages exist on the same plane. Why is it difficult to translate? -- because there are subtle nuances to words. Those nuances are lost in translating, and those are the real things.

This is impossible: to translate something for which no word exists, to translate something that is transcendental into the languages which belong to the world of duality. It is like talking about light with a blind man; talking about

beautiful music to one who cannot hear, who is deaf; talking to a person who is suffering from fever and whose taste is lost about "sweet." The taste of sweetness is meaningless; he has lost all taste. But a little bit is possible because he used to taste before; he can remember.
But you cannot even remember when you used to taste God; you have completely forgotten the taste. Maybe in your mother's womb there was some experience similar -- maybe not exactly the same, but similar.
I cannot tell you what it feels like, but I can show you the way. I can push you into the abyss... that is the only possibility. You can also taste it, and then you will become as dumb as I am, you will become as dumb as all the buddhas have been.
Just try to see the point of translating.

Rabindranath was given the Nobel Prize for his book GITANJALI. He had written it in his own mother tongue, Bengali. It has a different beauty in Bengali. Bengali has a music to it; it is one of the most beautiful languages in the world. It has a certain flavor of the heart. Its very constitution is poetic, it is MADE of poetry, the language itself. Hence GITANJALI in its original form is an altogether different experience.
Rabindranath himself translated it into English, but he felt very miserable. For years he tried. He knew English perfectly well, but he could see the difference -- the difference was vast. While the original was somewhere on Everest, the translation was just on the plains; the difference was vast. In translation something was lost, something which was really precious.

He asked a very famous Englishman, C.F. Andrews, to help him. Andrews was enchanted with the beauty of the book, because he knew nothing of the original. That's why you are enchanted with the words of buddhas, because you don't know anything of the original. If you knew anything of the original then the words of the buddhas would look just rubbish compared to the original; compared to those virgin peaks of the Himalayas the words will look mundane, of the marketplace. They ARE of the marketplace, they are meant for the marketplace.
Andrews was enchanted. Rabindranath said, "But I have shown you the book to help me."
Andrews suggested only four corrections; they were grammatical. Each language has its own grammar. He said, "These four words you change; they are a little bit grammatically wrong."
Rabindranath immediately changed those words. Then he went to England. In a poets' gathering -- a great English poet, Yeats, had called a gathering of the poets, the critics, and the people who love poetry, to listen to Rabindranath's GITANJALI -- Rabindranath read the poetry. They were all fascinated; it was something superb, something rarely known in the West, because it has the same quality as the Upanishads. If you have read Kahlil Gibran... it has the same quality.
But Yeats stood up and said, "Everything is perfectly right except that in four places something is wrong."
Those were exactly the four words that were suggested by C.F. Andrews.
Rabindranath said, "I am puzzled, surprised, I cannot believe it. These are the words suggested by C.F. Andrews.

They are more grammatical. My own originals were these...."
Yeats said, "Your original words are right. Although they are not grammatical they have poetry in them, a flow. These words suggested by Andrews are grammatically right" -- Andrews had the mind of a schoolmaster -- "but they are like rocks in the path of a stream; they don't help the flow. You be UNgrammatical, because poetry can afford to be nongrammatical, but poetry cannot afford not to be flowing. The flow has to be maintained; the greater the flow, the better the poetry."

Even in the ordinary world, from one language to another language, it is such a problem....
"Name?" queried the immigration official.
"Sneeze," replied the Chinese proudly.
The official looked at him: "Is that your Chinese name?" he asked. "Sneeze?"
"No, Amelican name."
"Then, let us have your native name."
"Ah Choo."

Now "Ah Choo" becomes "Sneeze"....
In ordinary languages, too, translation is a very difficult phenomenon, one of the most difficult arts; and the greater the poetry, the more difficult it is. The greatest poetry remains untranslated.
But to talk about enlightenment is impossible, for so many reasons: no content which can be talked about; nobody as an ego to feel, to say, to describe. The object disappears, and with the object the subject disappears, remember,

because they are part of a duality -- object and subject -- they are together. If there is no object, the subject disappears immediately. That's why Buddha says it is a state of ANATTA, a state of no ego, of no I. No content, no watcher... then what is left? The whole is left, the total is left! But that total can only be pointed at, not described, not defined.

And my whole effort here is to help you towards that existential state. But don't ask how it feels. There is nobody to feel it, there is nothing to feel it; there is nothing to be felt either. An absolute silence... and a silence which is not in contrast to sound. A pure love, but a love that knows nothing of hate. Fullness, but a fullness which is utterly empty. That's how words become useless, and mystics' statements look very paradoxical.

Ludwig Wittgenstein has said: Nothing should be said if the experience is inexpressible -- if it cannot be said then it should not be said. But that too is a problem. The mystic cannot agree, I cannot agree. It cannot be said, yet efforts have to be made. No effort is going to do justice to the experience -- all those who have known have been perfectly aware -- but still efforts have been made, efforts not really to describe it but efforts to create a longing in you.

And the real longing arises not because of the master's words, but because of the master himself, his presence. If you are in love with the master then his presence starts opening some unknown doors in you. Once in a while a window suddenly opens and you have a glimpse. Once in a while you are transported into other worlds, into other dimensions. The master's presence has to be tasted -- that is

the taste of enlightenment. The master's presence has to be allowed to sink deep into you; that is the only way to know something of it.
Jesus says: Eat me. The last night, when he is saying goodbye to his disciples, he breaks the bread and says, "This is me. Eat me, digest me. And whenever you eat, and whenever you break bread, remember." And then he offers wine to his disciples and says, "This is my blood -- drink me, and whenever you drink wine, remember me."
Yes, it is a nourishment of the soul, hence the bread; and yes, it is wine, because it intoxicates you with the divine. Come closer to me, Geetam! Drop your armor, drop your defenses. Drop your mind. Forget yourself more and more so that you can come closer and closer. In that intimacy something is bound to transpire.

The second question:
Question 2
BELOVED MASTER,
I HAVE TRIED MY WHOLE LIFE TO LIVE A RELIGIOUS LIFE, BUT THEN WHY AM I STILL MISERABLE?

Nand Kishor, the religious life cannot be tried. Whatsoever you have been doing in the name of religion must have been something else. Religion is not an effort, it is a consciousness. It is not a practice, it is awareness. It is not a cultivation; you cannot cultivate it -- religious life has nothing to do with character.
Character can be cultivated. Character is moral; even an irreligious person can cultivate it. In fact irreligious people

have more character than the so-called religious, because the religious person goes on believing that he can bribe God, or at least he can bribe the priest of God, and he will find some way to enter into paradise. But the irreligious has to be responsible for his life himself, towards himself. There is no God, no priest, nobody that he is answerable to; he is answerable to himself only. He has more character. Religion has nothing to do with character. In fact, the really religious person is absolutely characterless. But try to understand the word 'characterless'; it does not mean without character, it means with FLUID character. He lives moment to moment, responding to new situations, new challenges, with no ready-made answers.

The so-called man of character has ready-made answers. He never bothers what is the challenge, he goes on responding in the old, learned ways. Hence he is always falling short and that is his misery. He is never in tune with existence; he cannot be, because he is more interested in keeping his character than in being in tune with existence. What was right yesterday may not be right today, and what is right this moment may not be right the next moment. And the man of character has fixed ideas of what is right and what is wrong; his fixation is the problem.

Nand Kishor, that must be keeping you miserable. You are not flexible, you cannot be. The so-called man of character is absolutely inflexible. He is like dry wood. He is not like a green tree which moves with the wind, dances with the wind, bows down to let the wind pass and then stands back. The real religious man is like a green tree -- in fact, more like green grass. That's how Lao Tzu defines the religious man: he is like the grass. Let the wind come, and the grass

bows down, falls on the earth, is not in any way fighting with the wind. Why fight it? We are part of one organic unity; the wind is not our enemy. The grass bows down; the wind is gone and the grass is back again dancing. The wind has been a help, it has taken all the dust away. The grass is greener, fresher, it enjoyed the whole play with the wind. But a big tree, egoistic, stiff, rigid, unable to bow down, will fall in the strong wind and will not be able to get back again; it is bound to be miserable. A man of character is always miserable. His only happiness is that he is a man of character, that's all. And what does character have to do with religion? You may eat something, you may not eat something; you may drink something, you may not drink something else; you may smoke, you may not smoke.... Such trivia is thought to be of immense value! And you practice it -- and what do you mean by practicing it? Nand Kishor, it must be a repression -- and a man who represses is bound to be miserable, because all that he has repressed is struggling within him to come back, to be powerful again. And even though you have repressed it, it goes on pulling your strings from the unconscious. It will keep you always in a state of conflict, inner turmoil; a civil war continues inside you. You will remain tense, anxious, worried, and always afraid -- because you know the enemy is there -- that you have repressed and the enemy is trying every moment to take revenge. And there is a point beyond which you cannot repress any more because you cannot contain any more; there is a limit to everything. Then all that you have repressed explodes, like pus oozing out of you.

This is what we have been told is the state of a religious man -- this repressive character.
My approach is totally different. I don't say that you can practice religion and I don't say that religion has anything to do with this ordinary, moralistic, puritanical ideology.

An unshaven, bedraggled panhandler, with bloodshot eyes and teeth half gone, asked Hogan for a dime. "Do you drink, smoke, or gamble?" asked the Irishman.
"Mister," said the bum, "I don't touch a drop, or smoke the filthy weed, or bother with evil gambling."
"Okay," said Hogan. "If you will come home with me I will give you a dollar."
As they entered the house, Mrs. Hogan took her husband aside and hissed, "How dare you bring that terrible-looking specimen into our home!"
"Darling," said Hogan, "I just wanted you to see what a man looks like who does not drink, smoke or gamble."

These people are not religious people.
You say, Nand Kishor, "I have tried my whole life to live a religious life."
You have wasted your life! Don't waste it any more. Religion is not something to be tried. What do you know of religion?
Except in deep meditation, one never comes across religion. It is not written in the Gita and it is not written in the Koran. It is not written anywhere -- because it cannot be written. What is written is morality. What is written is, "You should do this, you should not do that" -- "shoulds" and "should nots." Religion has nothing to do with all that.

Religion is basically the science of creating consciousness in you. Become more meditative, become more conscious. Out of that consciousness a very flexible, spontaneous character is born, which changes every day with the situation, which is not attached to the past, which is not like something ready-made. On the contrary, it is a responsibility -- a moment-to-moment capacity to respond to reality. It is mirrorlike; it reflects whatsoever is the case, and out of that reflection, action is born. That action is religious action.

You don't know anything about religion, Nand Kishor. How can you practice it?

And you say, "Why am I still miserable?"

Whatsoever you have practiced, you must have practiced with greed, to attain something. You must be waiting that great happiness is going to shower on you, that God is going to reward you, that you will be made the richest man in the world or the president of a country, or you will become very famous -- a great saint, something like that. You have not loved religion, you have been using religion as a means to some other end; otherwise this question never arises.

A religious person cannot say, "Why am I still miserable?" because he knows, "If I am miserable, that means I am not religious."

Misery is a by-product of being unconscious. If you are conscious, misery disappears. Not that it is a reward; it is just a simple outcome of consciousness. Bring a light, a lamp, into the house, and the darkness disappears. It is not a reward from God -- not that he sees that you have brought the light, now you have to be rewarded and the darkness

has to be removed. No, it is the natural law: AES DHAMMO SANANTANO -- this is the eternal law. Bring light and darkness disappears, because darkness has no existence of its own; it is only absence of light.

Misery is absence of consciousness. So it is impossible to be conscious AND miserable; nobody has ever been able to do it up to now. If you can do it, you will be doing something historical, something unheard of, something incomprehensible. You will be doing a miracle which no buddha has ever been able to do. You cannot do it either; it is impossible, it is not in the nature of things. How can you keep the darkness, too, with the light burning in your room? You can keep the darkness, then you have to put out the light; you cannot keep them both together, no coexistence is possible.

If you are miserable, that simply shows you have not understood what religion is and you have been trying something else in the name of religion. You have been trying to be a moralist, a puritan. You have been trying to create a character. Why? For what? Because character is praised, because the society respects character. It is an ego trip -- very subtle, but an ego trip all the same.

And ego creates misery. Your so-called saints are all miserable. I have come across thousands of your saints -- Hindu, Jaina, Buddhist, Mohammedan, Christian -- and they are all miserable. They are all hoping to be rewarded after death.

Real religion is instant: here you become conscious and immediately misery disappears. You need not wait for the other life, you need not wait for tomorrow even.

And that's what Buddha means when he says: Be quick in doing good. The greatest good is to be conscious -- because all other goods are born out of it. Being conscious is the source of all goodness, all virtue.

The third question:
Question 3
BELOVED MASTER,
WHEN I HEAR YOU SPEAK ON LOVE AND MEDITATION, OR SEX AND DEATH, SAYING THEY ARE TWO SIDES OF THE SAME ENERGY, SOMETHING IN ME KNOWS IT IS TRUE. BUT, ALTHOUGH DRAWN BY BOTH ASPECTS, I FEEL MYSELF HUNG UP ON THE IDEA THAT I CAN ONLY APPROACH ONE SIDE AT A TIME. IS THERE ACTUALLY A WAY TO BE AT THE MEETING POINT OF THESE POLARITIES WHERE THEY CAN BE FELT AS ONE?

Prem Asang, the beginning has to be always from one side, from one aspect; in the beginning you cannot manage to enter from both the doors. If a temple has two doors you cannot enter simultaneously from both the doors.
How will you manage it? But there is no need either to enter from both doors simultaneously; one door is enough. By entering by one door you have reached the inner shrine. The people who have entered from the other door, they have also reached to the same inner shrine. The meeting happens in the innermost experience.
Whether you enter from love or from meditation it does not matter -- you reach to the same point. The same point of

egolessness is arrived at through love or through meditation. The same point of mind disappearing is arrived at by love and by meditation, and the same point of going beyond time is reached by both. The ultimate result is the same, so you need not worry.

You are not to enter from both doors. If you try to enter from both doors you will not be able to enter even from one, because one step you will take in one door, then you will rush to the other; one step you will take in the other door and you will rush back to the first one. And you will be running between these doors OUTSIDE the temple. But this is absurd, there is no need!

If the person entering from the door of love was missing something that the person entering from the door of meditation is gaining, or vice versa, then there would have been a problem -- but they both reach to the same point. From both polarities they come to the same middle... and the middle point is the point of transcendence.

Don't be worried that you can only approach one side at a time. You reach to the innermost shrine, then all the sides are yours. Love, and you will know what meditation is; meditate, and you will know what love is.

Love is for those whose energy is naturally extrovert, and meditation is for those whose energy is naturally introvert. Meditation means being with yourself in utter joy, enjoying your aloneness. Love means being with the other, enjoying the togetherness. Meditation is like playing on the flute solo; love is like two instruments playing together in deep rhythm -- flute with the tabla. It is a JUGALBANDI -- it is a communion between two instruments going together hand in hand, dancing together.

There are people who will find it easier to come to themselves through the other; it is a little longer way, love is a little longer way, remember, but immensely beautiful, because on the way there are beautiful trees and flowers and birds. Meditation is the shortest way possible because you don't go anywhere; you simply close your eyes and dive deep within your own being -- where you already are. Love is coming to yourself through the other, via the other; meditation is coming to yourself directly, immediately. But it is a little dry because there is no path -- there are no trees on the path, no birds, no sunrise, no sunset, no moon, no stars. It has a beauty of its own: the beauty of the desert. Have you been to the desert? The silence, the eternal silence of the desert... sands spreading unto eternity... a purity, a cleanliness. Yes, those are the beauties of meditation.

It depends on you: there are desert lovers. Many Christian mystics have gone to the desert and have attained to God in the desert. Going to the desert is only symbolic of going into meditation.

You have to watch yourself, whatsoever appeals to you. In the ultimate reckoning both are the same but on the way both are different -- different songs, different music, different taste. But people are different.

There are two types of people: the masculine and the feminine. The feminine type will find it easier to move through love. And remember: by 'feminine' I don't mean the female; a man can be a feminine type. Chaitanya was a feminine type, just like Meera; there is no difference in their type. Meera is female, Chaitanya is male, but their type is the same; both are the feminine type, both moved

through love. Both needed Krishna; only through Krishna they could reach themselves.

And in the same way, by 'masculine' I don't mean the male. Mahavira and the great woman mystic of Kashmir, Lalla, both are exactly the same -- both are masculine types. Mahavira lived naked, Lalla also lived naked. She is the only woman mystic who has lived naked. Both were the same type, the meditative type.

The male type will find it easier to go into himself directly; the feminine type will find it easier to move through the other. Neither is higher or lower because both reach to the same.

So, Asang, just watch, find out your own type, and move accordingly. And don't be worried that you cannot manage both aspects together; nobody has ever managed. Yes, a few people have tried, but they have all failed; nobody has ever succeeded.

Of course, there is one way... if you want to know both the ways. Then the only possible way was tried by Ramakrishna: first you enter by one aspect, one door, reach to the innermost shrine, then come back out and go in again from the other door. That is good as far as scientific experimentation is concerned, just to be certain whether the other also reaches the same place or not. Ramakrishna tried all the religions possible.

And once you have reached the inside shrine, things are easier. If it took you years to reach from the first door, from the second door it will take only days, because in fact you have already reached the goal; you are simply trying the other way, whether it also reaches there or not.

If you are doing some experiments like Ramakrishna, Asang, then it is perfectly okay. But then too even Ramakrishna could not enter two doors together, simultaneously; it is impossible. First you enter one, reach, experience; then, if you are interested.... In fact, nobody cares then. Why? For what? You have arrived -- and you can see people arriving from the other door also; there is no need for you yourself to go and experiment.

You will meet there Meera and Mahavira, both sitting together. You will meet there Lao Tzu and Krishna and Mohammed and Christ sitting together... sipping tea and gossiping! What else is left?

But if you are interested, if you want to really inquire whether the other way also comes to the same place, you will have to come out and move through the other way. And the other way will be easier now because your consciousness is already inside; only your body will be coming out. And you can move through the other and you can see....

Ramakrishna did one great experiment: he proved, existentially, that all religions are equal. It has been said before too, but nobody has proved it existentially; it was a logical inference. But Ramakrishna went, practically, into every possible method and reached again and again to the same state.

Ramakrishna heralds a new vision, Ramakrishna begins a new phase. After Ramakrishna, in fact, there should not be so many religions -- even if the variety is beautiful, the antagonism should disappear; the Hindu should not be fighting with the Mohammedan -- because this man

Ramakrishna has arrived to the same experience from all the religions.
Asang, if you are interested in doing some experiment like Ramakrishna, then it is okay; otherwise there is no need to be worried. Enter from one door and you have entered from all the doors.

The fourth question:
Question 4
BELOVED MASTER,
WHEN YOU SPOKE ABOUT GOOD, EVIL, AND THEIR RESULTANT KARMAS, WERE YOU SAYING THAT CONSCIOUS ACTS ARE INTRINSICALLY BLISSFUL AND UNCONSCIOUS ACTS INTRINSICALLY PAINFUL, OR IS THERE SOMETHING MORE TO IT? ALSO, DOES IT FOLLOW THAT ALL BLISS IS A RESULT OF CONSCIOUSNESS AND ALL SUFFERING THE RESULT OF UNCONSCIOUSNESS?

Prem Vidya, there is nothing more to it. It is a simple phenomenon: consciousness is intrinsically blissful. Bliss is not a result; it is inbuilt in consciousness. It does not come from the outside; it flowers inside consciousness. It is the fragrance of the flowering consciousness. When the rose of consciousness opens, the fragrance is bliss.
And when your being closes in unconsciousness, that dead and stale air, that stink, that darkness, is misery. That too is intrinsic, because now the fresh air cannot flow through you; your doors, your windows, are all closed. Now the sunrays cannot reach inside you. You are not available to

rain, to wind, to sun. You have become isolated from existence. You have become a monad, windowless. You have become encapsulated, completely closed into your own self, into your own ego. You have disconnected yourself from this immensely beautiful, blissful existence; hence, misery. It is not really a result; it is unconsciousness itself, another name for it.

And people ARE living unconsciously, but they don't see it. They go on saying they are living in misery and they want not to live in misery, but they always throw the responsibility on something else, somebody else. Either it is fate or it is the society, the economic structure, the state, the church, the wife, the husband, the mother -- but always somebody else.

Religion starts in your life when you take the responsibility on yourself. To take the responsibility for your misery is the beginning of change, because even to accept that "I am responsible for whatsoever I am," is the beginning of consciousness. You are coming out of a state of drunkenness in which you have lived for centuries.

Poteen is an Irish illegal brew that can burn holes in steel plate. After a pint of it Flaherty saw so many animals in his room that he put a sign on his house, FLAHERTY'S ZOO. The local sergeant went to reason with him and was no sooner in than he was offered a glass of the Mountain Dew. When the policeman staggered out thirty minutes later he raised his hand for silence, although there was nobody. "Ish alright, men. The worst is over. He sold me half the elephants."

You are living in a state of drunkenness. You don't need alcohol -- alcohol is circulating in your blood already. You don't need marijuana, LSD, mescaline, no -- you are already stuffed with it. You are born unconscious! But because everybody else is like you, you never become aware of it.

Only when awakening starts happening in you, then you become aware, comparatively, that up to now you have lived in a kind of sleep, that you have been a sleepwalker, a somnambulist, that whatsoever you have done up to now has been done unconsciously. And because you were doing things unconsciously and moving blindly in life, like driftwood, with no sense of direction, with no idea where you are going, with no idea who you are, how can you hope to be blissful? You can only be miserable, more or less. When you are a little less miserable you call it happiness. It is not really happiness, but a little less misery than the normal. When it is a little too much you enter into anguish. But these are all degrees of your misery, sometimes less, sometimes more, but you have not known happiness yet. Yes, you have known pleasure....

Pleasure is when you forget your misery. Misery remains -- you forget your misery. You go to the movie, you become so much focused on the movie, you become so much involved in the story, that you forget yourself, that for two, three hours you are as if you are not. But outside the movie house you are back to your routine self and to your routine misery.

The stupidity is that because of your unconsciousness you suffer, and when you want to avoid your suffering you drink alcohol so that you can forget your suffering. It is

because of unconsciousness that you are miserable; then you try to become more unconscious so that you need not know that you are miserable. This way you go on deeper and deeper into the unconscious. And these states of coma you think are very very great. These are just blank spaces when you become fast asleep, so totally unaware that you cannot remember that you are miserable.

And in these unconscious states, created by chemicals, you can believe that you are having some happiness, you can imagine; it depends all on your imagination. Many people have experimented with LSD -- the most evolved psychedelic up to now. And the result of many experiments is that people who are hoping that they will attain to great bliss come out reporting that they reached paradise and they saw angels and light and color and had beautiful poetic experiences. And the people who go into the experiment with the idea that this is wrong, that this cannot give bliss, that it is bound to give misery, come back reporting that they have been in hell and they have suffered much -- they have suffered hellfire.

The reason is clear: whatsoever you imagine starts looking real under the impact of LSD. If you are against it, if you believe that it is evil, you will come across evil. It simply magnifies your imagination, whatsoever the imagination. If it is dark and black, then you fall into a black hole.

If it is beautiful then, like Aldous Huxley, because he believed that LSD is the latest religious discovery, that LSD can take people to ecstasy, to samadhi.... What Buddha attained after six years and Mahavira attained after twelve years, and Kabir and Nanak etcetera, after years of struggle with the unconsciousness to become conscious,

can be attained through LSD very easily -- just a very small quantity of LSD has to be taken.
He believed that sooner or later we will refine LSD more and more and we will create the ultimate psychedelic he called SOMA, in remembrance of the old Vedas -- because in the Vedas it is said that the seers used to drink a certain juice called SOMA RASO, and that juice used to bridge them to God. Huxley says in the future the ultimate psychedelic will be soma. You can inject it yourself into your body and you will be transported into paradise.
Now this is sheer foolishness! This is all nonsense. But Huxley is a sincere man. What he is saying is not false; he has experienced it through LSD, because he believed in it. It is his belief projected, it is his imagination magnified.
Another person of the same integrity, Rahner, who is against LSD and against all psychedelic trips, came with just the opposite report: that LSD takes you to hell, that it throws you into hellfire, that it creates such tortures that you cannot imagine -- even Adolf Hitler could not have dreamed about them. And he is also sincere. Both are right because both have been deceived by their own minds.
Man is already unconscious; now these people are trying to make him even more unconscious, as if this much unconsciousness is not enough!
Vidya, as far as buddhas are concerned, as far as I am concerned, consciousness cannot be attained by any chemical. Unconsciousness can be produced by chemicals, because unconsciousness is a very gross, lower phenomenon. Consciousness is the highest peak of growth, of opening, of coming home; it is not possible through the chemicals. It is possible only if you go on sharpening your

intelligence; if you go on working on your witnessing soul; if you become more and more a witness of all that you do, of all that you think, of all that you feel. If you are miserable -- as everybody is -- then remember, it simply shows you are unconscious.

Don't fight with misery; that won't help. You can push misery from here and there; it will remain. Don't throw responsibility on others. Don't say, "Because of this wife I am miserable; if I change the wife I will not be miserable." You can go on changing -- no woman of this world is going to make you blissful. If you think, "The husband is the cause of my misery," you can change....

In America people are changing very fast, but misery is growing, not lessening. You can count a person's misery by knowing how many divorces he has gone through. The more divorces the more miserable he becomes, because the more divorces, the more hopeless he becomes.

In a country like India you can hope. You cannot divorce easily; the major part of the country cannot even conceive of divorce. The only possible way to get rid of your wife is to hope for another life -- even then one never knows! You may become too much hooked to each other that in other lives you also may continue. And particularly women go on praying in the temples, "Give me the same husband again -- for a hundred lives!" And if their prayers are fulfilled then there is no hope. But at least one can postpone: "After death.... This life is finished, nothing can be done. Now this woman or this man is my fate." So accept it and console yourself. Remain contented. Hope for the best and expect the worst!

But in India people seem to be more at ease because they know: "This woman is creating trouble." At least this much is a great consolation: "This man is creating trouble." But in America even that hope is not possible -- people have changed their husbands and wives so many times.

I have heard:
A man and a woman were sitting taking their breakfast and their children were playing in the garden -- and then a fight broke out among the children.
The wife said, "Look! Your children and my children have ganged together and they are beating our children!"

One boy, a small boy, was bragging about his daddy, and he was saying, "He is the greatest daddy possible."
The other boy said, "That's nothing! He has been my daddy before. I know him -- we have discarded him. He is very old-fashioned, out of date; you have got a secondhand daddy!"

I have heard about one man who changed his wife eight times, hoping that this time he would find a better woman who will not create misery, but each time he was surprised to know that he had found the same kind of woman again. In fact, if the chooser is the same how can you choose something different? You fall in love with the same kind of woman again and again, because YOU remain the same. Your state of consciousness or unconsciousness remains the same, your MIND is the same. Who is going to choose? You fall in love with a certain kind of woman -- who walks this way, who has a certain kind of nose and a certain kind

of voice and face and figure. A certain type of woman -- a certain type of psychology she has -- and you become attracted towards her. When you come closer and live together you find misery. You divorce. Again you start looking. But you are the same person -- you will again find the same kind of woman. How can you find another kind of woman? You will not be interested in another kind. The same kind of woman will attract you, will fascinate you, and again you will be in the same trap. Only the name changes, the trap remains the same.

Don't throw your responsibility on others; that's what keeps you miserable. Take the responsibility on yourself. Remember always, "I am responsible for my life. Nobody else is responsible. So if I am miserable then I have to look into my own consciousness; something is wrong with me, hence I create misery around me."

This is the beginning, a great beginning, the first seed of transformation. You are already becoming conscious if you take the responsibility on your own shoulders. You are already becoming conscious; the first ray has happened.

Yes, Vidya: consciousness is intrinsically blissful and unconsciousness, intrinsically miserable. There is nothing more to it; it is very simple.

Laws of life are always very simple. Truth is always very simple. Truth is not occult, truth is not esoteric. Truth is very obvious -- and because it is very obvious, that's why people don't see it. People go on missing the obvious, people go on missing the simple, because they think truth must be very complex. Hence they go on looking for something complex -- and truth is not complex. They go on looking far away -- and truth is very close by. They go on

looking into mysteries, into mystic, occult, esoteric teachings.
And there are people who go on exploiting because they know there are people who cannot be satisfied with simple truth. They write rubbish but in such a way that it looks very occult. They write in such a way that you cannot really understand what they are writing. And people think that if they cannot understand then there must be some great mystery in it.
Truth is very simple, and because it is very simple you don't look at it. You will have to learn, you will have to become aware, of the simplicity and obviousness of truth. There is nothing more to it. It is simply this: consciousness is bliss, unconsciousness is misery.

The last question:
Question 5
BELOVED MASTER,
WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT COMMUNISM?

Raja, I don't think about such things -- in fact, I don't think at all! I am certainly interested in communes, but not in communism. The moment something becomes an "ism" it becomes dangerous. The idea of a commune is beautiful: people living together in a nonpossessive way, neither possessing things nor possessing persons; people living together, creating together, celebrating together, and still allowing each one his own space; people creating a certain climate of meditativeness, of love, and living in that climate.

I am certainly interested in the idea of the commune -- it simply means where communion is possible. In the world there is no communion possible. Even communication is not possible, what to say about communion!
Communication means a dialogue between two minds -- even that is not possible -- and communion means a meeting of two hearts. Where communion is possible, there exists a commune.
The idea of the family is rotten now. It has worked, it has done its work, it is finished. There is no future for the family. In fact, the family has been one of the causes of calamity. The family makes you identified with a very small group -- the mother, the father, the brother, the sister -- a very small group becomes your whole world. A man needs to grow more variety.
A commune means more variety: not just your father but many uncles, not just your mother but many aunts. A commune means the children will have more people to learn about, more people to love, more people to become accustomed to. They will become richer.
Psychologists say that when a child lives with the mother and the father, the small unit of the family, he knows the mother as the representative of all womanhood and the father as the representative of all manhood -- which is wrong, utterly wrong. His father does not represent all the types and his mother does not represent all the types either. And he becomes slowly slowly focused on the mother; the mother becomes womanhood incarnate.
Now there will be trouble! His whole life he will be searching for his mother in his wife and he will not find her -- and that creates misery. No wife will be a mother to him,

and that will be his deep search, unconscious search, because he knows only one woman. That is his idea of a real woman, how a woman should be. And the girl will always be looking for the father, and no husband will be a father to her.

This fixation is creating great psychological tension and anxiety in the world. A commune means you will not be so much fixed. You look at our little Siddhartha! For days he disappears from the mother; he lives with other sannyasins for days together. He has many friends, grown-up friends; women, men. He comes back to the ashram very late in the night -- two o'clock. So busy! Laxmi called him and asked him, "Siddhartha, this is too much -- two o'clock! You have to be in by eleven."

He said, "Is this a rule only for me or for all? Is this rule applicable to grown-ups too?"

Now, this is maturity! He is becoming grown-up! And he said, "A few days I have to stay with others too -- they invite me!" Now he is living with many families. He will become aware that his mother is not the only woman in the world; there are many other women. He will become acquainted with many facets of womanhood. His idea of woman will be richer, and there is more possibility that he will be contented with a wife than otherwise. He knows many uncles and fathers. His vision of man is not linear, it is multidimensional; it is bound to be multidimensional.

I am interested in the idea of the commune because a commune will help people to get rid of many psychological hang-ups which our upbringing has been giving to us. The upbringing is so rotten, so old-fashioned! For five thousand years there has been no change. Everything else has

changed -- from the bullock cart we have come to the jet plane -- but as far as human life is concerned the same old rotten family remains. With man we are very orthodox; hence we have better machines but not better human beings. We have better EVERYTHING -- just man is not better; and the reason is that about man we are very orthodox and conventional.

A commune will change the idea of the family; it will make the family very flexible.

Just a few days ago, Bipin came from America and he said, "Strange! -- after just one year I am coming and all the couples have changed! And I used to think of a few couples that they were permanent couples -- for example, Satya and Chaitanya, Sheela and Chinmaya. Even the permanent ones that I used to think would remain, even they are no longer there! New combinations of people have happened." He was asking, "What is our Beloved Master doing?"

I am not doing anything -- this is not MY work! This is bound to happen in a commune. People will become more flexible, more available to each other, more loving, relate more, be less possessive.

I am certainly interested in the idea of a commune, but not in communism. Communism is ugly. Communism is a great epidemic. The sooner it disappears from the world, the better. It has destroyed great values -- the greatest value of freedom has been destroyed. And communism is antireligious.

If communism continues there is no hope for buddhas to be born; it won't allow it. If Gautam Buddha were born in Soviet Russia he would be forced to live in a mental asylum. This is not a good prospect! Even Jesus Christ will

find himself in more difficulty. They will not crucify him, certainly not, but they will put him in a mental asylum. He will be declared neurotic or psychotic because he hears voices; he talks with the Devil and God. This is neurosis, this is absolutely a madman! He will be given electric shocks, remember, not crucified anymore.

If Jesus is planning to come back I want him to be aware of the situation. This time they won't kill you, they will keep you alive, but they will inject you with chemicals, they will give you electric shocks, insulin shocks, and if you are still dangerous they will give you tranquilizers, they will make you very very sleepy. They can force you to live almost in a coma, to vegetate, which will be far more ugly than to crucify a man.

When you crucify a man you cannot humiliate him. He can keep his pride, he can keep his head high: "Okay, you crucify me, so you crucify me -- but you are not forcing me to change my spirit or my ideas or my vision of life. I am ready to sacrifice."

One can die with dignity -- Socrates died with dignity, Jesus died with dignity -- but in Soviet Russia, if Socrates is born, or Jesus, or Buddha, no dignity will be available. In fact nobody will ever hear about them. They will be forced to live in a mental asylum. Doctors will take care of them, and nobody will ever hear what they wanted to say, what their message was.

Two Russian workers were walking along side by side. Their heads were bent low and their faces were sad and drawn. They were not talking to each other. Suddenly one of the Russians spat on the ground and the other

immediately did the same. "That's enough!" said one to the other. "If we continue, they will think we are discussing politics."

I have heard another story:
In Russia the communists were conducting a purge. An old gypsy was brought before the commissar. "How long," asked the commissar, "have you been in the party?"
"Many years, commissar."
"And your father?"
"Ah, he was a member too, and my grandfather and my great-grandfather."
"Now listen," said the commissar dubiously, "back in those days there was no party."
"Ah, that didn't make any difference," replied the gypsy. "We were stealing anyway!"

Communism is a violent, forced state of affairs. It is transforming the whole country into a concentration camp. It is not allowing people any freedom to be themselves; it is reducing them into numbers. It is destructive of individuality -- and I am all for individuality and the freedom of the individual, because if the freedom of the individual disappears, then there is no possibility of inquiring into the reality of God. And that is the whole purpose of life.
The real destiny of life can only be fulfilled when you know that God is, within and without. He is your consciousness and he is this universe.
I am against communism, but I am all for communes.
Enough for today.

The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 4
Chapter #5
Chapter title: Dust against the wind
26 August 1979 am in Buddha Hall

AS THE RICH MERCHANT WITH FEW SERVANTS
SHUNS A DANGEROUS ROAD
AND THE MAN WHO LOVES LIFE SHUNS POISON,
BEWARE THE DANGERS OF FOLLY AND MISCHIEF.

FOR AN UNWOUNDED HAND MAY HANDLE
POISON.
THE INNOCENT COME TO NO HARM.

BUT AS DUST THROWN AGAINST THE WIND,
MISCHIEF IS BLOWN BACK IN THE FACE
OF THE FOOL WHO WRONGS THE PURE AND
HARMLESS.

SOME ARE REBORN IN HELL,
SOME IN THIS WORLD,
THE GOOD IN HEAVEN.
BUT THE PURE ARE NOT BORN AT ALL.

NOWHERE!
NOT IN THE SKY,
NOR IN THE MIDST OF THE SEA,
NOR DEEP IN THE MOUNTAINS,
CAN YOU HIDE FROM YOUR OWN MISCHIEF.

NOT IN THE SKY,
NOR IN THE MIDST OF THE OCEAN,
NOR DEEP IN THE MOUNTAINS,
NOWHERE
CAN YOU HIDE FROM YOUR OWN DEATH.

Life is not given ready-made -- not to humanity at least. That is the dignity of human beings, and the danger too. All other animals are born ready-made, preprogrammed. Their whole life is a simple unfoldment of something built-in. They need not live their lives consciously; their life is unconscious, it is mechanical. It can't be good, it can't be bad; it simply is. You cannot call a tree a sinner or a saint, and you cannot call a tiger or cat virtuous or full of vice. Those words are meaningless as far as existence below humanity is concerned. They become immensely significant referred to man.

Man has a special situation. He is born like all other animals, with a difference -- a difference that really makes a difference. The difference is of tremendous value to understand, because one may go on avoiding it and to avoid it is to avoid your true life. There is every possibility to remain oblivious of it, because it seems more convenient and more comfortable not to be reminded of it. To be reminded of it means a great challenge: a challenge to adventure into the unknown, into that which is not preprogrammed.

God is not a built-in possibility; it is an open opportunity. It can happen, it may not happen. It all depends on you -- how you live, how much consciousness you bring to your life, how nonmechanical you become.

Millions of people don't want to be reminded of this dimension at all; hence their antagonism against Buddha, Christ, Socrates. These people -- Buddha, Christ, Socrates -- goad you, they don't allow you to sleep comfortably. They bring the point again and again to your awareness that this is not the right way to live, that you are missing life. This is not human life that you are living, this is animal life.
And sometimes you can fall even below animals. No animal can become a Genghis Khan or Adolf Hitler or Joseph Stalin, because animals have no choice. They can't become Buddhas, they can't become Genghis Khans either. They remain whatsoever they are; they can't move anywhere else. They have a life already arranged; they will simply follow the course.
Their life is like a movie: when you see it for the first time you are immensely interested, curious what is going to happen next but in fact, nothing is going to happen -- the film is already preprogrammed. Next time you don't feel so interested because you know already what is going to happen next. The third time you are bored, and if you are forced to see it a fourth time you will rebel, and if you have to see it a fifth time you may go mad. The same film....
Because now you know everything is already there, nothing is happening; the film is simply repeating a certain course. Animals are like films -- already made, unfolding whatsoever is built-in. Man lives in a world of choice; hence man has to decide what life he wants to live. He can fall below the animals, he can rise above the angels. He can exist accidentally or he can exist with a decisiveness.
It is through decisiveness that the soul is born. If you exist accidentally, like driftwood, you live without a soul; your

life is not much of a life. It is pseudo, it is lukewarm; it has no intensity; it has no flame; it has no light. You cannot experience the truth. Living accidentally, knowing the truth is impossible. One has to be so decisive, so committed, so consciously involved with life, so intensely adventurous, that all is at stake every moment. One has to be creative -- not only unfolding, but creative.

This is man's privilege, his prerogative, and also his danger. Very few people will choose the life of choice, commitment, involvement, because it is dangerous, because the sea is uncharted and you don't have any map. You have a very small boat and the sea is very stormy and who knows whether the other shore exists or not? Why leave the shelter on this shore? Remain here.

Buddha says millions of people simply go up and down on this shore, running hither and thither, just creating an appearance as if their life is a pilgrimage -- and they are simply running up and down on the same shore. It is not a pilgrimage; it is mere occupation, befooling others and befooling yourself.

The pilgrimage begins when you leave this shore, its shelter, its security, its convenience, its comfort, its respectability, power, prestige. You leave your small boat at the mercy of the storms, at the mercy of the ocean, trusting that if this shore exists the other MUST exist, because one shore cannot exist....

With this trust -- moving towards the other shore, risking all -- real life begins. And real life is religious life. Real life is what I mean by sannyas. Life lived consciously is the only life; life lived unconsciously is mere existence. Animals only exist, they don't live; only man can live. But

all men don't live either; only a few buddhas, a few awakened ones.
Become alert to what you are doing with your life. Are you really moving consciously, with a sense of direction -- taking each step deliberately, in full awareness of why, to where? Or are you just imitating others? If they are running, you are running; if they are after money, you are after money; if they are after power, you are after power. Are you just imitators? Then your life will be imitation. Are you simply following others? Then your life will be a carbon copy. You will never know your original face. And your original face is the face of God. But that original face has to be discovered with tremendous effort. With great risk one can actualize what is just a seed in you, one can make actual what is only potential. And then man is infinite; otherwise man is very small, ugly.
A life lived unconsciously cannot be beautiful, a life lived unconsciously cannot have freedom. And without freedom, how can there be any beauty? Beauty is a shadow of freedom. A life lived unconsciously can only be mediocre, mundane, superficial. Only with consciousness does your life start deepening; it attains a new dimension, the dimension of depth. And the dimension of depth is the dimension of the divine.
God is not somewhere else, but in your own depths, in your own ultimate depths. Truth is not to be found somewhere else; it has to be searched and looked for withinwards. Truth is not something of the mind; otherwise it would have been very easy to attain it. Mind is a machine.
The great Western philosopher, the father of Western philosophy, Aristotle, defines man as a rational being, but

his definition cannot be applicable to the millions. It is not even applicable to himself, because he is not a buddha. A very clever man, very logical, but without any consciousness. He lived his own life as unconsciously as anyone can live. He had two wives, and he writes in his book that women have less teeth than men. Having two wives he could have counted any time -- but this was a superstition, very prevalent in Greece in those days. The male chauvinist mind cannot allow women to have anything equal to men, not even teeth! He never bothered to count -- what kind of rationality is this?

In fact, unless you are conscious, you can't be rational either. To live rationally means to live consciously, to live meditatively. And the moment you can live meditatively, you cannot only live rationally, you can live suprarationally -- because life is not only reason, life is far more than that. Reason is only one of its dimensions, and life is multidimensional.

Life plus consciousness, and you start becoming a buddha. Existence plus consciousness, and you start attaining life. Consciousness is the whole chemistry, the alchemy. Life plus consciousness, and you are entering into the temple of God. Existence plus consciousness, and you enter into the temple of life. But if you live without consciousness you don't have life, you don't have God. If you have life you cannot miss God for long, because life is the first ray of God.

But people merely exist, they vegetate; they think they are already alive. This belief prevents them from creating life. When you are born, you are born only as an opportunity, as a space where life can grow. But it is not inevitable -- and it

is good that it is not inevitable. If it was inevitable, man would have been a machine as all other animals are.

It is tremendously significant to remember that existence has bestowed on you a great gift, and the gift is that you are born as a tabula rasa, nothing is written on you -- you are born as a clean slate. Now you have to write something on it. You can write something imitating others, borrowed; you can write Vedas on it, Gitas, Korans, Bibles, but you will miss the whole thing. You destroyed a great opportunity.

You have to write your own song -- not the song of Krishna and not the song of Christ, but your OWN song! You have to sing your own heart, only then will you be fulfilled. But people are simply repeating like parrots; hence they become very knowledgeable and still remain foolish, still remain ignorant.

Saint Augustine divides humanity into two categories; those categories are significant. The first category he calls "knowledgeable ignorance." There are people who know too much and yet know nothing; their knowledge is all borrowed. Nothing has arisen in them, nothing has happened to them; they are simply repeating others. They may be very clever in repeating it, very efficient in repeating it, but they are functioning like computers. They are not yet human beings; humanity is not yet born in them. Their knowledge knows nothing, it is a pretension.

The universities are full of such people, and the world respects these people very much because knowledge is power. They know, that is the prevalent idea, and they are powerful. And in a certain sense the idea is true: a man who knows physics is more powerful than the man who does not

know, but as far as his own life is concerned he is as ignorant as anybody else. There is no difference between the villager and the university professor as far as self-knowing is concerned -- and that is the real treasure.
There is knowledge which knows not, and, Augustine says, there is also an ignorance which knows. What is the ignorance he is talking about, that knows? The ignorance of the innocent. The innocent person has cleaned his mind completely of all borrowed knowledge.
Meditation is nothing but a device to clean the mind, to give a shower to your inner being, so that all the dust, the so-called knowledge, is taken away and you are left clean, fresh, young. This is what Jesus says: Unless you are born again you will not enter into my kingdom of God.
This is what in the East we used to call the phenomenon of the DWIJ -- twice-born. All brahmins are not dwij, but all dwijas are brahmins. All brahmins are not twice-born, but all twice-borns are brahmins. Christ is a brahmin, Mohammed is a brahmin. The brahmin is one who has known Brahman, one who has known the ultimate life, but the secret is, you will have to be born again.
What does it mean? It means you will have to die to your knowledge -- borrowed, imitative, mechanical -- and you will have to be again innocent as you were when you were born the first time. But the first childhood is bound to be lost; nobody can protect it. It is in the nature of things that the first childhood will be lost. But the second childhood can be attained, and with the second childhood starts life. Before that you were merely existing. With the second birth you are entering into the real mystery of that which is.

Let me remind you: don't take life for granted. It has to be created, and it can be created only by choosing freely, by choosing on your own. Yes, there is a possibility you may go astray, there is a possibility you may commit errors, mistakes. But nothing to be worried about -- mistakes and errors and going astray, they are all part of growth. It is only by committing mistakes that one learns, it is only by going astray that one comes back to the right path.

Those who never go astray remain impotent. Those who never commit any mistake because of fear, they never do anything -- because if you do, there is a possibility you may commit some mistake. Afraid of committing mistakes, they never do anything. But without doing anything, how can you grow? You will remain hollow, you will not get any crystallization, you will not have any soul. You will be dead, you will be a corpse -- walking, breathing, talking, but you will be a corpse because you will not have the taste of life eternal.

The first thing to be remembered is that we are not yet born. One birth happens through the parents, through the mother. The second birth happens when you are in intimate relationship with a master, with a buddha. The second birth happens in a buddhafield: the buddha becomes the womb. The master is the womb for the disciple. The disciple enters into the womb of the master, disappears into the master and is born again.

It is through this new birth that you start being conscious. You believe that you are conscious... because you can come back every evening to your home from the office, so you think you are conscious. Because you can do certain things, you think you are conscious. Now there are robots,

machine-men, which can do all the things that you are doing.
Now there is a possibility that soon there will be planes -- they are already in existence, not yet used; soon they will be used -- which will not have any pilots, and there will be trains without any drivers. Theoretically they are possible now. The machine will do it all. Then you will be very much surprised: you have been doing these things and you were thinking that you are conscious because you do these things. By doing a certain thing one does not become conscious.
Consciousness is doing a thing with a new flavor. Doing it, in itself, is not consciousness, but doing it with a witness inside; watching, observing, knowing that you are doing it -- that is consciousness, and that is rebirth.

Bryant caught a tiny fish which suddenly began to speak. "I am really an elf and if you release me I will grant you and your wife any three wishes."
So the Irishman released the fish, rushed home and told his wife. The couple were anxious to get to town and look at things to wish for, so the wife decided to make a quick dinner out of a can of beans. But she could not find the can opener and said, "I wish I had a can opener." Kazam! She had a can opener.
"You wasted one wish on that stupid can opener," screamed Bryant. "I wish it was up your ass!"
And the sad part of the story is that they had to use the third and last wish to get it out again.

This is the way you are living, this is the way the whole humanity is living: not knowing what you are saying, not knowing what you are doing, not knowing at all -- just haphazardly stumbling, groping. And this continues from the beginning to the very end.
Your whole life becomes a grammar of unconsciousness, a language of unconsciousness. And through this language, the layer of this language, you look at life -- and everything is misinterpreted, distorted.

Business partners Slutsky and Gross were fishing in a small rowboat on a lake in the Catskills. Suddenly a storm came up, the boat capsized, and while Slutsky began to swim, Gross floundered and sputtered helplessly. He was sinking.
"Say," said Slutsky, swimming away, "can you float alone?"
"I am drowning," sputtered Gross, "and he is talking business!"

The old language, "Can you float a loan?" -- the language of business. He understands only one language. Now, even in such a situation, what is said to him will be understood the way he can understand. We don't understand what is said; we understand what we can understand. We don't understand what we see; we see only what we can see.

Old man Bernstein lay dying. The entire family had gathered around the deathbed. In a soft, feeble voice, he inquired, "Is Sol here?"
"Yes, Papa," said his eldest son.
"Is Lester here?"

"Yes, Dad!" answered the boy.
"Is Eli here?"
"I am right here!" said the youngest son.
"If you are all here," said Bernstein, "who is minding the store?"

And now he is dying -- the last moments! Even at the moment of death he is thinking of who is minding the store. From birth to death you go on living, groping in darkness with no light -- and you could have created the light. You cannot find it in the scriptures; nobody can hand it to you. It is not purchased or sold; it is nontransferable. But you can create it -- you can put all your energies together. You can start living consciously from this very moment.
For example, you are listening to me. You can listen in a sleepy way... because you are here, and I am uttering a few words, and you have ears and your ears function, so those words strike your eardrums and some noise is made -- and of course you hear. But this is not listening, it is only hearing. It is not listening.
Listening means you are alert, watchful, on your toes, drinking with no mind to distort; with no inner noise, with no chattering, utterly silent; not sleepy, very wakeful, very awake; as if your house is on fire, as if everything can be taken away any moment and this is no time to sleep. When your house is on fire you cannot sleep -- or can you? When your house is on fire you cannot be sleepy; you will be alert, very alert.
The first statement that Buddha made after he left his palace was, "My house is on fire. Now I cannot live anymore in unconsciousness." There was nobody except

his charioteer. The old man looked at the palace; he didn't see any flames there, the house was not on fire. He thought, "The prince has gone crazy!" He was an old man, an old servant, of the same age as Buddha's father. He had seen Buddha from the first day he was born; Buddha used to respect the old man.

The old man said, "What nonsense you are talking! Although my eyes are becoming weak, I am becoming old, but I don't see any flames. The house is perfectly okay, there is no fire!"

Buddha said, "Yes, I see -- you may not see -- my house is on fire, because each and every moment death is possible. Now I cannot remain in this sleepy state anymore."

The old man shrugged his shoulders. He said, "You are saying just insane things!"

When he had to leave Buddha in the forest and they said goodbye, the old man was crying and he said, "Listen to me -- I am just like your father. Where are you going? Have you gone nuts? Such a beautiful palace, such a beautiful wife, so much comfort, so much luxury! Where are you going?"

Buddha said, "I am going in search of consciousness." He didn't say, "I am going in search of God," because how can you talk about God if you are not even conscious? The real seeker goes in search of consciousness, not in search of God. If you start your search for God, that is going to remain an unconscious search -- because you have heard priests talking about God a greed has arisen in your mind for God.

The real seeker, the real sannyasin, has nothing to do with God. His whole effort, his single effort, his one-pointed

effort, his concentrated effort, is to become more conscious -- how to be so intensely conscious that you become full of light, that your whole mind is a flame of light burning bright, that the torch of your mind is burning from both the ends simultaneously. In that light one knows naturally that God is.

God is not to be searched for; what is to be searched for is consciousness. Unconscious people can believe in God, but their belief in God is just like their belief in money. They believe in notes, they believe in God, they believe in stone statues, they believe in dead scriptures. They can only believe, remember: only unconscious people believe.

The conscious person knows, feels, experiences. He does not believe in God: he lives in God, he breathes in God, his heart beats in God. It is not a question of belief.

You don't believe in the sun when you see the sun rise. You don't ask people, "Do you believe in the sun?" If you ask, they will laugh at you. You don't believe in the moon when the moon is full in the night; you never ask anybody. There are not believers in the moon and nonbelievers. It is your experience; there is no need to believe or disbelieve.

Exactly like that, in consciousness you have eyes to see God, you have eyes to see the truth of existence. Then it is no longer a question of belief -- it is your experience, existential experience. A conscious person knows, an unconscious person believes.

Why are you a Hindu, why are you a Mohammedan, why are you a Jaina, and why are you a Christian? All beliefs! -- and the priest lives on your unconsciousness. He goes on giving you more and more beliefs -- moral beliefs, beliefs that if you do this you will be rewarded, if you do that you

will be punished, belief in hell, belief in heaven. He goes on piling up more and more beliefs. You are drowning in beliefs! Your beliefs have become so heavy on you, like the Himalayas on your chest; they don't allow you to live.
The first step towards consciousness is to discard all beliefs. Don't be a Hindu, don't be a Mohammedan, don't be a Christian... because I tell you the way to become a christ! Why be a Christian? And I tell you the way to become a buddha -- why be satisfied by being a Buddhist? Why be satisfied with plastic flowers when the real roses can be grown, when you can become a garden of roses? You purchase a few plastic flowers from the market and you go on worshipping those plastic flowers. What you call them -- Christian, Mohammedan, Hindu -- does not matter; if they are borrowed they are plastic. The real flower has to be grown within your being; it has to blossom there.
Those who have known, they say -- and I vouch for them, I am a witness -- that when your consciousness opens up in its totality it is a one-thousand-petaled lotus, a golden lotus, gold with perfume. It is the ultimate miracle. And unless that is attained, don't rest. Each moment lost is a great loss.

The sutras:

AS THE RICH MERCHANT WITH FEW SERVANTS
SHUNS A DANGEROUS ROAD
AND THE MAN WHO LOVES LIFE SHUNS POISON,
BEWARE THE DANGERS OF FOLLY AND MISCHIEF.

Buddha is saying that if you are a merchant with a great treasure and you are coming home from a long long

journey of business -- doing business in many many places you have gathered great treasure and you are coming back home and you have only a few servants with you -- you will avoid dangerous roads where robbers can rob you, where you can be killed, where your treasure can be taken away from you.

Man has been on a long pilgrimage. You are not new on the earth, you are very ancient pilgrims. And all these lives you have gathered much treasure inside you -- even YOU may not be aware of it. You have learned much... you are not conscious, you don't know what treasures you are carrying within yourself. Because you are unconscious you are continuously moving on dangerous roads where you can be robbed -- where you ARE robbed, robbed every day. The person who is not aware, one who is asleep, you can rob him; he will not even give you a fight.

And the robbers are not outside, the robbers are within you. Anger, hatred, greed, jealousy, possessiveness, these are the robbers, and in the unconscious mind they go on robbing you. How much has anger robbed you of? Look back! How much has your anger destroyed? But you don't even calculate! You don't even look back to have an insight into what you have been doing to yourself. How much has your lust exploited you? But you go on doing the same things again and again! The same anger which you have always experienced as poison, which you know perfectly well is only destructive -- and each time you have been in it you have repented later on -- you have decided, you have promised to yourself many times, not to go into it again. And again and again you go on forgetting your promises given to yourself.

A man was saying to his friend, "Last night I went to see a Jewish porno movie, and it was quite an experience."
The friend asked, "What could a dirty Jewish movie be like?"
The man said, "It only lasted ten minutes: one minute of sex and nine minutes of guilt."

Just watch your life and you will find it: one minute of anger and how many minutes of guilt? One minute of lust and how many minutes of guilt, or how many hours, or how many days?

Brotsky was in Puerto Rico for a business convention. One night, in front of his hotel, he was hailed seductively by a beautiful prostitute. "Hello, Americano," she said. "You wanna buy what I am selling?"
Brotsky went with her. Ten days later, at home in New York, he found that he had caught gonorrhea.
The next year, in front of the same hotel, he was hailed by the same girl again. "Hello, Americano. You wanna buy what I am selling?"
"Sure," he said, "What is it this time -- cancer?"

If you look at your life you will see it is moving in circles. You go on doing the same stupid things, the same stupid things, and you have done them so many times. When are you going to wake up? And again you become intrigued with the same stupidity, again and again you are caught in the SAME net. Your life has not many new things.

You just watch your life for three months, make notes for three months, and then you will be surprised: this is all that you have been repeating again and again. And unless you become awake you are going to repeat the same your whole life -- and not only your whole life, you are going to repeat it in many many lives to come.

Harry, who grew up in Philadelphia, was making his first visit to England.
One night he spotted a ravishing young redhead in a pub, walked over to her and stated conversationally, "You know, I come from the other side...."
"Let's go right to my flat," she exclaimed. "This I gotta see!"

You get it? Again and again.... "This I gotta see!" You become again and again intrigued. You may have known many women, and again another woman, and you are ready to be foolish again. Your life is repetitive -- you don't even make new mistakes!
Be a little creative. If you are interested in making mistakes, at least make new mistakes. If you can make it a point that "I will make only new mistakes," soon they will be finished -- because how many new mistakes are there? One day you will simply find that there are no more new mistakes left, and you cannot make any because you have decided not to repeat.
Once should be enough -- but why is it not enough? The reason is that while you are making that mistake you are not there; you are even doing it unconsciously. If you can

do a mistake consciously, totally alert, with full awareness, absolute presence, you will not repeat it again.
A man of intelligence is bound to commit mistakes, but one mistake only once, then he is finished with it. He has known and understood it. But people remain immature.

Two little colored boys met on the street.
"I am five years old. How old are you?"
"I dunno."
"Do you ever think of women?"
"Naw."
"Then you is four!"

Now, this is how age, maturity, is measured, weighed. Maturity means becoming more conscious; there is no other way to become mature. I am not saying don't commit mistakes, because that will not help. I am not saying avoid mistakes, no. I am saying whatsoever you want to do, do it, but do it very consciously. Bring your full being in it, so once done you can decide whether it is worth doing again or it is utter nonsense, useless; so once done you know whether it is a real diamond or just a colored stone.
If it is a real diamond, go after it, dig deep -- you may be close to a treasure. And if it is just a colored stone, forget all about it. Don't carry colored stones; they become a weight and they make your journey more and more difficult. When you want to go uphill you need to be weightless. And the journey towards consciousness is an uphill journey.
AS THE RICH MERCHANT WITH FEW SERVANTS SHUNS A DANGEROUS ROAD AND THE MAN WHO

LOVES LIFE SHUNS POISON, BEWARE THE DANGERS OF FOLLY AND MISCHIEF. Become aware. Beware means be aware. Beware is a combination of two words: be aware. Be aware OF THE DANGERS OF FOLLY AND MISCHIEF. They are two sides of the same coin: folly and mischief. Folly means unconsciousness -- and out of unconsciousness only mischief is born.

FOR AN UNWOUNDED HAND MAY HANDLE POISON.
THE INNOCENT COME TO NO HARM.

If you become aware of folly and mischief.... Remember, Buddha is not saying avoid; he is saying beware.
Lao Tzu says: A man of wisdom walks as if at each step there is danger. A man of wisdom walks as if in cold winter he is crossing a frozen stream, that is what Lao Tzu says. Yes, exactly, it is so: the man of wisdom walks alert. Each step is full of dangers, because your mind can any moment assert.
Your mind is very ancient, its habits are very deeply ingrained, implanted. Just a little unawareness and the mind is bound to catch hold of you, and it will drag you into some mischief. It lives on mischief. It is bound to drag you into something which you will repent later on. But repentance does not help, it is a sheer waste of time. First you waste time in doing a mistake and then you waste time in repenting.

One man once came to me, a very rich man. He had a lifelong habit of becoming angry so easily that just a slight

provocation was enough, or if there was no provocation he would create it, he would imagine something. And he had suffered much because of it: his wife left him, his children deserted him, no servant could stay with him for long. He was living a very isolated life. He had all, but was very poor in a way because he had nobody to love him or to receive his love.

He asked me, "How can I get rid of anger? I have decided many times, I have taken vows before great saints that I will not be angry again, but again and again, when the situation arises I forget all about the vow. It comes, and it comes in such a floodlike manner that I am simply taken over by it. What should I do? I have come to you. Please help me to decide so that I can get rid of it."

I said, "You do one thing. The first thing is: drop repenting. The second thing is: never vow again against anger."

He said, "What are you saying? Then my life will be ruined!"

I said, "You have been taking vows and you have been repenting -- has it helped in any way?"

He had to concede that it had not helped. Then I said, "Why not try what I am saying? -- because my own understanding is that repentance is not against anger; it is in fact a way of the ego to settle you back in the old position."

When you become angry and later on you remember, your ego feels hurt that, "I have again committed the same stupidity." Now this wounded ego wants to be healed; you have fallen in your own eyes. Your wounded ego says, "Go to the temple or to some saint. Take a vow that, 'Now I will never do such a thing again.'" Taking a vow the ego feels good: "Look how religious I am." Taking a vow before a

saint and before a gathering you feel tremendously strengthened in your ego: "Look, I have decided!" The wound is again healed.
You are back in the old situation again: again the ego is enthroned. You will make the same mistake again sooner or later, and now you have learned a way to heal the wounds. Repentance is a way, taking vows is a way.
So the first thing I told the man was, "Stop repenting -- it is wasting time! Gone is gone, past is past. It is finished. You need not worry about it. You start afresh -- don't repent. Rather than repenting, my suggestion is: you go home and BE angry -- the first thing to do -- be angry and be CONSCIOUSLY angry. While you are angry, remain alert that you are angry, know what you are doing: that you are throwing things, that you are throwing abuses. Be alert!"
The next day he came. He said, "It is impossible! Either I can be angry or I can be alert. If I am alert I cannot be angry; if I am angry I cannot be alert. You have given me an impossible task!"
I said, "Now it is for you to decide: if you want to be angry, forget alertness; if you do not want to be angry, then be alert. No repentance, no taking of vows anymore. A simple method!"
All the awakened ones have been teaching the simple method.

Somebody asked Mahavira, "Who is a real saint and who is a sinner?"
Maybe the questioner wanted a ready-made answer that is given in the scriptures, but people like Mahavira speak out of their own being. What he said is tremendously beautiful.

The definition that he has given is unique, unique in the whole history of humanity. He said, "ASUTTA MUNI -- one who is awake, he is the saint. And SUTTA AMUNI -- one who is asleep is the sinner."

Simple, but tremendously significant! Wakefulness is the only saintliness there is, and sleepiness, unconsciousness, is the only sin there is; all other sins are born out of it. Cut the root, cut the very root! Don't go on pruning the leaves.
FOR AN UNWOUNDED HAND MAY HANDLE POISON. And then, when you are aware, alert, watchful, then there is no problem. Then you are like an unwounded hand, you can handle poison. What does it mean?

Let me remind you of a situation that happened in Jesus' life. He took a whip and entered into the great temple of Jerusalem. A whip in the hand of Jesus...? This is the meaning of what Buddha is saying: an unwounded hand can handle poison. Yes, Jesus can handle a whip, no problem; the whip cannot overpower him. He remains alert, his consciousness is such.
The great temple of Jerusalem had become a place of robbers; subtle robbery was going on. There were moneychangers inside the temple and they were exploiting the whole country. Jesus alone entered the temple and upturned their boards -- the boards of the moneychangers -- threw their money around and created such turmoil that the moneychangers escaped outside the temple. They were many and Jesus was alone, but he was in such a fury, in such a fire!

Now, this has been a problem for the Christians: how to explain it? -- because their whole effort is to prove that Jesus is a dove, a symbol of peace. How can he take a whip in his hands? How can he be so angry, so enraged, that he upturned the boards of the moneychangers and threw the moneychangers outside the temple? And he must have been afire; otherwise, he was alone -- he could have been caught hold of. His energy must have been in a storm; they could not face him. The priests and the business people and the moneychangers all escaped outside shouting, "This man has gone mad!"

Christians avoid this story. There is no need to avoid it if you understand this sutra of Buddha: FOR AN UNWOUNDED HAND MAY HANDLE POISON. THE INNOCENT COME TO NO HARM. Jesus is so innocent! He is not angry; it is his compassion. He is not violent, he is not destructive; it is his love. The whip in his hand is the whip in the hands of love, compassion.
This is why in the East we have Krishna, who can fight in the war even though he has promised not to fight. He forgets all about his promise. People think that he is very diplomatic, political; he is not. That promise was given in a certain moment; now that moment is no longer applicable -- the situation has changed. He is not an opportunist, he is not political at all. He is simply honest, sincere, responsible to the situation that is present. It was so in that moment when he promised that he would not enter into war; it is no longer so, the situation has changed. He enters war with no repentance; he never repented for it. There is no need to repent.

A man of awareness acts out of his awareness, hence there is no repentance; his action is total. And one of the beauties of the total action is that it does not create karma; it does not create anything; it doesn't leave any trace on you. It is like writing on water: you have not even finished... it is gone. It is not even writing in sand, because that may remain for a few hours if the wind does not come -- it is writing on water.

If you go to Hindu temples you will find Rama with the bow and arrow in his hand. Now it has been a problem for the so-called Gandhians to explain it; for Mahatma Gandhi it was a problem. If Rama had a spinning wheel in his hand it would have been okay -- but the bow and the arrow? Gandhi tried to avoid it. He was repeating Rama's name every day; that was the last name on his lips when he died. When he was shot dead, the last words that came to his lips were, "Hey Ram! Oh Ram!" But how did he manage? What about that bow and arrow? He never encountered the problem honestly, sincerely -- because Rama fought the war, must have killed many people, certainly killed Ravana. What about this violence?

This sutra will explain: FOR AN UNWOUNDED HAND MAY HANDLE POISON. THE INNOCENT COME TO NO HARM. If you can be totally alert, then there is no problem. You can handle poison; then the poison will function as a medicine. In the hands of the wise, poison becomes medicine; in the hands of the fools, even medicine, even nectar, is bound to become poison.

THE INNOCENT COME TO NO HARM. If you function out of innocence -- not out of knowledgeability but out of childlike innocence -- then you can never come to any

harm, because it leaves no trace. You remain free of your actions. You live totally and yet no action burdens you.

BUT AS DUST THROWN AGAINST THE WIND, MISCHIEF IS BLOWN BACK IN THE FACE OF THE FOOL WHO WRONGS THE PURE AND HARMLESS.

Remember, if you function out of unawareness, then your whole life will be DUST THROWN AGAINST THE WIND. It comes back into your own eyes. It is spitting at the sky -- it falls on your own face.

You suffer not because of others, you suffer because of your own foolish actions. And what is a foolish action? Action which arises out of an unconscious state of mind.

BUT AS THE DUST THROWN AGAINST THE WIND, MISCHIEF IS BLOWN BACK IN THE FACE OF THE FOOL WHO WRONGS THE PURE AND HARMLESS.

And the outcome is even more dangerous for the fool if his mischief and his wrong is against the pure and the harmless. If you are fighting with another fool there is not much problem: he spits on you, you spit on him. Your spit comes back to you, his spit goes back to him; everything is equalized. You harm him, your harm comes back to you; he harms you, his harm goes back to him.

But when you harm or do mischief to somebody innocent, then you are really in trouble because your mischief will come back to you a thousandfold. The innocent person will not do any mischief to you; he will simply re-echo, he will simply reflect, he will be a mirror. If you are ugly, your

ugliness will be shown -- and of course, the purer the mirror, the more clearly your ugliness will be shown.
And the mind has a great desire to harm the innocent. It is afraid to harm the mischievous because the mischievous can prove too much. The innocent seems to be SO innocent that you are tempted to harm him. The innocent seems to be so vulnerable, so delicate, that you think there is no problem: you can do anything to him, he will not even reply. Hence Jesus is crucified, Socrates is poisoned, Buddha is stoned.
Remember, there is a great temptation to harm the innocent, because you know he will not return it in the same coin. But the trouble is, HE will not return it in the same coin, but the whole existence takes revenge on his behalf. Because HE is not going to take revenge, the whole existence takes his side. Existence is always on the side of the awakened one. You are bound to suffer much, although Jesus is ready to forgive you. The last words of Jesus were: Father, forgive all these people because they know not what they are doing. This is his response. But existence cannot forgive you.
Existence follows a very exact law: mischief is bound to create mischief for you, and misery, if you create it for others, is bound to rebound on you. And if it is done against the harmless, against the wise, against the buddhas, then in a thousandfold way you will suffer.

SOME ARE REBORN IN HELL,
SOME IN THIS WORLD,
THE GOOD IN HEAVEN.
BUT THE PURE ARE NOT BORN AT ALL.

Hell and heaven are not geographical, remember it. It is just a metaphor to explain something psychological. Hell is the state of the mind which is in deep misery -- of course, created by your own doings. All the dust that you have been throwing against the wind falling on yourself, that is hell -- all the wrong that you have been doing to people coming back to you. You have to reap the crop because you had sown the seeds. If you sow seeds of poison you will have to reap poison. It is so simple: AES DHAMMO SANANTANO -- this is the eternal law.

Nobody can be exempted from it, there is nobody who can be an exception -- although everybody thinks, "I may be an exception, I may find some way to get out of it." Certainly you can find ways to get out of human laws, you can find ways to get out of any law, because man-made laws are man-made laws; they can be broken. And you can find intelligent people who can show you how to bypass them. But eternal laws, natural laws, cannot be broken; if you break them you are bound to suffer. That suffering is hell. Whenever you go against the law of life you are in hell, and whenever you go in tune with the law you are in heaven. Heaven means a state of joy. And whenever you are in a limbo, neither here nor there, neither against nor for, in a state of lethargy, in a state of indecision, just hanging in between, then you are in this world. In the Buddhist scriptures this world is called MADHYALOK -- the middle state between heaven and hell.

There are three kinds of people in the world: a few who are in heaven, many who are in the middle, and many more who are in hell. And in fact these are not three kinds of

people because each person goes through all these three states every day. In the morning you may be in heaven, by the afternoon you are in limbo, by the evening, coming home, you are in hell. You go on changing, shifting. These are psychological states.

To go beyond all these three is called nirvana, is called buddhahood, is called moksha. If you can go beyond all the three -- that means if you can go beyond all mind -- then you are not only in tune with the law.... If you are in tune with the law you are in heaven, if you are against the law you are in hell. If you are indecisive, half-half, fifty-fifty, you are in the middle world, this world. But if you become one with the law, you are no longer separate -- not even in tune, because in tune you are separate. If you become one with the law: if you drop your ego and mind totally; if you become immersed in the eternal law; if you become the ocean, your dewdrop disappears in the ocean and becomes it, then you are born no more. Then there is no birth, no death. Then this whole wheel of birth and death stops. Then you are one with the cosmos, then you are God.

This is the ultimate that has to be attained, this is the ultimate that man is capable of attaining, but also capable of missing. Unless great effort is made with great skill and intelligence, you will not be able to attain it.

NOWHERE!
NOT IN THE SKY,
NOR IN THE MIDST OF THE SEA,
NOR DEEP IN THE MOUNTAINS,
CAN YOU HIDE FROM YOUR OWN MISCHIEF.

Remember: there is no way to hide from your mischief. So don't go on befooling yourself that you will find some way: that you will go to the Ganges and take a dip in the Ganges and all your sins will be washed away. Don't deceive yourself -- the Ganges cannot do that. Don't think that you will go to Kaaba and you will do HAJ, the great pilgrimage, and you will become a HAJI -- the man who has been to Kaaba -- and then all sins are taken away from you, God has forgiven you. Don't think that by doing a certain ritual -- YAGNA, HAVAN -- you will be freed from your mischiefs. Nothing is going to help. NOWHERE! Buddha says,NOT IN THE SKY,NOR IN THE MIDST OF THE SEA,NOR DEEP IN THE MOUNTAINS, CAN YOU HIDE FROM YOUR OWN MISCHIEF. It will follow you like your shadow, it will torture you wherever you go. It is better not to do it -- but you can avoid doing it only if you become conscious, otherwise you are bound to do it.

NOT IN THE SKY,
NOR IN THE MIDST OF THE OCEAN,
NOR DEEP IN THE MOUNTAINS,
NOWHERE
CAN YOU HIDE FROM YOUR OWN DEATH.

Mischief is bound to bring its own punishment just as certainly as birth is bound to bring its own death. You cannot avoid death, you cannot avoid the outcome of your deeds. So don't think in these terms, because all that time wasted in avoiding, hiding, is simply wasted. All that

energy can be put into one effort: of becoming aware, of becoming meditative. That is going to help.

A man was going to the Ganges. He went to Ramakrishna, he was a follower of Ramakrishna. He asked Ramakrishna, "Paramahansadeva, I am going to the Ganges -- bless me. Do you think all my sins will be washed away?"
Ramakrishna said, "Yes, certainly, because the Ganges is so pure; whosoever dives deep into it becomes as pure as the Ganges. But there is a problem that you have to remember."
The man said, "What is that problem? You just tell me, I will remember."
Ramakrishna said, "Have you seen the great trees that stand on the banks of the Ganges?"
He said, "Yes, I have seen."
Ramakrishna said, "Do you know what is the purpose of those trees?"
He said, "That I have never heard and it is not written in the scriptures. What is the purpose of those trees? You tell me."
Ramakrishna said, "The purpose of those trees is that when you dive in the Ganges, your sins have to leave you because of the power of the Ganges. Those sins sit on the top of those tall trees. When you come back out of the Ganges, they jump upon you again! So it is really futile. If you want to go you can go, but avoid one thing: if you dive in the Ganges, don't come out! Then be gone forever; otherwise those sins won't leave you. And they will take revenge, they will jump upon you with vengeance."

And this is literally true. The religious people, the so-called religious people, think that they can do a certain ritual and the sin is finished, and they are free to do the sin again! And once you know the trick how to finish it, why bother? You can go on doing as many sins as you can -- the Ganges is always there. And now there is no need to go to the Ganges either: you can bring the Ganges in pipes to your home, so every day, early morning or evening, you take a bath. Evening will be better, so the whole day's sins are finished and you are as pure as a lotus flower.

Buddha says nothing can help you. There is nowhere to hide from two things: the result of your deeds and death. They are going to happen.

Then what should we do? Become conscious, and in becoming conscious both disappear. In becoming conscious your actions automatically go through a transformation. The conscious man cannot do anything wrong, and the conscious man comes to know that, "There is no death for my consciousness. The body will die, the mind will die, but not my innermost being. I am eternal. AMRITASYA PUTRAH -- I am the son of eternity, I belong to the eternal existence."

Consciousness brings these two truths home. First it transforms your world by transforming your actions; secondly it transforms your interiority by making you aware that you are eternal. When you know you are eternal, when you know that you have always been and you will always be, all your values of life immediately start changing. Then whatsoever was important yesterday is no longer important, and whatever was never important before

becomes important -- because now you think in terms of eternity and not in terms of time.
To think in terms of time is politics: to think in terms of eternity is religion.
Enough for today.
The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 4
Chapter #6
Chapter title: Is this the way it is?
27 August 1979 am in Buddha Hall

The first question:
Question 1
BELOVED MASTER,
IT SEEMS TO ME THAT BEING HERE WITH YOU MEANS TO LET GO OF EVERYTHING -- NOT ONLY THE MISERY, FEAR, SADNESS AND THE SO-CALLED NEGATIVE SPACES, BUT ALSO THE HAPPY, LOVING, FLOWING FEELINGS, THE SO-CALLED POSITIVE SPACES THAT HAVE ALWAYS BEEN MY GOAL. BELOVED MASTER, IS THIS THE WAY IT IS?

Anand Hareesh, the positive and the negative, the night and the day, the summer and the winter, birth and death -- they are not separate. If you want to let go of one, you will have to allow the other also to go.
That is one of the greatest dilemmas: people want the positive to remain with them -- but if the positive remains, the negative remains as its shadow. The positive will not have any meaning without the negative. If you don't know

what darkness is you will not be able to see light at all. If you want to see light you will have to be ready to experience darkness too. You cannot avoid death if you cling to life. It is life that brings death in.

And everybody wants to cling to the positive spaces and everybody wants to avoid the negative spaces. This is impossible -- this is against the eternal law.

If you watch carefully you will see that if the negative is torturing you too much then the positive is only a cover-up. What do you mean when you say that you are happy? You simply mean that "At this moment my unhappiness is covered up." What do you mean when you say that "Now I am relaxed"? It simply means that the tensions have gone deeper into the unconscious; now you are oblivious of them.

But sooner or later they will assert, sooner or later they will have their own time. You cannot remain with the positive forever. The negative and positive always balance each other: you will have as much happiness as you are ready to have unhappiness.

Hence one of the mysteries: the more affluent a society is, the more miserable it is. There is no other country more miserable than America, for the simple reason that America has now the highest peak of happiness; it cannot avoid the lowest depth. The peaks are possible only with valleys -- the higher the peak, the deeper the valley.

In India people feel very satisfied. The reason is they don't know the peaks of happiness; hence they don't know the valleys of unhappiness. They live more or less on neutral ground, neither positive nor negative. This is not true

contentment, this is simply absence of positive spaces -- hence the negative spaces are also absent.
America is really in a mental torture, in a great psychological upheaval. No society has ever been in such a state. Individuals, of course, have been.
Gautam Buddha was the son of a king. He had all the joys -- that's why he became aware of the misery of life. It is not accidental that all the twenty-four TIRTHANKARAS of the Jainas were kings. Buddha was a king, Rama and Krishna were kings, all the Hindu AVATARAS were kings. There is something in it, something very fundamental. Why have beggars not become tirthankaras, avataras, buddhas? For the simple reason that they don't know what happiness is -- how can they be aware of the misery of life?
Buddha says: Life is DUKKHA -- pure misery. Only a buddha can say it because he has known the peaks. Knowing the peaks is simultaneously becoming aware of the valleys. If you live intensely, passionately, you will be more aware of death than the person who lives in a lukewarm way, who lives only so-so, who is not intense and passionate in his life. He cannot be very alert about death. The deeper you plunge into life, the greater will be your awareness of death. The positive and the negative continuously balance each other.
The Indians have played a trick upon themselves. They have become neutral: "Don't go to the heights of joy; that is the way to avoid the depths of misery, pain, sorrow." But this is not true revolution. True revolution is not by becoming indifferent, by becoming lukewarm, by living a

very very dull life. Real revolution happens through transcendence.

These two words have to be understood because the difference is very delicate and subtle: 'indifference' and 'transcendence'. Indifference simply means you avoid the positive to avoid the negative. Transcendence means you avoid nothing, neither the positive nor the negative. You live the positive in its totality and you live the negative in its totality, with a new quality -- and that quality is that of a witness. You live totally but at the same time you remain silently alert, aware.

You know happiness surrounds you but you are not it; you know unhappiness surrounds you but you are not it. You know it is day but you are not it, and you know it is night but you are not it. You know now you are alive but you are not it; then when you will be dying you will know you are not it. This is transcendence.

NETI, NETI -- neither this nor that -- is the secret formula of transcendence: neither positive nor negative. But it does not mean NOT to live the positive and the negative. If you avoid living you will become dull, very dull; you will lose all intelligence.

That's the difference between the old sannyas and my new vision of sannyas. The old sannyas teaches you indifference, neutrality: "Don't go to the heights so you need not fall into the depths." Simple mathematics! "Don't be happy, then you will not be unhappy." How can you be unhappy if you have never been happy? "Don't rejoice, then there will be no sorrow, and don't laugh, then tears will not be possible." This is simple mathematics, but not the truth of transcendence, not the truth of real sannyas.

The real sannyas means: laugh deeply, but remember you are not the laughter; and cry and weep deeply, let the tears flow, be total in it, and yet alert, a flame inside watching it all.

Hareesh, you are to transcend, not to renounce. If you renounce you miss the point. And when I say, "Let go!" I simply mean don't cling. I am not saying to you don't try to be happy. Make every possible effort to be happy, joyous, but remember that sadness will follow -- that is natural. Accept it, and when it comes, don't run away from it, don't escape from it. That too is beautiful, part of life, part of growth; without it there is no maturity. Go deep into it. Joy has something to contribute to your growth, and sorrow too. Joy brings a freshness, the freshness of the morning dew. Joy brings youth, joy brings a dance to your heart. Sadness also brings many gifts but you escape from sadness; hence you never become aware of the gifts. Sadness brings a silence which no joy can ever bring. Joy is always a little noisy; sadness is utterly silent. Joy is always a little shallow; sadness is deep, it has depth. Joy always makes you forget yourself; it is easier to drown yourself in joy, to be intoxicated with joy. It keeps you unconscious. Sadness brings an awareness because you cannot drown yourself in it. You cannot participate, you have to stand outside -- because you don't want it!

The first lessons of witnessing happen in sadness. One learns witnessing in sadness and only then, later on, the same witnessing can be applied to the moments of pleasure. But it is by witnessing that one transcends.

And when I say, "Let go of it all, the positive and the negative," I simply mean don't cling, don't be identified. I

am not saying, "Renounce!" Live, and yet live above. Walk on the earth, but no, don't let your feet touch the earth. Yes, there is an art to it.

And that's what sannyas is all about: the art of living in the world without being part of it, the art of living life without being identified with it. That's what real let-go is.

The old sannyas is that of indifference. Exactly that is the word used in the old scriptures: a sannyasin becomes UDASIN -- indifferent to all that is -- VAIRAGYA. He becomes cold and detached. He escapes from the world of duality. He moves into a monastery or into the Himalayan caves, lives alone, lives without joy, without sadness.

A kind of death he lives: he is already in his grave, he lives not. His life is not worth calling life. He has fallen below humanity; he is closer to the animals than to human beings. Hence his search for the caves, forests, jungles, mountains, deserts -- he is afraid of being with human beings. He wants to fall below human beings, because human beings are bound to be divided by this great polarity, positive and negative, and he is afraid of it.

But the real sannyasin -- the sannyasin of my vision -- lives in the world, in the thick of it, in the dense world. He renounces nothing. He lives life as totally as possible, because if God has given life it means there is something to attain through it. Only by living it can it be attained, only by living it is there something to be learned. Transcendence has to be learned; that is the great gift of life.

If you become more and more conscious, let-go will happen and yet you will be here and now, and more than ever before. You will eat and you will taste more. You will love and you will have deeper orgasmic experiences. You

will play and your play will have something of the spiritual in it. Your ordinary life will become sacred.
Only one thing has to be introduced: witnessing.

The second question:
Question 2
BELOVED MASTER,
I AM FEELING MORE AND MORE THAT THIS LIFE IS SOMETHING MAGICAL. IS THIS HOW YOU SEE LIFE? IS THIS WHAT YOU MEAN BY THE GODLINESS ALL ABOUT US?

Yes, Anand Nur, that's precisely what I mean. By "God" I don't mean a person. By "God" I mean the magic that surrounds you, the mysterious, the miraculous. By "God" I don't mean anybody who created the world, but creation itself. The very process of creativity is God.
Hence you cannot worship God, you cannot pray to God. All prayers are false because they are addressed to a personal God -- and there is no personal God. You cannot relate to God, calling him "father," "mother." He is not a person; relationship is not possible. Then how to worship, how to pray? You will have to learn new ways of praying and worshipping.
To be creative is to worship. To be creative is to participate in the great process of creation -- and participating in creativity is participating in God. For a moment you are transported. When you are painting something you are no longer there; you have become just a creative force. When you are playing music, if you are not just a technician but really a musician, a lover of music, then you disappear --

then the ego is no longer there. At least for those few rare, diamondlike moments, immensely precious, some windows open. You are no longer there, not as an ego.
God is not a person, he is not an ego. And if you want to meet God you will have to be something similar: a non-ego, a nonperson. God is a presence. If you want to have any communion with God you will have to learn how to be just a presence and not a person; alert, fully alert, but without any idea of "I."
And the best way to let this "I" disappear is not through austerities, yoga, fasting -- no. It is through creativity. I teach you the yoga of creativity, because to me that is the only yoga. The word 'yoga' means union; when you are creative you are in a state of union with God. Standing on your head is not going to help much, in fact it is not going to help at all. You can stand on you head for lives -- it will do only one thing: it will make you stupid!
And I am saying a scientific truth, I am not joking; I am very serious about it. If you stand on your head for long periods of time you will become stupid, because your brain consists of a very very delicate nervous system. Those nerves are so thin... they are thinner than hairs. Your small head has millions of nerves; you cannot see them with your naked eyes, they are so thin. If you stand on your head too long the blood rushes towards your head, and in that flood those nerves are going to be destroyed.
In fact, scientists say man attained to mind, brain, because he stood on two legs -- upright. Animals have not attained to mind yet because they still go on remaining parallel to the earth. Their heads are getting too much blood; hence they cannot grow subtle nervous systems. It is only man

who has been able to grow a subtle nervous system which can sustain great consciousness, which can sustain great intelligence.

It is very rare to come across an intelligent, so-called yogi -- I have not come across one yet! The people who distort their bodies and do all kinds of circus tricks and stand on their heads, they may have good bodies -- they can have; so much gymnastics is bound to give you a healthier body, more animallike -- but they don't have intelligence. I have yet to come across a yogi who is really intelligent, and one of the reasons is that their subtle, delicate nervous systems are too much flooded with blood.

You cannot sleep in the night without a pillow. Do you know why? -- because too much blood goes into the head. It keeps your whole nervous system vibrating. You need pillows. Pillows keep the blood flow less towards the head; you can sleep, you can rest, you can relax.

By "yoga" I exactly mean the literal translation: union, communion. When you are painting or playing music or dancing or singing, then you are in a state of yoga.

In my commune, this is going to be the yoga: you have to create. And the more you create, the more you become capable of creating. The more you create, the sharper is your intelligence. The more you create, the more you become available to infinite sources of creativity -- that is, God. The more you create, the more you become a vehicle -- a vehicle for the magic to flow through you.

Yes, Anand Nur, by "God" I mean the magic that surrounds you. Can't you feel the magic that surrounds you every moment -- THIS very moment? The birds making sounds... the trees utterly silent, in a state of meditation... and you all

here together with me, from faraway countries... a silence pervading. You are utterly tuned with me, breathing with me, your hearts beating with my heart. Can't you see the magic of the now, of the here, and the beauty of it and the benediction? This is God!
God is not found in the temples and the mosques and the GURUDWARAS and the churches. God is found only in the company of the buddhas, because it is only in the company of the buddhas that you become aware of the magical existence.

The third question:
Question 3
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WHY ARE PEOPLE SO MUCH AGAINST YOU?

Sudheer, they are not so much against me as they are afraid of me. Out of fear they are against, but the root cause is fear. And why are they afraid? -- because they don't understand. It is misunderstanding. It always happens, it is bound to happen; it is nothing new.
I say one thing, they understand something else because their minds are prejudiced. They have been brought up in certain traditions and I am breaking all traditions! They have been brought up to think in certain ways, and my whole effort here is to take you beyond thinking.
People are conventional, conformist, traditional. And to me religion is rebellion -- rebellion against all conventions, against all conformities, against all traditions. Religion is never a tradition, can never be a tradition. Science can be a tradition but religion never.

Science is really a tradition. Withdraw Newton -- for a moment think as though Newton was never born -- then there can be no Albert Einstein. Albert Einstein is possible only if Newton happens first. Science is a tradition, it is a continuum. Withdraw one brick and the whole edifice falls. But I am possible without there ever being a Christ. I am possible not because there has been a Mahavira or a Patanjali, not because there has been a Buddha or a Confucius or Lao Tzu. Religion is not a continuum; it is an individual phenomenon, it is an individual flowering. You can become awakened even if you are not aware of anybody ever becoming awakened before. You are not related with the past in the same way as science is related. That's why scientific truths, once discovered, become the property of everybody else. Albert Einstein worked hard for thirteen years to discover the theory of relativity; now you can read all about it within hours -- you need not discover it again. Edison worked for years, at least for three years, to discover the first electric light bulb; now you can go on producing electric light bulbs -- you don't need Edisons to produce them. Ordinary laborers knowing nothing of electricity can do the job -- they ARE doing it. But religious truths are totally different: you have to discover them again and again. What Buddha discovered does not become universal property. It dies with him, it disappears with him; it is an individual flavor. That is the beauty of religion: that it never becomes a commodity in the marketplace. Hence science can be taught in the schools, colleges, universities; religion cannot be taught. Religion cannot be taught at all; you cannot be informed about religion. You have to discover it on your own.

Yes, you can get the inspiration, but inspiration is not information. You can be inspired by the presence of a buddha, you can become afire. You can attain to a burning longing to be like a buddha, but you will have to discover everything on your own. And you will not be able to give it to your children as a heritage. All that you can give, all that you can impart, is an intense longing for truth, that's all -- but not truth itself.

Hence it is very difficult for the masses to understand what I am saying. It was difficult when Buddha was here, it was difficult when Jesus was here -- it will be difficult always because the masses live according to the past. They are fed, continuously brought up, in traditional ways. They have been told what is right, what is wrong; they have been told whether God exists or not, and they have learned all these things. And they have accumulated so much information that their minds are full of knowledge; they think they already know.

So when anybody comes and brings a new dispensation into the world, when anybody brings a new revelation, when anybody becomes available to God, becomes a vehicle of God, the people are disturbed, their prejudices are shattered. Their old conceptions are not strengthened -- on the contrary, they start feeling, "If this man is right then we have been wrong all along... not only we but our forefathers and their forefathers." This goes against their ego. They would rather cling to their own ego than listen to the truth.

And then because of their prejudices they go on hearing something which is not said. I say one thing, they immediately interpret it according to their own ideas. They

don't listen in silence; they listen through all kinds of barriers of thoughts.

For example, there are Jews, Mohammedans, Hindus, Christians, Jainas, Buddhists, Sikhs -- all kinds of people are gathered here. Do you think when I say something the Jew hears the same as the Jaina, the Mohammedan hears the same as the Christian, the Buddhist hears the same as the Hindu? Impossible! The Mohammedan has his own ideas....

For example, if I am talking about rebirth, then the Christian, the Jew and the Mohammedan are a little on guard, unconsciously, because they have been told there is only one life; they cannot trust that there are many lives. But when I am talking about rebirth the Hindu is happy, absolutely willing. The Buddhist is willing, the Jaina is willing, absolutely willing. There is no problem in their minds. Not that they are agreeing with me -- they are happy because I am agreeing with them! And that's how it is about each single statement.

Words don't have any clear-cut meanings -- they can't have; otherwise each communication will become very scientific. Words have many meanings, many nuances, so when you hear a word you can give it a color of your own. You can hear in your own personal, private way. You have your own private meaning.

When I talk about God, the Buddhist listening here will immediately stop listening, it is absolutely automatic. Automatically he will be turned off. God? -- he has been told that the whole idea is nonsense. And when Buddha has said that the whole idea is nonsense, it has to be so. And not only Buddha -- for twenty-five centuries many other

mystics who have attained to the ultimate have been telling him that God is not there. But the Hindu, the Mohammedan, the Christian, the Jew, they are absolutely willing, immensely happy that yes, I am talking about God -- their God! The Jaina and the Buddhist will not be happy; they don't believe in God.

When I talk about the soul, the Jaina will be happy, the Hindu will be happy, the Mohammedan, the Christian, the Jew -- everybody except the Buddhist. He does not believe in the soul either. He says there is no individual entity, everything is a flux. Just as the Ganges goes on changing every moment, just as you cannot step in the same river twice, you cannot meet the same individual again. There is nothing permanent, nothing at all. Except change, everything changes. The Buddhist, the moment I talk about soul or God, stops listening. He says, "This is not for me." Not that he does it consciously -- these are unconscious habits, conditionings.

It is not so much that people are against me; the reality is they don't understand what I am talking about, or they understand something totally different which is not being talked about. They are not aware what I am doing here. They don't come here, they depend on newspapers. Some third-rate journalist comes and reports something -- what can he report about meditation? He has never meditated. Look at the stupidity of the world! You don't send a journalist to report about a surgeon if he does not know anything about surgery -- or do you? If there is going to be a conference of surgeons, you send somebody who is well acquainted with the world of surgery; only he can report. If physicists are meeting, papers are read and discussed and

you send somebody, you have to send an expert who knows what physics is. And modern physics is a very very evolved phenomenon; it needs years of studies. One has to be a physicist. You can't depend on a general journalist who goes on reporting about mediocre politicians and their stupid speeches. You don't send the same type of journalist to report when physicists are talking; you have to send a special person or you have to appoint a physicist to report about the conference, because only he will be able to understand.

It is said that when Albert Einstein was alive, only twelve persons really understood -- all over the world -- what he was talking about. Now, who is going to report about him? Only one of these twelve may be able to report about Albert Einstein and his theory of relativity in such a way that at least some glimpse becomes possible to the common masses.

But when you send a journalist here, you never inquire, you never require that he should be a meditator, that he should know something about meditation, something about yoga, something about Sufism, Zen, Tao, Tantra. No, these are not the requirements.

Any Tom, Harry, Dick is thought to be perfectly capable of reporting about meditation, about Tantra, about Tao, about Zen, about Sufism. And people depend on his reports, and he has never meditated in his life. He has never had a single moment of meditation. He knows nothing of a state of no-thought. He knows nothing of those intervals, those spaces, where mind disappears, ego disappears, time disappears. How can he understand?

Just by watching people sitting silently, will you be able to understand anything? If somebody is sitting silently with closed eyes...? You can take a picture of the person but you will not be able to take a picture of the inner happening. You can see people dancing, you can see them like Sufis, whirling dervishes; you can see them dancing and you will report that you saw people dancing, jumping -- but how are you going to know their inner world?
You should participate! You should dance yourself. You should have a taste of it. Only then you may be able to report something of it -- only something, not all of it, because all of it is impossible to report, all of it is inexpressible.
And when these people report, who don't understand, their report is only sensational. And then the masses read them, and they read even that report according to their own ideas. Then misunderstanding upon misunderstanding, layers and layers of misunderstanding! I must be the most misunderstood man in this country at this moment.

Carolyn, a curvaceous traveling saleslady, was waiting her turn to register at a motel when she overheard the desk clerk tell Zabroski, the man in front of her, that he had just gotten the last room. She waited for the Pole to leave the desk and then approached him.
"There is not another motel within miles and I am dead tired," she pleaded. "Look -- you don't know me, I don't know you, they don't know us, we don't know them. How's about me spending the night with you?"
"I don't care," said Zabroski.

They went to his room; he took off his clothes and so did she. "Listen," she said, "you don't know me, I don't know you, they don't know us, we don't know them. Let's have a few drinks. I've got a bottle."
After they had gotten a little high, she cuddled up to him and whispered, "You don't know me, I don't know you, they don't know us, we don't know them -- let's have a party."
"Hey," said the Pole, "if I don't know you and you don't know me and they don't know us and we don't know them -- who the hell we gonna invite?"

Now the word 'party' is creating the trouble! The Pole is going to understand according to his idea of a party. Carolyn has something else in her mind -- a real party! What I am saying is totally different from what is being understood by the outsiders. But that is natural and I accept it. I have no grudge, no complaint about it. It's how it is going to be.
I can be understood only by those who are in deep love, who are in deep trust with me. I can be understood only by those who are ready to put their minds aside. In that state of silence, something from me can stir your heart, can trigger a process of understanding.

The fourth question:
Question 4
BELOVED MASTER,
WHERE DO REBELLION AND SURRENDER MEET?

Prem Rajo, rebellion and surrender meet in the idea of the ego. Drop the ego and simultaneously surrender happens, and rebellion too.

I know what you mean by your question. You mean that rebellion and surrender seem to be polar opposites -- how can they meet? How can one be rebellious AND surrendered? That's your question. That's how mind thinks about rebellion and surrender; through the mind you cannot see them meeting anywhere.

A man who is surrendered will look nonrebellious. A man who is rebellious will always be disobeying -- how can he surrender? He may die, but he will not surrender.

You know only one kind of surrender: the surrender that is forced on you, the surrender that is not done by you but you are made to do it -- at the point of a dagger you are forced to surrender. That is not the surrender I am talking about.

I am talking of a totally different kind of surrender. You are not forced -- you see the ugliness of the ego, you see the misery of the ego, you see the stinking ego, and you use the master as an excuse to drop the ego. The master is always an excuse -- remember.

When you surrender to me you are not surrendering to anybody in particular -- because I am not there as a person. And when you surrender I am not accepting your surrender, remember -- because there is nothing to surrender, just a false idea of the ego.

It is like a man who believes that he is rich and he is not, and he comes to me and he says, "I surrender my whole kingdom to you." I say, "Okay, I accept."

I accept so that you can get rid of this nonsense. You don't have it, so it is not going to create any trouble for me.

Two hippies were resting under a tree. It was a full-moon night, and they were really high. One looked long at the moon and then said, "I would like to purchase it, and I am ready to pay any price."
The other said, "Forget all about it, because I am not going to sell it."

When you surrender your ego you are not surrendering anything which is real, just an idea. If it was really something, then the master would be burdened by so many egos, he would be killed! He would have to carry a Himalaya of egos; it would be impossible for him to live; even to walk, even to breathe. I have one hundred thousand sannyasins in the world -- now, if I have to keep one hundred thousand egos, then Vivek will go mad!
She goes mad about other things she has to arrange. So many presents come to me and she wants to dispose of them immediately, because it becomes a burden on her to go on collecting them and to keep track of where they are and to keep them clean. Now she is very much worried about my fountain pens. She goes on asking every day, "When are you going to distribute these?" -- because it is becoming a problem for her. I think I must have two hundred or more, and I am waiting so that at least I can give one fountain pen to each sannyasin -- I am waiting! Right now it will be a problem for me; whom to give and whom not to give, so I go on telling Vivek, "Wait a little, wait." And I tell many people, "Go on bringing them!" Now Niranjana is going especially to the West to bring as many fountain pens as possible. But if I have to keep all

these egos it will be impossible -- Lao Tzu House is too small!

I accept your ego happily because there is no problem in accepting it. You are not giving anything to me, I am not taking anything from you. But you are getting rid of an idea, a fantasy, and your getting rid of it is the point. It is not surrender forced on you; it is surrender out of your own understanding.

And then rebellion happens on its own accord, because a man without the ego is the most rebellious in the world. Again remember: when I use the word 'rebellion' I don't mean it in the political sense. A man without the ego cannot have any politics. Politics needs great egoists; the whole game of politics is the game of ego, it is an ego trip.

When you are no longer burdened by the ego, when you have been unburdened, when the master has taken your so-called ego away from you, your life will be that of a rebel, of tremendous revolution. You will not be a Hindu and you will not be a Mohammedan and you will not be a Christian and you will not be a Jaina. This is revolution. You will not be a German and you will not be a Japanese and you will not be an Indian. This is revolution. You will not belong to any religion, to any sect, to any society, to any tradition. This is revolution.

And because there is no ego, God can flow through you; great creativity becomes possible. THIS is revolution! And you will live now in a total let-go; in fact God will live through you -- not you. And God cannot be a slave, and God cannot be reduced to any slavery, and you cannot be reduced to any slavery either now.

Prem Rajo, rebellion and surrender certainly meet -- in dropping the ego. But don't just go on trying to understand these things theoretically. Do something existential so that what I am saying becomes your experience -- because only experience liberates.

The fifth question:
Question 5
BELOVED MASTER,
I hear the Indians bragging too much about their spirituality. What do You say about it?

Sahajo, Indians have nothing else to brag about! Forgive them, be compassionate to them. They don't have money, they don't have big houses, they don't have big cars, they don't have anything of science, technology. It is very difficult for them to maintain their ego; spirituality is their shelter. And spirituality is a commodity. You can brag about it very easily because nobody can prove that you don't have it, neither can you prove that you have it. It is so invisible that either you accept it or you don't accept it -- but you cannot prove it.
And why particularly, spirituality? It sometimes happens that if you are very greedy you will pretend just the opposite, because that is the only way to hide the greed. If you are a very angry person, you may pretend to be very polite, compassionate, loving, because that is the only way to hide your anger. If you are obsessed with sex, you may start talking about BRAHMACHARYA -- celibacy. The opposite is the way to hide it.

The Indian mind is utterly materialistic, and the only way to hide it is to talk about, brag about, spirituality. Yes, there have been a few people in this country -- a Buddha, a Mahavira, a Patanjali, a Krishna -- who were utterly spiritual. But such people have been everywhere! Heraclitus, Pythagoras, Socrates, Plotinus, in Greece -- the same type of people, the same quality, the same fragrance. Lao Tzu, Chuang Tzu, Lieh Tzu, Mencius, in China -- the same perfume. Christ, Eckhart, Francis, Bohme -- the same dimension. Spiritual people have been everywhere; it is nobody's possession. But Indians brag about it, I know.

Sahajo, I can understand your question, because what you see all around is just the opposite. That's why they brag about spirituality. Each Indian thinks that just by being an Indian he is a Buddha. It is not so easy to be a Buddha! And Buddha has nothing to do with being an Indian.

In fact, Buddha was not an Indian, he was a Nepalese. He was born on the border of India and Nepal; in fact, now that part is in Nepal. And the statue of Buddha that you see does not look like a Nepalese, or does it? It is not a true statue. It does not look like Bahadur! Nepalese are closer to Chinese, Tibetans, Japanese -- the Mongol type. Buddha's statue does not look like a Nepalese, not at all.

The statues were not made at the time of Buddha nor when he died. The statues were made five hundred years later. And you will be surprised to know, they were made in imitation of Alexander the Great. Alexander had come to India by that time, and he had a beautiful face, the Greek features. The statue of the Buddha is Greek! The man himself was Nepalese; the statue is Greek.

And all the scriptures that you read about Buddha are not original. Some have been translated from Tibetan, some from Chinese, some from Japanese. The originals were destroyed by the Hindus -- and now the same Hindus go on proclaiming that they are the inheritors of Buddha.
Buddhists were killed by the Indians!
A time came after Buddha's death, after seven or eight hundred years, when all the Buddhists either were killed or they had to escape out of India. India was completely cleaned of Buddhists. Yes, they were killed, burned alive. Those who were fortunate escaped. In a way that was a blessing, because the people who escaped, the monks, they escaped to Tibet, to China. Those who were not too much afraid, they escaped to Tibet -- Tibet was very close. Those who were very much afraid went to China, to Mongolia, to Korea, to Taiwan, they simply never stopped, they went on and on! That's how the whole of Asia was converted to Buddhism. The whole credit goes to the Hindus. And now these same Hindus go on claiming that, "We have given birth to Buddha." Feel ashamed!
But India is poor and very materialistic. Poor people cannot be otherwise; a poor person is bound to be materialistic, grossly materialistic. But then where to feed one's ego? India has nothing else to brag about. Spirituality is a good commodity -- invisible, unprovable. Anybody can say, "I have experienced God." You cannot disprove it. Maybe he is right, maybe he is not right, but it is beyond proof this way or that.
But don't be worried about these stupid people who go on talking about spirituality, not knowing even the ABC of it. Yes, they may know something about the Vedas and the

Upanishads. They may have crammed a few sutras, they may repeat them parrotlike, but they don't understand what they are saying -- because their lives belie it.

"Excuse me, sir," said the Indian, "but aren't you the gentleman that fetched my son out of the lake yesterday?"
"Why, yes, I am," said the embarrassed rescuer. "But that's alright -- let's just say nothing more about it."
"Say nothing about it?" shrieked the Indian. "Indeed, man, where is his cap?"

He is not even grateful! He has not come to say thanks to the person that, "You have saved the life of my child." He is worried about the cap....

A Mexican, an Italian and an Indian were discussing what they would do if they awoke one morning to discover that they were millionaires. The Mexican said he would build a bullring.
The Italian said he would hire thirty hookers -- one for each night of the month.
The Indian said he would go to sleep again and see if he could make another million.

If you watch the Indian mind, it IS materialistic. And it is not that it is materialistic only today -- it has always been, because twenty-five centuries ago Buddha was telling people not to be materialists, and he was talking to the Indians. And even before Buddha, almost twenty-five centuries before Buddha, Parshvanath was telling Indians not to be materialists.

India has given the greatest materialist philosophy to the world: the philosophy of the Charvakas. The Greek philosopy of Epicurus is nothing compared to the philosophy the Charvakas have given to the world. The word CHARVAKA is significant; it comes from CHARUVAK. Charuvak means sweet message, beautiful message. Another name of the philosophy of the Charvakas is LOKAYAT. Lokayat means popular; in which the majority of the people believe.

Maybe it is because of the Indian materialism that a Buddha, a Mahavira, a Parshvanath, a Neminatha, were possible. When people are too materialistic, a few intelligent people are bound to get bored by the whole thing. It becomes nauseating, it becomes sickening! Life works in a very strange way: when the society is materialistic, a few avant-garde people start becoming spiritualists.

Now the West is very materialist, and a great longing for spirituality is arising there. That's why you have come here. You don't see many Indians here. They believe they already know. They believe they have nothing to do -- no more research, no more inquiry. And they have become very cunning. Poor people are bound to become cunning. Poverty is the root cause of all sins, of all crimes. So they start learning devious ways. They start becoming hypocrites: they say one thing, they do another thing. They start learning how to wear masks. You can see it, not only in the ordinary people, but in the so-called leaders and saints, political and religious. You will not find such hypocrites anywhere else.

An airplane crossing the Atlantic ran into engine trouble. After dumping all the baggage to lighten the load, the pilot informed the passengers that three people would have to jump in order to save the rest.
"We need three volunteers," announced the pilot.
Immediately an Englishman left his seat, shouted, "God save the Queen!" and jumped out.
In a little while a Frenchman got up and said, "Long live France!" and took the plunge.
Five minutes later an Indian politician in pure snow-white, handspun clothes, stood up, screamed, "Long live Mahatma Gandhi!" and threw a Mexican out the door.

The last question:
Question 6
BELOVED MASTER,
WITH THE THREAT OF NUCLEAR DESTRUCTION, HOW CAN WE BE "JOYFUL AND SERENE"?

Julia Bradley, what else can you do? Time is short -- dance, sing, be joyous! If there were no nuclear destruction possible, no threat, you could have postponed. You could have said, "Tomorrow we will dance." But now there may be no tomorrow; you cannot postpone.
This is for the first time that tomorrow is absolutely doubtful. It has always been doubtful, but this time it is absolutely doubtful. Individually it is always doubtful: tomorrow may never come, even the next breath may not come in. Individually death is always imminent, but this time it is something global, universal. The whole earth may

disappear, may explode; not only all human beings, birds, animals, trees, the whole life on earth may be gone.

Now it is up to you, Julia Bradley. You can cry and weep and you can beat your head against the wall; that will not stop nuclear destruction and its threat. In fact it may bring it closer and faster because sad people, miserable people, are dangerous people. Misery creates destructiveness.

But if the whole humanity can start dancing, rejoicing, feasting -- seeing that the threat is very close by.... The third world war can start any moment. The foolish politicians have enough atomic energy piled up to destroy this earth not only once but seven hundred times. That many atomic bombs, hydrogen bombs, have accumulated that we can kill each person seven hundred times -- although a person dies only once. But politicians don't want to take any chance, so seven hundred times you can be killed. It will not be needed, one time will do -- because we have heard only one story of resurrection; that is Jesus Christ. And even if Jesus Christ is resurrected and everybody is gone, what is he going to do? He will have to commit suicide.

Rejoice! -- because then there is a possibility. If the whole earth can become full of joy it will be less possible to destroy -- because who is going to destroy it? We are the people; it is up to us to decide that we want to live or that we want to commit suicide. If we start a new climate in the world -- of rejoicing, of dancing, of singing, of meditation, of prayer -- and if people become full of bliss, cheerfulness, laughter.... If the world is full of laughter, there is every possibility we can avoid nuclear destruction, because joyous people don't want to destroy, they want to create.

And anyway, Julia Bradley, you are going to die. Whether the whole earth remains or not does not matter. YOU are going to die, that much is certain. How does it matter to you whether the world continues after you or not? If it continues, good; if it does not continue, good. How does it matter to you? You will not be here anymore. As far as you are concerned, death is absolutely certain. Still you love, still you sing, you listen to music, so what difference does it make?

If destruction has become global, we have to make laughter and dancing also global, in the same proportion, to counteract it. Why be sad? And what are you going to gain by sadness? Is it going to help in any way? It may be just a trick of the mind to keep you sad, it may be just a defense. You must be sad; now you are trying to find more and more rationalizations for remaining sad. And this is a beautiful rationalization, that, "What are you talking about? Telling people to dance and sing and rejoice, and the world is on the verge of destruction? Tell people to be sad; tell people to cry and weep and forget all laughter and forget all love!" Is that going to help in any way? It will bring the universal suicide closer.

But somewhere deep down in you there is a sadness that does not want to leave you, and that sadness is trying to find rationalizations.

David came from an orthodox family. One day he announced, "Mama, I am going to marry an Irish girl named Maggie Coyle."

The woman froze in shock. "That's nice, David," she said, "but don't tell your papa. You know he has got a weak

heart. And I would not tell your sister, Ida -- remember how strongly she feels about religious questions. And don't mention it to your brother, Louis -- he might give you a bust in the mouth. Me, it is alright you told. I'm gonna commit suicide anyway."

Somewhere deep down you must have a suicidal instinct. You are just finding rationalizations.

Yes, I know the world is facing a danger, but each individual has always faced the danger of death. Still Jesus says: Rejoice and rejoice! And again I say unto you, rejoice! And in fact, Jesus was saying to people, "This world is to be destroyed soon. The Day of Judgment is very close by." It was never so close as it is now. Jesus was wrong! Twenty centuries have passed, and he was saying to people, "In your very life you will see the Day of Judgment!" His prophecy was not fulfilled.

In fact he was not a prophet, he was a mystic. He was saying these things for a totally different purpose. He was saying, "The Day of Judgment is very close by -- transform yourself! Don't waste time, don't postpone!"

Now the day of universal death is really close by, so, Julia, don't postpone. Rejoice, rejoice, I say unto you again and again, rejoice -- because if you can die rejoicing, you will transcend death, you will go beyond death.

One who can die blissfully never dies, because in death he comes to know immortality.

And if the time is short, then you have to spread this orange laughter all over the world. Then it is time that we should make people more and more joyous. Tell them that death can take over this earth any moment -- the days are

numbered -- because the politicians are fools, and the fools have so much power now that it is a sheer miracle that the third world war has not happened yet. It should have happened. Why it has not happened yet is a mystery. Having all these stupid politicians all over the world having all the power.... Just pushing a button and the process can be triggered, and within ten minutes the whole earth will be on fire -- a fire that can melt steel and rock, a fire that will melt everything. The whole earth can explode.
This is good news! You don't have time to waste. Julia, come on -- join the dance!
Enough for today.
The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 4
Chapter #7
Chapter title: See yourself in others
28 August 1979 am in Buddha Hall

ALL BEINGS TREMBLE BEFORE VIOLENCE.
ALL FEAR DEATH.
ALL LOVE LIFE.

SEE YOURSELF IN OTHERS.
THEN WHOM CAN YOU HURT?
WHAT HARM CAN YOU DO?

HE WHO SEEKS HAPPINESS
BY HURTING THOSE WHO SEEK HAPPINESS
WILL NEVER FIND HAPPINESS.

FOR YOUR BROTHER IS LIKE YOU.

HE WANTS TO BE HAPPY.
NEVER HARM HIM
AND WHEN YOU LEAVE THIS LIFE
YOU TOO WILL FIND HAPPINESS.

NEVER SPEAK HARSH WORDS
FOR THEY WILL REBOUND UPON YOU.
ANGRY WORDS HURT
AND THE HURT REBOUNDS.

LIKE A BROKEN GONG
BE STILL, BE SILENT.
KNOW THE STILLNESS OF FREEDOM
WHERE THERE IS NO MORE STRIVING.

LIKE HERDSMEN DRIVING THEIR COWS INTO THE FIELDS
OLD AGE AND DEATH WILL DRIVE YOU BEFORE THEM.

BUT THE FOOL IN HIS MISCHIEF FORGETS
AND HE LIGHTS THE FIRE
WHEREIN ONE DAY HE MUST BURN.

HE WHO HARMS THE HARMLESS
OR HURTS THE INNOCENT
TEN TIMES SHALL HE FALL --

INTO TORMENT OR INFIRMITY,
INJURY OR DISEASE OR MADNESS,
PERSECUTION OR FEARFUL ACCUSATION,

LOSS OF FAMILY, LOSS OF FORTUNE.

FIRE FROM HEAVEN SHALL STRIKE HIS HOUSE AND WHEN HIS BODY HAS BEEN STRUCK DOWN HE SHALL RISE IN HELL.

What is the greatest mystery of existence? It is not life, it is not love -- it is death.
Science tries to understand life; hence remains partial. Life is only a part of the total mystery, and a very tiny part -- superficial, just on the circumference. It has no depth, it is shallow. Hence science remains shallow. It knows much and knows it in great detail, but all its knowing remains superficial -- as if you know the ocean only by its waves and you have never dived deep into it, and you don't know its infinity.
Life is finite, momentary. This moment it is there, the next moment gone. It is a breeze, comes and goes... it does not abide. Hence the claim of science that it knows the truth is not true. It knows only the partial truth, and to claim the partial as the total is one of the absurdities of the scientific approach. What it knows is true, but it is not the whole truth. And the moment you claim that the part is the whole, you falsify even the part.
Love is midway. It is exactly in the middle of life and death. It is half life, half death; hence the fear of love. Unless you are ready to die, you cannot know love -- although by dying you become more alive. It is through death that love resurrects itself again and again. It is by disappearing that it appears again and again.

Love is far more mysterious than life itself, because it has life in it and something more too: life plus death. Fifty percent of love is life, fifty percent is death. And only those who are ready to die will know the life of love. Those who are afraid to die will never enter the mystery of love.

Art explores the world of love. Hence art is far truer than science, goes deeper than science. The vision of the artist contains much more than scientific knowledge can ever contain, although the way of art is totally different from the way of science. It has to be different. Science can be objective because it is peripheral. Art cannot be absolutely objective; it is fifty percent objective, fifty percent subjective. It cannot be free from the observer.

Science tries to be absolutely free from the observer; the observer should not enter in it, should not participate, should remain absolutely neutral, nonparticipant, a spectator. He should not bring himself into it. That is the scientific outlook.

But how can you avoid the knower? If you really want to know, the knower is bound to enter into knowledge.

Now the more perceptive scientists are becoming alert to the phenomenon that it is impossible to be absolutely impartial: the observer is bound to be reflected by his observations. He cannot be a pure spectator. He will interpret, he will theorize, he will create hypotheses and he will move through his hypotheses. He will choose because the details are infinite. He will have to focus.

Who is going to decide where to focus, what to choose, what not to choose, in what direction to move? Because existence is multidimensional and you cannot move in all dimensions simultaneously, you can move only in one

dimension, it is bound to be that what you know will be affected by the knower. But this has been the understanding of art from the very beginning.

When the scientist looks at the flower he tries to be just an observer. He simply takes note of what he sees; he does not bring his dreams, his visions into his observation. The poet has more freedom, the painter has more freedom. He moves deep into the phenomenon of the flower. He participates in its mystery, he is not separate; for a few moments he becomes one with it. There are moments when the poet dances with the flower -- in the wind, in the sun, in the rain. There are moments when the poet becomes the flower, when the observer is the observed. There are moments when the poet not only looks at the flower but looks THROUGH the flower, becomes the eyes of the flower. Naturally, he dives deeper than science; he brings far bigger diamonds, far more precious stones.

Poetry, painting, sculpture, music -- they come closer to reality because they are ready to participate. But they are only halfway.

Religion is concerned basically with death. Death contains all: death contains life, death contains love, and something more which neither life can contain nor love can contain. Death is the culmination of all, the crescendo, the highest peak. Life is the base, death is the peak -- love is somewhere in between.

The religious man, the mystic, tries to explore the mystery of death. In exploring the mystery of death, he inevitably comes to know what life is, what love is. Those are not his goals. His goal is to penetrate death, because there seems to be nothing more mysterious than death. Love has some

mystery because of death, and life also has some mystery because of death.
If death disappears there will be no mystery in life. That's why a dead thing has no mystery in it, a corpse has no mystery in it, because it cannot die anymore. You think it has no mystery because life has disappeared? No, it has no mystery because now it cannot die anymore. Death has disappeared, and with death automatically life disappears. Life is only one of the ways of death's expression.
The corpse has no mystery because, with the disappearance of death, love is gone. Just one moment before there was great mystery; now there is nothing. You can only go and bury the dead or burn the dead. The full stop has come. The process has stopped. It is death that keeps the process going on. It is death that keeps you aware of something mysterious, miraculous, magical.
Religion is founded in the search into death, and to understand death is to understand all. To experience death is to experience all, because in the experience of death, you not only experience life at its highest, love at its deepest; in experiencing death you enter into the divine. Death is the door to the divine. Death is the name of the door of God's temple. The meditator dies voluntarily.
There are two kinds of death. One is the ordinary death; everybody dies it. That is not the mystic's death. The ordinary death happens against you; you go into it very reluctantly. You don't want to go into it, you cling to life. You don't become available to it, you don't become open to it. Hence you go on missing the point.
Many times you have died, but each time you died so much obsessed with life that you could not see what death is.

Your eyes were focused on life, you were clinging to life. You were snatched away, and the only way to snatch you away is to make you unconscious.

When the surgeon is going to operate on you he makes you unconscious, he gives you anesthesia. That's what death has been doing for centuries, from eternity. If you can't go joyously, dancingly into it, there is a built-in anesthesia: people become unconscious before they die. That's why you don't remember your past lives, because you became so deeply unconscious before you died that the chapter became closed.

If a person can die conscious, alert, he will remember his past life. That's how India discovered that there is not only one life; millions of times you have lived. You are not new, you are very ancient pilgrims. But each time you died reluctantly, unconsciously; hence you forgot everything.

The mystic dies voluntarily. The mystic dies before the actual death; he dies in meditation. Lovers know a little bit of it because fifty percent of love is death. That's why love is very close to meditation. Lovers know something of meditativeness; unawares they have stumbled upon it. Lovers know silence, stillness. Lovers know timelessness, but they have stumbled upon it -- it has not been their basic search.

The mystic goes into it very consciously, deliberately. Meditation is total death, voluntary death. One dies into oneself. Before death ever comes the mystic dies. He dies every day. Whenever he meditates he goes into death. He reaches to those heights, those depths, and, slowly slowly, as meditation becomes natural, he starts living death. Then each moment of his life is also a moment of death. Each

moment he dies to the past and remains fresh, because the moment you die to the past you become alive to the present.

He dies continuously and remains as fresh as dewdrops or lotus leaves in the early morning sun. His freshness, his youth, his timelessness, depend on the art of dying. And then when actual death comes he has nothing to fear, because he has known this death thousands of times. He is thrilled, enchanted; he dances! Joyously he wants to die. Death does not create fear in him; on the contrary, a tremendous attraction, a great pull.

And because he dies joyously he dies without becoming unconscious, and he knows the total secret of death. Knowing it, he has the master key that can unlock all the doors. He has the key that can open the door of God.

And now he knows that he is not a separate individual. The very idea of separation was stupid. The very idea of separation was there because he was not aware of death. You think yourself separate as an ego because you don't know what death is. If you know death, the ego will evaporate. And the moment the ego evaporates you start feeling for the whole existence.

That is why Buddha teaches nonviolence. It is not a moral teaching, not like Mahatma Gandhi. Mahatma Gandhi's whole teaching is moral, social, political. It is ordinary; it has no mysticism in it. Buddha's nonviolence is totally different, qualitatively different. When he teaches nonviolence he means there is nobody other than you. To hurt anybody is to hurt yourself. To destroy anything is to destroy yourself. To be against, inimical, antagonistic to

anybody is to be against your own being -- because there is only one being that permeates and pervades all.
Buddha never uses the word 'God', but by subtle hints he indicates again and again. This is his way of indicating. His respect for God is so tremendous that he feels to use the word 'God' is to commit a crime. That is my understanding of Buddha. He does not use the word because of deep respect, great reverence. He has been misunderstood -- as it happens always. All the buddhas are misunderstood, because the people who try to understand them have no insight, are blind, deaf.
Buddha has been thought to be an atheist. Nothing can be farther from the truth. Buddha has been thought to be against God. Nothing can be more untrue. Buddha's reverence is such that he cannot assert the word 'God'. To assert the word 'God' is to create a separation; as if "God" is separate from "me." The inseparableness is so much, the unity with God is so much, that even the word cannot be uttered.
That has been a tradition in ancient Israel: for centuries the name of God was not asserted. Only the highest priest of the great temple of Jerusalem was allowed, and that too in absolute aloneness, and that too only once a year. Nobody else was allowed to use the name of God. Only one day, once in a year, the highest priest, the purest, the most pious, the holiest man amongst all the Jews, would enter into the shrine, the innermost shrine of the temple. All the doors would be closed. Thousands of people would gather all around the temple just to be present there while the priest asserts the name of God. Nobody would hear it -- the priest would whisper it.

You cannot shout the name of God; it can only be whispered in silence -- and only once. It was a beautiful tradition. It shows reverence. Otherwise, beautiful words like 'God' become contaminated, become profane. They become ugly.

Even now, Jews, whenever they use the word 'God' or they write the word 'God', spell it differently. They don't use the full spelling G-o-d. They simply use G-d, they leave out the 'o', just to show that, "We are not competent enough to assert the full name." The essential part, the middle core of it, the very soul of it, is left out. And that 'o' is beautiful because it is also the symbol zero. It is not only 'o' but zero too, and zero is the innermost core of God.

Buddha calls it SHUNYATA -- emptiness, void. 'G' and 'd' are just peripheral; it's okay, one can use them, but the innermost core has to be left unexpressed. It is because of tremendous reverence for God, for existence, that Buddha has never used the word. But hints are there; for the perceptive ones, for the sensitive ones, there are infinite hints. In each sentence there is a hint.

The moment you die consciously, in meditation, God is born -- because you disappear as an ego. Then what is left? A stillness, a tremendously potential stillness, a silence that is pregnant -- pregnant with the whole. When you disappear, boundaries disappear. You melt and merge with everybody else.

The poet, only once in a while, becomes attuned with the flower, attuned with the sunrise, attuned with a bird on the wing. The mystic becomes one with existence forever. He is the flower and he is the cloud and he is the sun and he is the moon and he is the stars. He starts living in a

multidimensional way because the whole life is his. He lives in the tree as greenness, and in the rose as redness. He is on the wings of the bird, he is the roar of the lion and he is the waves of the ocean. He is all... how can he be violent? How can he hurt? How can he be destructive? His whole life becomes a creativity.
The mystic is utterly creative.

The sutras:

ALL BEINGS TREMBLE BEFORE VIOLENCE.
ALL FEAR DEATH.
ALL LOVE LIFE.

Simple statements, but with great meaning.
ALL BEINGS TREMBLE BEFORE VIOLENCE. Even unconscious animals tremble before violence. Even though you may not make them in any way alert that they are being killed, but still, before a sheep is killed, she trembles. Now the scientists have discovered that the same is true about trees. When the woodcutter comes into the garden or into the forest the trees tremble.
Now there are sophisticated instruments like cardiographs, to note the trembling of the heart of the tree, which can make a graph of what is happening to the inside of the tree. Even the entry of the woodcutter into the forest.... He has not said anything, he has not yet cut a single branch of the tree, but the trembling arises as if some intuitive source makes the tree alert.
And scientists have watched a miracle: the same woodcutter with his axe on his shoulder may move from

the forest. If he has not cut any tree -- if he is just passing by the way, going to some other place -- no tree trembles. It seems as if the intention of the woodcutter -- just the intention, not any act -- is being relayed, broadcast to the trees.

And one thing more they have observed. You may not cut the tree; a hunter may come and kill a tiger -- but all the trees surrounding the place tremble. Even the death of the tiger is enough to make them sad, to make them afraid. What scientists have just now become aware of, within these last three or four years, the mystics have been aware of for centuries.

Buddha says: ALL BEINGS TREMBLE BEFORE VIOLENCE. Violence is something against nature. The religious person cannot be violent -- not that he practices nonviolence, remember. If you practice nonviolence you will become a Gandhian, a phony. The Gandhian is not a religious person. He practices nonviolence, he TRIES to become nonviolent -- he has no understanding. He creates a character, but deep down he has no consciousness which can function as a center of that character.

The mystic first creates the consciousness, then the character follows on its own accord. And the moralist creates the character, but consciousness does not follow the character. Character is a very superficial thing. You can find in this country... there are thousands of people who practice nonviolence, the Jainas particularly.

The Buddhists have forgotten all that Buddha has said. The day Buddhism had to leave India, it left its nonviolence too. Now Buddhists are all meat-eaters -- the Chinese, the Japanese, the Koreans. Of course they have rationalized it.

The rationalization is that, "We eat the meat only of those animals who have died a natural death." So in China, in Japan or in Buddhist countries, you will find written on shops' boards, "Here only that meat is served which has been taken from animals who have died a natural death." Now, not so many animals are dying a natural death that they can supply the whole of Asia. But that's enough -- people are cunning.

But in India the Jainas are still practicing nonviolence. But because they practice it, it remains something false, something closer to hypocrisy. It does not transform their being, it does not make them luminous, it does not give them grace and beauty. And in their ordinary life they are as angry, as full of ambition -- or even more so -- than others. And that "more" can be understood; there is a reason.

They have somehow forced themselves to be nonviolent. Now where will their violence go? It will have to find some new ways, new outlets. Because their master, Mahavira, who was a contemporary of Buddha, said to them: Create a consciousness which is followed by nonviolence -- in the same way as Buddha said it. In the same way as Buddhists have misunderstood Buddha, they have found a legal way to get out of it.

"Don't kill," Buddha said. And they say, "We don't kill; we only eat the meat of the animal who has died naturally." This is a legal strategy to get out of it.

Jainas have followed in a routine way, without understanding, the message of Mahavira... because Mahavira said: Don't kill animals, don't cut trees -- he was the first to say: Don't cut trees -- so Jainas have followed it,

not understanding the depth and the significance of it, but only as a dead letter. Literally they have followed, so they stopped farming because in farming you will have to cut plants and trees.

They stopped being warriors. Mahavira was born into a warrior race; all twenty-four Jaina TIRTHANKARAS were warriors. Of course it is absolutely certain that the people who became interested in Jaina tirthankaras must have come, at least the majority of them, from the KSHATRIYAS -- the warrior race, the samurai of India. But they could not remain warriors anymore, they had to drop their swords.

They could not be warriors, they could not be farmers, and the brahmins wouldn't allow them to be brahmins. And they were not interested either in being brahmins, because they were not interested in brahmin scriptures -- because those scriptures are full of violence.

In those scriptures animal sacrifice is allowed; not only animal sacrifice but human sacrifice too -- that at the altar of God you can sacrifice human beings. Once in a while, even in these days, this twentieth century, it happens in India: once in a while a child is sacrificed, a man is sacrificed -- even now!

They could not become brahmins, they could not remain kshatriyas, warriors. They would not like to become sudras. To be cobblers was impossible because that is violence, and it was against their ego to become sweepers. Then the only possible way for them was to be business people. So all the Jainas became business people, and their whole repressed violence became their ambition, their greed.

Hence the Jainas' is a small community in India, a very small community, but it manages and controls the majority of the wealth of the country. It is the richest community. The whole violence became directed towards one thing -- money. You can hurt people by being rich without hurting them in any visible way. You can exploit people. You need not kill them, you need not drink their blood, but you can still exploit them to such an extent that no blood is left in them. That's what happened with the Jainas. That is always going to happen if you try to do the superficial first.
It is as stupid as if I want to invite you for dinner -- I need not invite your shadow, it comes with you. If I invite your shadow, the shadow is not going to come; it cannot come and there is no question of your coming because you are not invited at all.

Character is a shadow phenomenon, consciousness is the center. Character simply reflects consciousness. So these sutras have to be understood not as moral teachings, but as spiritual insights. ALL BEINGS TREMBLE BEFORE VIOLENCE. "All beings" means trees, birds, animals, men....
We are so cunning that we go on saying that man is the master. Animals are created for him to enjoy, trees are created for him. Not only that we make distinctions and differences between man and other animals and other planes of existence, we make differences in humanity too. For example, Adolf Hitler used to think that the Germans, particularly the Nordics, the purest Germans, are made by God to dominate the whole world. All other races are a

little lower than the pure Aryans. So if they don't yield, don't surrender, they can be destroyed.

Jews have always been thinking that they are the chosen people. Hindus have always thought that they are the most pious people, God's own people; God always takes birth in Hindu families, nowhere else. Hindus have always thought that this country, India, is the only sacred country. But this stupidity is nothing special to Hindus; everybody thinks that way.

Mohammedans think that God has given the real and the final dispensation to Mohammed in the Koran. Now there is no need for any master, no need for any Buddha. The Koran is the full stop; evolution has stopped at the Koran. And Mohammedans have the privilege and the responsibility to turn the whole humanity into Mohammedans. And if people resist they have to be killed for their own sake.

And so is the case with Christians, because their Jesus is the only begotten Son of God. And what are all others -- bastards? Only Jesus is the only begotten Son of God, and you can reach heaven only through Jesus -- not through Buddha, not through Krishna, not through Zarathustra. No, Jesus is the ONLY way, the ONLY truth!

So not only in animals and trees have we made a hierarchy, we are trying to make a hierarchy in man too. All men are the same. Yes, there may be superficial differences -- which is good. It will be very sad if those superficial differences disappear. They make life more enchanting; they give life variety, color. They make life a garden, full of different colors and different perfumes. Small differences are beautiful; they have to be cherished, they

have not to be destroyed. Man has not to be made into a single kind of humanity. These differences -- of Jews and Hindus and Mohammedans and Christians -- are beautiful. The differences in Chinese and Japanese and Germans and English and French and Italians, are beautiful, but these are superficial things.
At the core, all human beings are equal and the same.

Put two men and a woman on a desert island and this is what surely will happen:
If they are Jewish, the two men will play cards to see who gets the woman.
If they are English, they will discuss the weather and ignore the woman because they are more interested in each other.
If they are French, the two men will share the woman.
If they are Italian, the woman will kill one of the men.
If they are Eskimos, one of the men will claim the woman and then lend her to the other man.
If they are Americans, they will still be discussing the matter, trying to find a fair and amicable way to settle the problem.

These differences ARE there, and these differences are beautiful and they have to be cherished. They are lovely, they make the earth beautiful; otherwise it will be very boring.

The following ad appeared in the personal column of a London paper: "My husband and I have four sons. Has anyone any suggestions as to how we may have a daughter?"

Letters poured in from all over the world. An American wrote, "If at first you don't succeed, try, try again."
An Irishman sent a bottle of Scotch with instructions to drink the entire contents before retiring.
A German offered his collection of whips.
A Mexican recommended a diet of tacos and refried beans.
An Indian proposed yoga, particularly SHIRSHASANA -- the headstand.
A Frenchman merely wrote, "May I be of service?"

These differences are good, beautiful; they should be helped to grow. But the basic, the fundamental being is the same, not only in human beings but in ALL beings. The tree has a being -- only its body is different from you; and the tiger has a being -- only its body is different from you. The differences are only on the circumference. The center is always the same because the center is one. The name of the center is God.
ALL BEINGS TREMBLE BEFORE VIOLENCE. ALL FEAR DEATH. ALL LOVE LIFE. There is no need to prove these things. These are simple observations of everybody. But a few conclusions can be drawn from them. If ALL beings tremble before violence, then there is something wrong in violence, basically wrong. It is against nature.
Destructiveness is not natural, creativeness is natural. Not violence but compassion is natural, not violence but love. Not anger, not hate, because those are the things that lead to violence, those are the seeds. Love, compassion, sharing, these are natural. And to be natural is to be religious.

ALL FEAR DEATH; hence, do not kill. Rather, help people to know death. Their fear is because of ignorance. They are afraid of death because death is the greatest unknown. There is no way to know death unless you die. Help people to know death through meditation, because that is a way of dying and still remaining alive.

ALL LOVE LIFE; hence, love. Create contexts, spaces, where more love can grow. That's what I am doing here: creating a space where your love energies can flow, where they have no hindrance, no obstructions.

All the societies of the world have been too much war-oriented, hence they have not allowed love -- because if you allow love to flow, war disappears. If you allow love and help love and create contexts for love to grow and happen, it will be impossible for people to fight each other and kill each other.

So from the very beginning we have to give them military training. From the very beginning children have to be taught hatred. The Hindu is told to hate the Mohammedan, the Mohammedan is told to hate the Hindu. The Christian hates the Jew, the Jew hates the Christian, and so on, so forth. Each nation hates another nation, and in each nation also there are different, small communities which hate each other: Maharashtrians hating Gujaratis, Gujaratis hating Maharashtrians.

India is one country, but the North hates the South, the South hates the North. The Hindi-speaking people hate the non-Hindi-speaking people, and the non-Hindi-speaking people are always against the Hindi-speaking people.

It seems that we have been brought up in such a way that hate has become simple, habitual; we are habituated to it,

and love has become almost impossible. With so much hatred, with so many enemies, you are hating almost everybody. How can you love your wife? How can you love your children? How can you love your parents? And then impossible demands are made on you: you are told to love your wife, to love your husband, and you are told to hate everybody else in the world. These are contradictions. Either you can love all or you can hate all; you cannot divide.

The man who hates everybody else cannot love his wife -- it is impossible. He becomes accustomed to hate. Hate flows in his blood, it circulates in his being. If for twenty-three hours in the day you are hating, fighting, struggling, competing, then do you think for one hour back home with your wife you will be loving? Impossible! Those twenty-three hours will continue underneath.

So the policeman becomes a policeman twenty-four hours. Even when he is at home with his wife he behaves as if he is a policeman. The magistrate becomes a magistrate, the clerk becomes a clerk twenty-four hours -- not only in the office, he carries his files in his head. Even while making love to his wife he is calculating, he is doing a thousand and one other things in his mind. He may be in the office or he may be somewhere else....

Just watch when you are making love to your wife, where you are. Are you there? In fact, somebody else is making love to your wife; you are not there -- it is just a mechanical act. And do you think your wife is there? She is also not there. She may be in the kitchen or thinking how to purchase a new fridge -- may already be gone to the

supermarket. She may be there; she may not be with you at all.
That's why your love is not satisfying; on the contrary, it leaves you very frustrated. And can you love your children? Impossible! How can you love your parents? -- these are the people who have taught you all kinds of hatreds.
We need a totally different world, a different upbringing, where hate is not taught. This is a very strange world that we have created! Up to now what we have done to humanity is really unbelievable: on the one hand we teach them hate, and on the other hand we go on talking about peace. On the one hand we poison them, and on the other hand we tell them, "You are all brothers." We talk about brotherhood, and we prepare for war; we talk about world peace, and we prepare for war. This is sheer neurosis; this is not sanity! Man hitherto has remained insane, and the reason is a wrong upbringing.
We have not listened to the buddhas yet. Now it is time! We HAVE to listen to buddhas now. If we don't listen, just a few years more and the whole humanity is doomed. We cannot afford anymore not to listen.
ALL LOVE LIFE. Help people to love more. Love yourself. Rejoice in love.

SEE YOURSELF IN OTHERS.
THEN WHOM CAN YOU HURT?
WHAT HARM CAN YOU DO?

See the point: this is not a moral teaching -- this is a spiritual regeneration, a revolution. SEE YOURSELF IN OTHERS. Not philosophically only -- existentially. Put the

ego aside and you will be able to see that you are in all, that life is one. THEN WHOM CAN YOU HURT? WHAT HARM CAN YOU DO?

HE WHO SEEKS HAPPINESS
BY HURTING THOSE WHO SEEK HAPPINESS
WILL NEVER FIND HAPPINESS.

If you are trying to seek happiness by hurting those who also are seeking happiness, you cannot find happiness, because you have not even understood the most fundamental thing about life. In such ignorance how can you be happy?
Just see all around, watch with loving eyes, look with egoless mind, and you will see that life is absolutely against destructiveness. Life is creative energy. Even if sometimes people commit suicide, they commit it not in the service of death but in the service of life.
The people who commit suicide are the people who have been in tremendous love with life and feel frustrated, disillusioned. In those moments of disillusionment they go insane. Those people who commit suicide are not against life, remember. Ordinarily that's what is thought about these people, that they are against life. No, they are too much for life; they are so much for life that life cannot fulfill their demands. In utter frustration they commit suicide.

Mulla Nasruddin was so discouraged with life that he decided to commit suicide. One evening he walked out to the country, a loaf of bread tucked under his arm. When he

came to a train junction he lay down on the railroad tracks. A peasant passing by was amazed by the strange sight. "What are you doing," he asked, "lying on these tracks?" Said the Mulla, "I am going to commit suicide." "What do you need the bread for?" asked the peasant. "In this country," said the Mulla, "by the time the train gets here, a man could starve to death."

Nobody wants to die. That means life wants to persist for ever and ever. That means life is in love with eternity. In fact life IS eternal. Death only changes the form, it does not destroy -- but it creates fear because it is the most unknown phenomenon.

Fear disappears only when, in deep meditation, you become acquainted with death; when in deep meditation you know that "I am not the body, not the mind. Then how can there be death?" The body will go into the earth -- dust unto dust -- but your consciousness will persist forever. Then fear disappears. And when fear disappears in you, a great desire arises to help others also so that they can dissipate their fear -- because people living in fear are living in anguish. Their life is a nightmare surrounded by fear.

Life should be surrounded by love, not by fear. It is fear that creates anger. It is fear that ultimately creates violence. Have you watched? Fear is only a feminine form of anger and anger is a masculine form of fear. Fear is a passive form of anger and anger is an active form of fear. So you can change fear into anger very easily, and anger into fear -- very easily.

Sometimes people come to me and they say, "We are feeling very afraid."

I tell them, "You go and beat the pillow and be angry with the pillow."
They say, "What will that do?"
I say, "You just try!" And it becomes a revelation even to them. If they can beat the pillow in real, hot anger, immediately fear disappears, because the same energy turns and becomes active. It was inactive, then it was fear.
Fear is the root cause of hate, anger, violence.
Help people not to be afraid. But how can you help people not to be afraid unless you know what fearlessness is?
HE WHO SEEKS HAPPINESS BY HURTING THOSE WHO SEEK HAPPINESS WILL NEVER FIND HAPPINESS. You can find happiness only if you help others also towards happiness. You cannot find happiness alone; that's what you have been trying. You have been trying to be happy alone and let the others go to hell. You are not so alone; we are joined together with each other. If everybody else is going to hell, you cannot go to heaven, remember.

There is a beautiful parable about Gautam Buddha:
He arrives at the gate of heaven. The doors are flung open for him, great music is there to receive him, and angels with garlands, but Buddha refuses to enter. He says, "I will wait here. Till the last being has entered into heaven I cannot enter."
The angels persuade him that, "This will take eternity... for everybody -- all men, all women, and all elephants, and ants and.... If you are thinking for all beings to enter first, then it will take eternity!"

Buddha says, "It is nothing to be worried about -- I will wait. I can wait, I know how to wait. And I am eternally blissful already -- what more can heaven give to me? There is nothing more than that. So I will wait here, but I cannot enter into heaven unless everybody else has entered."
And the story goes that Buddha is still waiting at the gate; the angels are still trying to persuade him. Again and again they try new arguments, but they have not yet been able to take him in and close the door. And the doors are open and Buddha is waiting....

There can be a thousand and one interpretations of this beautiful parable. Today I would like to remind you of one thing: even if Buddha wants to get in alone, he cannot. He understands that, that's why he is saying: Till the last being has entered, I am not going to enter -- because he understands that it is impossible.
We are all one, we are not separate. It is not possible just for my hand to enter into heaven; even if it enters it will be a dead hand, it will not be really my hand. It is not possible for one of my eyes to enter into heaven and the whole body to remain outside. Either I can enter as a whole being or not at all. That's what Buddha is saying.
Buddha is saying, "I am only a part -- the total is outside. I cannot enter in. I will enter only with the whole."
If you understand this, your approach, your relationship with life, will have a totally different flavor. You will see all are friends, you will befriend life. In that very befriending you will start becoming happy. In that love for all, a great bliss will arise in you.

FOR YOUR BROTHER IS LIKE YOU.
HE WANTS TO BE HAPPY.
NEVER HARM HIM
AND WHEN YOU LEAVE THIS LIFE
YOU TOO WILL FIND HAPPINESS.

This sutra has been misinterpreted for at least twenty-five centuries.

AND WHEN YOU LEAVE THIS LIFE YOU TOO WILL FIND HAPPINESS. This has been interpreted again and again as if it says something about life after death: "When you leave this life, when you leave this body, then you will find happiness" -- as if happiness is something which happens only after death; it cannot happen in life. This has been the way of the Buddhist interpreters.

I am not a Buddhist. The Buddhists have been interpreting it in a life-negative way. My interpretation is totally different. And I say to you that that is exactly what Buddha meant it to be, because I am not just interpreting it in a philosophical way -- this is my experience too. And as far as experience is concerned it can't be different; it is not different from Buddha's experience.

When Buddha says: AND WHEN YOU LEAVE THIS LIFE... he does not mean death. He simply means this way of living this life, this way of stupid living: this way of desires, ambitions, anger, possessions, jealousies -- this foolish way of life. And everybody who is not getting deeper into meditation is living in a foolish way.

Wiznicki and Polacek went to a used car lot to buy a car. They didn't have enough money to buy one but the salesman sold them a camel.
"Does this thing work?" asked Wiznicki.
"Of course," said the salesman. "This camel stops at red lights and goes on green."
Wiznicki and Polacek left on the back of the camel but in twenty minutes they were back without the animal.
"What happened?" asked the salesman.
"Camel do what you say alright," exclaimed Polacek. "We stop at red light, boys in car pull up beside us. One boy yell out, 'Look at those two jerks on the camel!' We got off to see who the two jerks were and camel ran away!"

If you look at your life, if you watch closely, you will see what a fool you are, what a jerk you are!
To live without meditation is to be foolish, because whatsoever you do then is going to be wrong. You cannot do right without meditation because right only grows in the soil of meditation. In the soil of the mind ambitions, desires arise. And when there is ambition there is competition, and when there is competition you are not a friend to others. You are an enemy and others are your enemies. The competitive mind lives in an inimical way, lives in hatred, lives in jealousy; its whole function is out of jealousy. And because of this kind of life man suffers, he remains in misery.
When Buddha says: AND WHEN YOU LEAVE THIS LIFE YOU TOO WILL FIND HAPPINESS... he means if you leave this life of ambition, jealousy, hatred, competition, if you leave this life of the ego, you will find

happiness -- immediately, instantly, herenow. It is not a question of after death. It is not a question that after death you will be happy. You can be happy this very moment -- you just have to change your pattern of life.
And the pattern of your life can be changed in two ways: either from the outside, from without -- which is character, which is morality -- or from the inside, from the interiority, from within -- which is religion.
Don't be a moralist. That is not a way of real revolution, it is all hocus-pocus. The moralist is an egoist in a new way. He lives in misery. Only one who has started living from the center, who enters into one's own subjectivity in deep silence, will have happiness showering on him.

NEVER SPEAK HARSH WORDS
FOR THEY WILL REBOUND UPON YOU.
ANGRY WORDS HURT
AND THE HURT REBOUNDS.

A fundamental of life: whatsoever you do rebounds on you. If you use harsh words, they will rebound. If you hurt people, that will come back to you.
Once I was in Matheran with a few friends. We went to visit a place called Echo Point. One man was with us who started barking like a dog, and all the valleys and the mountains surrounding started barking as if thousands of dogs were there.
I told the man, "Why don't you sing a song? -- because these mountains will only echo it. If you bark like a dog they will become dogs. Why don't you sing a song?"

And the man started singing a song... and we were showered by his beautiful song. From all the valleys and the mountains the song started coming back to us.
I told the people who were present that life is also an Echo Point. It gives you whatsoever you give to it. You have to reap the crop, whatsoever you have sown before. Sowing the seeds of poison, don't hope that you will be reaping a crop of nectar; you will not be able to attain to nectar by the seeds of poison. Poison will bring more poison. Sow the seeds of nectar and reap the crop of nectar.
NEVER SPEAK HARSH WORDS FOR THEY WILL REBOUND UPON YOU. ANGRY WORDS HURT AND THE HURT REBOUNDS.

LIKE A BROKEN GONG
BE STILL, BE SILENT.
KNOW THE STILLNESS OF FREEDOM
WHERE THERE IS NO MORE STRIVING.

This is the most pregnant sutra of all the sutras of today. This is the secret of meditation, this is what meditation is all about.
LIKE A BROKEN GONG BE STILL, BE SILENT. KNOW THE STILLNESS OF FREEDOM.... What is "the stillness of freedom"? -- freedom from desire. It is desire that creates noise in you. And there is not only one desire in you, there are millions of desires clamoring for attention, asking you, pulling you, pushing you, to follow them. You are falling apart because you are continuously being pulled and pushed in different directions.

KNOW THE STILLNESS OF FREEDOM.... That means freedom from desires. Then there is stillness.
... WHERE THERE IS NO MORE STRIVING. When there is no desire there is no more striving. Where there is no more goal there is no more striving. Where you are no more ambitious for anything -- worldly or otherworldly, material or spiritual -- when you are not ambitious at all, how can there be a noise in your being? All is bound to become silent. This is true silence.
There is another kind of silence too. You can sit in a yoga posture, you can take deep breaths, and you can chant a mantra, and you can force your mind again and again for months, years. If you go on doing such a thing, after years of practice you may attain to a certain stillness which will be forced, artificial. And if you will look deep within yourself you will find all the noise has become only repressed; it is still there lurking underneath you. It is no longer on the surface, it has gone to the bottom. And that is even more dangerous, because if something is in the conscious, getting rid of it is easy; if something becomes unconscious, then getting rid of it becomes impossible. Hence psychoanalysis tries to bring everything to the conscious so that you can get rid of it. It brings your dreams, your unconscious messages, to the conscious -- because the only way to get rid of anything is to become fully conscious of it. Then it is up to you to keep it or to throw it, but to remain unconscious is to be a victim. Your strings are pulled from behind the curtain and you don't know who is pulling them. You are just a doll pulled this way and that. You are simply following unconscious desires.

Psychoanalysis brings your repressed desires to the conscious, but it cannot do it totally -- because even the presence of the psychoanalyst is enough to keep you repressed. Only meditation can help you totally, because you are not bringing it to somebody else's notice, you are bringing it in front of your own being. You can be absolutely free. You need not be afraid what the other will think.

The presence of the other is always repressive even though the psychoanalyst says, "Don't be worried, don't be afraid. I am not going to disclose it to anybody -- this will remain a secret with me, this will die with me." Whatsoever he says, his presence is enough to repress, because it is impossible for him not to be judgmental. If you are saying something which goes against his mind you can see in his eyes that the judgment has arisen.

It is because of this that Sigmund Freud used to sit behind a curtain; he never used to face the patient. He was fully aware of the phenomenon that the face, the eyes, the gestures, will show that you are judgmental, that you are judging. And if you are judging, the fear arises and repression happens. But even if you are sitting behind a curtain, the person knows you are there, the other is there -- and the other is repressive.

Hence psychoanalysis helps only partially. And you know perfectly well that your psychoanalyst is as ill as you are, or maybe even more ill than you are. Psychoanalysts themselves go to other psychoanalysts to be psychoanalyzed, because they are suffering from the same problems.

Sigmund Freud and Carl Gustav Jung were traveling in a train together, when Jung was still a disciple and had not betrayed the master. Talking about psychoanalysis, Jung suddenly had an idea. He said, "You have psychoanalyzed us all, but you yourself are still unpsychoanalyzed. Would you like some of us to psychoanalyze you? I am ready! If you want, I can function as your psychoanalyst."
Sigmund Freud started trembling, perspiration came to his forehead although it was a cold winter morning. He said, "No, never!"
Jung asked, "Why?"
Sigmund Freud said, "That will destroy my whole prestige."
Jung said, "Then it has destroyed your prestige already. If YOU are afraid, then how can you say in front of us that others should not be afraid -- if even YOU are afraid?"

Sigmund Freud was afraid because he was carrying great repressions. About a few things he was so repressed that it is rare to find a person so repressed. He has done great work in bringing sex into the human consciousness from the repressed world. He has done the greatest service to humanity by destroying the taboo against sex, but he himself had very funny ideas about sex. He was not clear himself about sex, sexuality. He was carrying all kinds of dead, rotten ideas about sex himself. He was very much afraid of death too. Even the mention of death once or twice had made him go into a faint; just the mention of death and he had fainted, become unconscious.
Now, this is the founder of psychoanalysis -- fainting at the mention of the word 'death' and carrying very stupid, funny

ideas about sex. What to say about other psychoanalysts -- they are in the same boat as their patients, and their patients know perfectly well.
No, it is not possible for you to expose yourself totally in front of anybody else. Hence in the East we never developed anything like psychoanalysis -- we developed meditation. That is exposing yourself in front of yourself. That is the only possibility to be utterly true, because there is no fear.
Freedom from desire, freedom from the unconscious, freedom from all kinds of goals, brings a different kind of stillness, a natural stillness that arises within your being, starts overflowing. Even others can feel it; it becomes almost tangible.

LIKE HERDSMEN DRIVING THEIR COWS INTO THE FIELDS
OLD AGE AND DEATH WILL DRIVE YOU BEFORE THEM.

Death is going to come sooner or later. Before death comes, learn how to die in meditation.

BUT THE FOOL IN HIS MISCHIEF FORGETS
AND HE LIGHTS THE FIRE
WHEREIN ONE DAY HE MUST BURN.

The fool goes on creating ditches for himself. You create your own misery, because you act out of unconsciousness, you act out of a noisy, cloudy mind. You don't act out of clarity; your action is not out of spontaneity; your action is

not out of meditative silence. It creates fire. You may be thinking you are creating it for others, but everything rebounds on you.
There is no hellfire anywhere else unless you create it. Everybody has to carry his heaven or hell within himself -- it is your own creation.

HE WHO HARMS THE HARMLESS
OR HURTS THE INNOCENT
TEN TIMES SHALL HE FALL --

INTO TORMENT OR INFIRMITY,
INJURY OR DISEASE OR MADNESS,
PERSECUTION OR FEARFUL ACCUSATION,
LOSS OF FAMILY, LOSS OF FORTUNE.

FIRE FROM HEAVEN SHALL STRIKE HIS HOUSE
AND WHEN HIS BODY HAS BEEN STRUCK DOWN
HE SHALL RISE IN HELL.

FIRE FROM HEAVEN SHALL STRIKE HIS HOUSE....
It is not that somebody is sitting there in heaven who punishes you: you spit in the sky and it falls on you, you throw fire in the sky and it falls on you. You go against the current -- that is your whole misery.
Go with nature. Go absolutely in tune with nature, not upcurrent but with the current. Don't push the river, float with it. And life will be a bliss, and life will be an ecstasy, and life will be a benediction. Otherwise fire will strike your home. AND WHEN HIS BODY HAS BEEN

STRUCK DOWN HE SHALL RISE IN HELL. And this happens every day.

When you go to sleep, many of you suffer from nightmares. Many write to me, "What to do about nightmares?" You cannot do anything directly about nightmares; you will have to change your pattern of life. Your nightmares are produced by what you are doing and thinking in the day. Your night is simply a reflection. If your day is beautiful, blissful, loving, you can't have nightmares. And if your day is silent, still, utterly thoughtless, contentless -- absolutely pure, whole, knowing no disturbance -- all dreams will disappear. In the night you will have a dreamless sleep.

The same happens when death comes. When the body falls, immediately either you experience heaven -- if you have lived rightly, mindfully, meditatively -- or you experience hell. These are not geographical places somewhere; these are when you leave the body. The mind left alone goes berserk. The mind left alone, unoccupied, creates something for which you have been sowing the seeds your whole life.

Now psychologists are agreeing with this, slowly slowly, that when a person dies, immediately -- in fact while he is dying -- he is already either entering into a nightmare -- that is hell -- or into a very very beautiful space -- that is paradise.

The third thing is neither hell nor heaven, neither happiness nor unhappiness, but just pure awareness. That is nirvana, that is moksha. There is no word to translate it, because in all the non-Indian religions -- Christianity, Judaism, Islam -- only two words have been talked about: heaven and hell. The third is missing, the highest is missing.

That's why I say these three religions are a little primitive compared to Buddhism. Buddhism reaches to the highest peak -- it transcends heaven and hell too.
One can die in absolute silence -- fully alert, experiencing neither pleasure nor pain. Then he will not be born again. Then he has jumped out of the ugly wheel of life and death. He has become one with the cosmos. To become one with the cosmos is nirvana. He has ceased as an individual being and he has become the whole.
Become still -- not a forced stillness, not a practiced and cultivated stillness -- become still naturally. Understanding the futility of desire, seeing the absolute absurdity of ambition, become still -- through understanding, not through practice.
LIKE A BROKEN GONG BE STILL, BE SILENT. KNOW THE STILLNESS OF FREEDOM WHERE THERE IS NO MORE STRIVING and you have gone into the beyond and you have become the beyond....
This is the goal of sannyas, this is the goal of all religion. This is the essential core of all spirituality. Science only knows the part; art a little more than science. Religion knows the whole.
Enough for today.
The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 4
Chapter #8
Chapter title: Meditate a little bit
29 August 1979 am in Buddha Hall

Q1 and Q2 on video

The first question:
Question 1
BELOVED MASTER,
I HAVE ALWAYS THOUGHT THAT THE SENSE OF SCIENCE LIES IN ITS UTILITY FOR HUMAN NEEDS; IN HELPING TO PROVIDE ENOUGH FOOD, FINDING TREATMENTS AGAINST SICKNESS, CREATING MACHINES TO DELIVER MAN FROM HARD AND STUPID WORK, ETCETERA.
UNTIL NOW I HAVE ALWAYS BEEN CONVINCED THAT THERE IS NOTHING WRONG WITH SCIENCE, BUT RATHER WITH THE POPULAR ATTITUDE TOWARDS SCIENCE: THAT IT CAN DISCOVER THE INTERIOR LAWS OF LIFE.
NOW I HEAR IN YOUR WORDS THAT SCIENCE ITSELF IS A ROOT OF THE MISERIES IN THE WORLD, BECAUSE IT DESTROYS THE MYSTERIES OF LIFE AND HENCE LEADS TO AN ANTIRELIGIOUS ATTITUDE. ARE YOU AGAINST SCIENCE?

Prem Peter, I am not against science, but I am certainly for a different kind of science, with a totally different quality to it. Science as it exists now is very lopsided; it takes account only of the material, it leaves the spiritual out of it -- and that is very dangerous.
If man is only matter, all meaning disappears from life. What meaning can life have if man is only matter? What poetry is possible, what significance, what glory? The idea that man is matter reduces man to a very undignified state. The so-called science takes all the glory of man away from

him. That's why there is such a feeling of meaninglessness all over the world.

People are feeling utterly empty. Yes, they have better machines, better technology, better houses, better food, than ever. But all this affluence, all this material progress, is of no value unless you have insight -- something that transcends matter, body, mind -- unless you have a taste of the beyond. And the beyond is denied by science.

Science divides life into two categories: the known and the unknown. Religion divides life into three categories: the known, the unknown and the unknowable. Meaning comes from the unknowable. The known is that which was unknown yesterday, the unknown is that which will become known tomorrow. There is no qualitative difference between the known and the unknown, only a question of time.

The unknowable is qualitatively different from the known/unknown world. Unknowable means the mystery remains; howsoever deep you go into it, you cannot demystify it. In fact, on the contrary, the deeper you go, the more the mystery deepens. A moment comes in the religious explorer's life when he disappears into the mystery like a dewdrop evaporating in the morning sun. Then only mystery remains. That is the highest peak of fulfillment, of contentment; one has arrived home. You can call it God, nirvana, or whatsoever you like.

I am not against science -- my approach is basically scientific. But science has limitations, and I don't stop where science stops; I go on, I go beyond. Use science, but don't be used by it. It is good to have great technology; certainly it helps man to get rid of stupid work, certainly it

helps man to get rid of many kinds of slavery. Technology can help man and animals both. Animals are also tortured; they are suffering very much because we are using them. Machines can replace them, machines can do all the work. Man and animals can both be free.

And I would like a humanity which is totally free from work, because in that state you will start growing -- in aesthetic sense, sensitivity, relaxation, meditation. You will become more artistic and you will become more spiritual because you will have time and energy available.

I am not against science, I am not antiscience at all. I would like the world to have more and more of science, so that man can become available for something higher, for something which a poor man cannot afford.

Religion is the ultimate in luxury. The poor man has to think about bread and butter -- he cannot even manage that. He has to think about a shelter, clothes, children, medicine, and he cannot manage these small things. His whole life is burdened by trivia; he has no space, no time to devote to God. And even if he goes to the temple or to the church, he goes to ask only for material things. His prayer is not true prayer, it is not that of gratitude; it is a demand, a desire. He wants this, he wants that -- and we cannot condemn him, he has to be forgiven. The needs are there and he is constantly under a weight. How can he find a few hours just to sit silently, doing nothing? The mind goes on thinking. He has to think about the tomorrow.

Jesus says: Look at the lilies in the field; they toil not, they don't think of the morrow. And they are far more beautiful than even Solomon, the great king, in all his grandeur, ever was.

True, the lilies toil not and they don't think of the morrow. But can you say it to a poor man? If he does not think of the morrow, then tomorrow is death. He has to prepare for it; he has to think from where he is going to get his food, where he is going to be employed. He has to think. He has children and a wife, he has an old mother and an old father. He cannot be like the lilies of the field. How can he avoid toil, labor, work? -- that will be suicidal.

The lilies are certainly beautiful and I totally agree with Jesus, but Jesus' statement is not yet applicable to the greater part of humanity. Unless humanity becomes very rich, the statement will remain just theoretical; it will not have any practical use.

I would like the world to be richer than it is. I don't believe in poverty and I don't believe that poverty has anything to do with spirituality. Down the ages it has been told that poverty is something spiritual; it was just a consolation.

Just the other day, a French couple wrote a letter to me. They must be new arrivals here, they don't understand me. They must have come with certain prejudices. They were worried, very much worried. They wrote in the letter that, "We don't understand a few things. Why does this ashram look luxurious? This is against spirituality. Why do you drive in a beautiful car? This is against spirituality."

Now, for these three or four days I have been driving in an Impala. It is not a very beautiful car; in America it is the car of the plumbers! But in a sense I am also a plumber -- the plumber of the mind. I fix nuts and bolts. It is a poor man's car. In America, the people who use Chevrolet Impalas, etcetera, their neighborhood is called the Chevrolet neighborhood -- that means poor people's neighborhood.

But this French couple must have the old idea that poverty has something spiritual about it. Man has lived so long in poverty that he HAD to console himself, otherwise it would have been intolerable. He had to convince himself that poverty is spiritual.

Poverty is not spiritual -- poverty is the source of all crimes.

And I would like to tell the couple that, "If you want to cling to your beliefs and prejudices, this is not the place for you. Please get lost! -- the sooner the better, because you may be corrupted here. Listening to me is dangerous for you."

To me, spirituality has a totally different dimension. It is the ultimate luxury -- when you have all and suddenly you see that, although you have all, deep inside there is a vacuum which has to be filled, an emptiness which has to be transformed into a plenitude. One becomes aware of the inner emptiness only when one has everything on the outside. Science can do that miracle. I love science, because it can create the possibility for religion to happen. Up to now, religion has not happened on the earth. We have talked about religion but it has not happened; it has not touched the hearts of the millions. Only once in a while a person has been able to become enlightened. In a big garden where millions of bushes and trees are, if only once in a while in thousands of years a flower comes to a tree, you will not call it a garden. You will not be thankful to the gardener. You will not say, "The gardener is great, because look: after one thousand years, out of millions of trees, one tree has again blossomed with one flower." If this happens that simply shows it must have happened in spite of the

gardener! Somehow he has forgotten about the tree, somehow he has neglected the tree, somehow the tree has escaped his grip.

Man has lived irreligiously: talking about God, certainly -- going to the church, to the temple, to the mosque -- yet his life showing no flavor of religion.

My vision of religion is totally different. It has nothing to do with poverty. I would like the whole earth to become as rich as paradise -- richer than paradise -- so that people can stop thinking about paradise. Paradise was created by poor people just to console themselves that, "Here we are suffering, but it is not for long. Only a few days more, or a few years, and death will come and we will be transported into paradise." And what a consolation! -- that those who are rich here will be thrown into hell.

Jesus says a camel can pass through the eye of the needle, but the rich man cannot pass through the gate of heaven. What consolation! The poor people must have felt very satisfied, contented, that, "It is only a question of a few days more: then you will be in hellfire and I will sit in the lap of God, with all the luxuries, with all the riches, with all the joys that I am deprived of here and you are enjoying." The idea of paradise seems to be just a revenge.

I would like this earth to be a paradise -- and it cannot happen without science. So how can I be antiscience? Peter, I am not antiscience. But science is not all. Science can create only the circumference; the center has to be that of religion. Science is exterior, religion is interior. And I would like men to be rich on both sides: the exterior should be rich and the interior should be rich. Science cannot make

you rich in your inner world; that can be done only by religion.

If science goes on saying there is no inner world, then I am certainly against such statements -- but that is not being against science, just against these particular statements. These statements are stupid, because the people who are making these statements have not known anything of the inner.

Karl Marx says religion is the opium of the people -- and he has never experienced any meditation. His whole life was wasted in the British Museum, thinking, reading, collecting notes, preparing for his great work, DAS KAPITAL. And he was so much into trying to gain more and more knowledge that it happened many times -- he would faint in the British Museum! He would have to be carried unconscious to his home. And it was almost an everyday thing that he would have to be forced to leave the museum -- because the museum has to close sometime, it cannot remain open for twenty-four hours.

He had never heard about meditation; he knew only thinking and thinking. But still in a way he is right, that the old religiousness has served as a kind of opium. It has helped poor people to remain poor; it has helped them to remain contented as they are, hoping for the best in the next life. In that way he is right. But he is not right if we take into consideration a Buddha, a Zarathustra, a Lao Tzu -- then he is not right. And these are the really religious people, not the masses; the masses know nothing of religion.

I would like you to be enriched by Newton, Edison, Eddington, Rutherford, Einstein; and I would like you also

to be enriched by Buddha, Krishna, Christ, Mohammed, so that you can become rich in both the dimensions -- the outer and the inner. Science is good as far as it goes, but it does not go far enough -- and it cannot go. I am not saying that it can go and it does not go. No, it CANNOT go into the interiority of your being. The very methodology of science prevents it from going in. It can go only outwards, it can study only objectively; it cannot go into the subjectivity itself. That is the function of religion.
The society needs science, the society needs religion. And if you ask me what should be the first priority -- science should be the first priority. First the outer, the circumference, then the inner -- because the inner is more subtle, more delicate.
Science can create the space for real religion to exist on the earth.

The second question:
Question 2
BELOVED MASTER,
WHY ARE THE FRAUDS WORSHIPPED BY PEOPLE, AND PEOPLE LIKE JESUS, BUDDHA AND SOCRATES CONDEMNED, STONED AND KILLED?

Saroj, the buddhas have always been condemned by the ordinary masses, but the ordinary masses are not responsible for it. They are unconscious. We cannot make them responsible for it. They can't help it -- they are fast asleep. And the buddhas disturb their sleep; the buddhas make every possible effort to wake them up. Nobody wants

to be disturbed in one's sleep, and one may be having beautiful dreams, sweet, nice dreams....

People want to remain unconscious. Consciousness is unknown to them and they are naturally afraid of the unknown. With the known they are secure, safe, and everybody else is just like them.

When buddhas happen, they create a great disturbance. They cannot help it, either. When they become awakened they come to know such bliss, such silence, such heights of ecstasy, such orgasmic joy, that it starts overflowing, that great compassion arises in them. They can see people moving, walking in sleep; they start shaking them, shocking them.

So it is an absolutely natural phenomenon. People become angry because you are disturbing their dreams -- their anger can be understood. Buddhas become compassionate -- they cannot help it. When you are blissful, compassion comes as a shadow, it follows you. Out of their compassion, they start waking people up. Naturally there arises a conflict. And the people simply want not to be disturbed. They don't want awakening, they want opium. It feels very good; at least it keeps them unaware of the real problems of life. Buddhas know it perfectly well, that trying to wake people up is getting into danger. But it is worth it.... And because they now know they are indestructible -- they have come to know the eternal in themselves, what can the people do? They can crucify -- let them crucify. The body is going to die anyway. They can torture, but the torture cannot reach to the buddhas. The suffering remains on the outside, it cannot come in. The buddhas remain alert, watchful,

witnessing. Everything is outside; nothing can penetrate into their innermost core.
So they don't feel that they should avoid waking people up, disturbing people. The moment they become awakened they rush to the masses. When they were not awakened they went to the forests, to the mountains, to some place where they could be alone. All the buddhas -- Jesus, Mohammed, Mahavira, Gautama -- they all went into solitude. They avoided the masses when they were themselves asleep. But the moment they became awakened, the moment they saw the beauty and the benediction of life, the moment they saw the eternal beauty of existence, they rushed back to the marketplace -- all of them -- to give the message to the people, because the people are starving for spiritual food, although they are not aware that they are not nourished. Their souls are asleep; they are alive but not really alive.
And when buddhas speak to these people they bring a totally new kind of language. People cannot understand it. They can only misunderstand it -- they are bound to misunderstand it, it is so new!

Jacobs went into Levine's clothing store to ask the price of a suit on display in the window.
"You picked the best suit in the place," said Levine, "and to show you that I like to do business with a man who has got such good taste, I am gonna make you a special proposition. I will not ask you one hundred dollars for the suit. I will not ask you ninety. I will not ask you seventy. Sixty dollars is the price for you, my friend."

Jacobs replied, "I won't give you sixty, I won't give you fifty. My offer is forty."
"Sold," said Levine. "That's the way I like to do business -- no chiseling."

People have a certain language -- their language. Buddhas speak a totally different language; it comes from a different plane. People live in fear; buddhas live in freedom. People live in misery; buddhas live in ecstasy. How can they communicate? Communication is impossible.

Lanagan, aged eighty-eight, was on his deathbed and Father Feeney was trying to administer the final blessing.
"Open your eyes," said the father, "we have got to save your immortal soul."
Lanagan opened one eye, closed it, and tried to doze off. He was having a nice sleep. "Come on, now!" cried the priest. "If you don't want to go to confession, at least answer me this: do you renounce the Devil and all his works?"
"Well, I don't know, Father," said Lanagan opening his eyes. "At a time like this it ain't smart to antagonize anybody!"

The people want to be left alone -- don't disturb them. But buddhas are bound to disturb them. If somebody is responsible then buddhas are responsible, because they are conscious people. And I say it on my own authority: if people are against me, the responsibility is mine, not theirs -- they are doing the natural thing. But what can I do? I am

also doing the natural thing -- but we exist on different planes.
And this struggle is bound to continue forever.

Three explorers -- a priest, a businessman, and a Sufi -- were passing through a dangerous jungle. As the days went by, the number of hostile wild beasts who circled around them became larger and larger. Eventually they had to take refuge in a tree.
After a council of war they decided that one of them should go for help, since if they stayed as they were, fear, hunger and fatigue would eventually force them to fall into the jaws of the ravenous beasts.
But they could not decide who should go. "Not me," said the priest, "for I am a man of God, and I should stay to comfort whoever is left behind."
"Not me," said the businessman, "because I am paying all the expenses of the trip."
The Sufi said nothing, but suddenly pushed the priest off his branch. He fell to the ground, and immediately a fierce pack of hyenas picked him up, fought off all the other animals, and placed him reverently on the back of the largest of their number. Then, guarding him carefully, they escorted him towards safety.
"A miracle!" cried the businessman. "After your cruelty, divine guidance has intervened to save that good man. I am, from this moment on, converted to a good and holy life."
"Steady on," said the Sufi, "for there is, after all, another explanation."
"What other explanation can there possibly be?" shouted the businessman.

"Simply this: that it takes one to know one," said the Sufi, "and the smallest always recognize their leader and honor him...."

Saroj, you ask me, "Why are the frauds worshipped and buddhas tortured?"
The frauds are understood easily; they speak the same language as the people. The frauds are understood because the frauds are serving people in their sleep, they are offering them opium. The frauds are understood, respected, worshipped, because the frauds are not a disturbance -- not at all.
P.D. Ouspensky has dedicated his great book -- one of the greatest ever written, IN SEARCH OF THE MIRACULOUS -- to his master, George Gurdjieff, with these words: "To my master, George Gurdjieff, who disturbed my sleep forever."

The third question:
Question 3
BELOVED MASTER,
I DON'T KNOW WHO I AM AND I NEVER COULD KNOW WHO YOU ARE. ALL I KNOW IS THAT THIS SOMEONE-OR-OTHER LOVES YOU, WHOEVER YOU ARE.
OH, BELOVED MASTER -- YOU ARE SUCH A SWEET APPLE TO EAT IN THE DARK.

Prem Anuradha, one never comes to know who one is. If one comes to know who one is, then he must be wrong -- because this infinite that resides in you is

UNKNOWABLE, not unknown. You can go searching into it....

To send you into that adventure, the buddhas have been telling you again and again: Know thyself. Don't misunderstand them -- they have been misunderstood. Because Socrates says: Know thyself, people think they can know; otherwise, why should Socrates say: Know thyself? Socrates is not saying that you CAN know yourself; he is saying try to know thyself. In knowing yourself you will come across the unknowable. The very endeavor to know yourself will bring you to the infinite ocean of life.

You will never know who you are, you will not be able to answer. You will not be able to say that, "I am A or B or C." Whatever answer you bring is going to be wrong. When you become silent, utterly silent -- no answer, all answers that you had before have been dissolved and no new answer has come up; not only the answer has not come up, even the question is no longer remembered.... When the question and answer both are not there, in that deep silence, in that stillness, there is a kind of knowing that never becomes knowledge -- a kind of awareness, a kind of light, that enlightens you, yet you cannot inform anybody about it. You cannot even make a theory out of it for yourself. You will be utterly dumb.

Anuradha, this is a beautiful experience. This is how it should be. This is how it feels as you come closer and closer to satori, to samadhi.

You say, "I don't know who I am."

This is the beginning of real knowing. This state of a recognized ignorance is the first step into the temple of God.

You say, "I don't know who I am and I never could know who you are."

That too is true. If you cannot know who you are, how can you know who I am? -- because we are the same, we are one. You are unknowable, I am unknowable; we belong to the same mystery, we are part of the same orgasmic whole. It is an ecstasy, a bliss. It is a benediction. You can dance in it, you can sing in it, you can overflow with love through it, but it never becomes knowledge. Yes, sometimes it can become a song, a Song of Solomon....

Meditate over the Song of Solomon. It is one of the most beautiful songs ever sung -- and it has not been understood by the Jews and the Christians. In fact, they feel a little embarrassed because it looks so sexual. It certainly looks sexual, because sex is the only possible language that comes closest to the spiritual. It is the sex energy that becomes spiritual energy. So it is perfectly right that the Song of Songs, the Song of Solomon, has such sensuality around it. It is so sensuous, it is incomparably sensuous! Nothing else has ever been written, sung, with such profound sensuality.

But the so-called religious person thinks a religious person has to be absolutely antisense, antisex; he can't be sensate and he can't be sensuous. That is utterly wrong. The religious person is more sensuous than anybody else, because he is more alive. And when you want to express the ultimate, the only possible way is to express it through the deepest human experience -- of sexual orgasm. Ecstasy cannot be expressed in any other way.

We are part of one organic, orgasmic whole. This whole existence is in a deep, sensuous play. Yes, you can feel it,

you can taste it, but you cannot know it. Forget all about knowing it! The whole effort is an exercise in utter futility. It is good, Anuradha, that you understand that you cannot know yourself and you understand that you cannot know me either.
You say, "All I know is that this someone-or-other loves you, whoever you are."
It is a tremendously beautiful experience. Anuradha is simply stating something inexpressible. Difficult it is to express, but she has come very close; she has almost hit the target. Yes, this is how it is felt between a master and a disciple, because it is the greatest love affair there is. Exactly like this it is felt: "All I know is that this someone-or-other loves you, whoever you are."
Only a great love is felt -- love pulsating between the master and the disciple. Slowly slowly, there is neither master nor disciple; only love remains.
And you say, "Oh, Beloved Master -- you are such a sweet apple to eat in the dark."
Yes, love is a taste -- the taste of tao. But Anuradha, why in the dark?

I am reminded:
A rabbi was asked, "Why does a Jewish wife close her eyes when making love?"
The rabbi said, "Heaven forbid she should see her husband having a good time!"

Anuradha, why in the dark? Let me also have a good time! Let me also see it and experience it.

But I can understand why she is saying it. Yes, in the dark you taste more. Because our eyes cannot function, the energy that moves through the eyes becomes available to other senses. In the dark you hear better. If you want to hear music, it is good to listen in the dark; you will hear better. Because the eyes are no longer functioning, the energy becomes available to the ears.

In the dark you will taste better because the energy will move to the tongue, and the eyes are using eighty percent of your energy. When you are eating, if you are seeing, then eighty percent is involved in seeing and only twenty percent is available to the other four senses -- so to each sense nearabout five percent. That's why our other senses have become retarded. We don't taste, we don't hear, we don't touch. If you touch in darkness you will feel more, you will know the texture. And if you hear in darkness, the music will penetrate to the very heart.

Eyes have become very oppressive, very exploitative -- they have become dictatorial. They have absorbed all the energy, which is not their right; it has to be distributed back. Each sense should have at least twenty percent of the energy. Yes, sometimes, when you want to go into one sense very deeply, you can make the whole energy available for it. Close your ears, plug them; close your eyes, blindfold them; close your nose -- and then eat. And you will be surprised: such subtle nuances of taste you have never known before, because the whole hundred percent of your energy is moving through the tongue.

So I understand why Anuradha says, "Oh, Beloved Master -- you are such a sweet apple to eat in the dark."

But, Anuradha, an apple is a dangerous thing! You know what happened to Adam and Eve.... But I am making available to you the same apples, because to me the serpent who seduced Eve to eat the apple was the greatest benefactor of humanity. Without him there would have been no humanity at all. You would not have been here; no Buddha, no Jesus, no Mohammed, no Bahauddin, no Mansoor.... It is all because of the serpent. The serpent is the real founding father of humanity -- the whole credit goes to him. That apple proved of great significance.

I am not prohibiting you from anything -- no prohibition. I am making available to you all the joys of life. Eat them, be nourished by them. I am against the biblical idea of creating inhibitions, repressions, taboos. I am against the very idea of God telling Adam and Eve not to eat from a certain tree. It is against freedom and it is against growth and it is against maturity.

But that's how religions have functioned in the past. These stories are created by the so-called priests. Their whole idea of religion is that of repression, because it is only through repression that man can be reduced to a slave. It is only through repression that man can be exploited, oppressed. It is only through repression that man's intelligence can be destroyed.

Eat all the apples that life makes available to you. Nothing is prohibited -- because it is only through experiences of all kinds that one becomes enriched. And if you are not really rich in experiences -- of good and bad -- you will never become enlightened. Enlightenment is not possible for those who have lived only a poor, saintly life. It is not for those who have lived only the poor life of a sinner. It is for

those who have lived life in its totality, who have known all that is dark and who have known all that is light, who have moved into all the polarities.

A real maturity happens only when you learn how one walks on a tightrope: sometimes leaning to the left just to keep balance, and sometimes leaning to the right just to keep balance. When he feels that he may fall towards the left, he immediately leans towards the right. If he leans too much to the right, to balance it he starts leaning towards the left. Leaning right and left, he keeps himself in the middle. Don't be a leftist, otherwise you will fall; and don't be a rightist, otherwise you will fall. Be both, and both in such a balance, in such a synthesis, that you can remain walking on the tightrope. Life is a tightrope stretched between two hilltops. Unless you walk with full awareness, sensitivity, intelligence, you will not reach to the other shore.

The buddha is talking of the other shore. The other shore is available only to those who grow in intelligence. Priests want you to remain stupid and buddhas want you to become more and more intelligent. Hence there is a conflict between the priests and the buddhas.

Jesus was crucified not by criminals but by the rabbis, by the priests. Socrates was not poisoned by bad people but by the respectable ones. Why? -- because Socrates was trying to make life available to his disciples in its totality. What was his crime? The crime for which the people of Athens -- the respectable people, the highest strata of the society -- dragged him into the court was that he was corrupting the youth. He was making life available to his disciples in its totality -- and he was condemned as a corrupter of youth.

I am also condemned as a corrupter of youth. It seems humanity has not grown at all; we are moving in circles. If Socrates comes back he will not find it difficult to understand man. He will find it very difficult to understand a car or a radio or a television; it may be really inconceivable for him what these things are, how they function. Ordinary things that you never think about -- electricity -- he will not be able to understand. But he will be absolutely able to understand man, because man has not grown at all. Man is the same -- is doing the same, is behaving in the same foolish way.

People are against me because I am making all the apples available to you. Eat them. Live life in its totality.

And, Anuradha, soon -- the day is not far off -- many of you are going to become enlightened in this life. I can see you moving closer and closer to the point from where the ego disappears.

Now Anuradha is getting into difficulties: her memory is disappearing, she can't remember much. And of course Arup is worried, because Anuradha helps her in writing letters and she cannot remember.... Even to write a single letter she takes at least one hour. But as far as I am concerned, I am immensely happy -- it is Arup's problem! I am immensely happy. The past is disappearing, the memory is becoming totally different. Now more important things are happening which have to be remembered; the ordinary, the mundane, cannot be remembered.

And the ego is disappearing. Anuradha has become almost empty. I say "almost" -- just a little bit is left. Once that little bit is gone, the beyond will start showering on her.

The first flowers have started opening, the spring is close by.
Anuradha, feel blessed. The spring is very close by, and I am immensely pleased with you.

The fourth question:
Question 4
BELOVED MASTER,
"HE HAS TAMED HIS HORSES...." YES! BUT HOW TO DO IT? WHAT IS THE WAY TO TAME THEM? I EITHER CONTROL, REPRESS AND STOP MYSELF, OR I AM LED BY MY SENSES AND DRIVEN BY MY "ANIMAL." WITH BOTH I FEEL NOT AT EASE AND I CONSTANTLY MOVE FROM ONE SIDE, REPRESSION, TO THE OTHER -- DRIVEN.
HOW TO COME OUT OF THIS TRAP? IS WATCHING AND AWARENESS ALL THERE IS TO DO?

Prem Sohan, do you think watching and awareness is a small thing? You ask me, "Is watching and awareness all there is to do?"
Just do it! -- and you will know that nothing is left to be done anymore. Don't philosophize about it, don't go on thinking about it. Of course, the word 'awareness' does not seem very big. And if you look in the dictionary the meaning is there: it is not so fantastic, it is not that far out. You know your problems existentially, and you know the solution only intellectually -- that is the problem. You will have to know your solution also existentially. Awareness contains all the religions of the world, all the scriptures of the world, all that has ever been said by all the enlightened

people. This simple word contains all; it is like a small key. Don't throw it "... because it is so small -- how can it open the doors, all the doors of the great palace?" It is a master key! And keys are not that big; you don't have to carry them in trucks, you can keep the key in the pocket. It is just a small thing, but it can unlock great doors, many doors. If it is a master key it can unlock all the locks.

Awareness is the key.

You say, "How to tame...? I either control, repress and stop myself, or I am led by my senses and driven by my 'animal'."

Yes, these are the two alternatives if you don't attain to awareness. Either you will repress and control -- which is ugly, which will make you unnatural, which will make you ill at ease with yourself, which will drive you ultimately into a kind of insanity... because you are repressing your own energies, which need to be transformed, not repressed. And energies repressed are dangerous; they will explode. And your senses have their own aliveness. If you repress them you will become dull, you will become insensitive. You will become insensitive to beauty, to joy, to music, to poetry, to all that has any intrinsic value.

That's why your so-called monks, your mahatmas, your saints, are utterly insensitive. They can't see any beauty anywhere, they can't see any joy anywhere. And if you live with them for a few days you will know they are joy-killers; they will destroy your joy also, they will make you embarrassed if you are happy. They will ask such questions as, "Why are you happy? What is there to be happy about in this life? Life is misery! Why are you laughing and giggling? What is there to laugh about? Crying is okay,

tears are accepted -- they are religious. But giggling? -- that is not religious."

Just the other day one person has written to me, "You must be the first enlightened one who is telling jokes." Yes, that is true -- at least I can claim that much originality!

Otherwise it is very difficult to claim any originality in this world; there is nothing new under the sun. For millions and millions of years man has existed and thousands and thousands of enlightened people have existed; they have done almost everything that can be done. I was really searching what to do -- something new! Then I stumbled upon jokes. I said, "This is right!"

If you repress you will become humorless, you will lose all sense of humor. Your saints cannot laugh, and a man who cannot laugh is not a man; he becomes subhuman. Horses don't laugh, buffaloes don't laugh, donkeys don't tell jokes to each other. Laughter is absolutely human; no other animal laughs. And if one morning, just going for a walk, a donkey suddenly starts laughing, you will go crazy! You will not even be able to report to anybody that this has happened; they will think that you are mad.

It is man's privilege to laugh. Laughter has something divine about it; laughter has something which is available only to man. Only man can laugh, because he can sense the absurd, the ridiculous; because he can see through and through, and he can see all around such stupidity pretending to be wise, fools pretending to be intelligent, intellectual -- the intelligentsia.

Never repress. Repression will destroy all that is human in you. And once the human is destroyed you cannot attain to the divine, because humanness is the bridge.

Man is a bridge between the animal and the divine. And the animal is also beautiful because the animal has aliveness. That is exactly the meaning of the word 'animal'. It comes from 'anima' -- aliveness, life, vitality. Your saints become nonvital because they destroy the animal. They don't tame it, they destroy it -- to destroy they find easier.

Taming needs art, it needs great art. To kill a tiger is simple. To ride on the tiger and come back home... it is dangerous and it is arduous and it needs great art. And so is the case with all your senses: they have their own sensitivity, a little intelligence of their own. Have you observed it? -- that your senses have their own intelligence, their own small minds.

You are asleep and a cockroach starts crawling -- what else in India? -- a cockroach starts crawling up your leg, and you remain asleep and the leg simply throws the cockroach away. The leg has its own intelligence, its own built-in alertness; it functions on its own. Your sleep remains undisturbed. You eat -- your stomach must have its own intelligence; otherwise it is a very complicated process to digest, to transform bread into blood. Scientists have not yet been able to do it mechanically. They have not been able to create machines which can transform bread into blood. Your stomach must have an intelligence of its own -- and it does not ask you at all. Once you have taken anything down the throat you forget all about it; now it is up to the stomach to do the whole work. And the work is really complicated, immensely complicated: sorting out different elements, sending those different elements to different parts of the body....

You have wounded your hand. Immediately your hand, your blood circulation, your body starts a healing process. Your mind is not needed at all.
Remember that forcing your senses into some repressed state will take your vitality. You will not be fresh, you will not be young, you will not be flowing. That's what has happened to humanity at large: because of wrong religious teachings, people have become dull, stupid.
There is one woman in Soviet Russia who can read with her fingers -- and not braille; she can read ordinary books with her fingers, with closed eyes, blindfolded. She says that she can see through the fingers. There are people whose fingers are so sensitive, by touching you they will know much about you that even you may not be aware of. Just shaking hands with you they know much about you. Your hand gives them a kind of information: whether it is cold or warm, friendly or unfriendly, or indifferent. A sensitive person, just by shaking hands with you, has already become aware of many things about you, has already known much about you.
Each sense has its beauty and has to contribute to your intelligence. So please, don't repress, don't control.

While rambling along the railroad tracks, Isaac found twenty dollars. He walked a little further and felt his corns pinch. "Feet," he said, "I'm gonna buy you a brand-new pair of shoes."
He continued his walk, but soon felt the hot sun on his forehead. "Old top," promised Isaac, "I'll get you a cool, shady hat."

Just then Isaac's stomach grumbled. "Okay, belly," he said, "I will buy you a fine meal."
Isaac resumed his journey. Five minutes later, he stopped in shock. He looked downward at the front of his pants and hollered, "Hey, big stiff, who told YOU we came into big money?"

Each sense of the body has its own intelligence. No sense has to be curtailed; each sense has to be given freedom joyously. Each sense has to be nourished in its aliveness. Only then will you know that all your senses create an orchestra, a great melody.
But I understand your trouble; this is the trouble of almost everybody in the world. Either you control or you start indulging, and you don't know how to remain exactly in the middle. Indulgence is also destructive. Repression is destructive, indulgence is destructive -- because these are two extremes. One fasts for many days; he is trying to control, repress his hunger, his body's needs. Another eats too much, goes on stuffing.
It is said that Nero used to have four physicians always around him because he was a lover, a mad lover, of food; he was obsessed with food. He would eat too much, and the physicians' work was to help him vomit so that he could eat again. And this he would do many times in the day. Otherwise you can eat only once, if you live in a primitive, aboriginal part of Africa... because for centuries they have eaten only once, and that is enough. If you live in India you will eat twice, if you live in America five times. But Nero was eating sometimes even twenty times a day. Now, this is indulgence, mad indulgence! This is again going to dull

your senses. His belly must have been going berserk, his body must have been feeling a kind of insanity.
One has to be in the middle, the golden mean. That is Buddha's teaching.

There is a beautiful story in Buddha's life:
He came to Shravasti, one of the greatest cities of those days. It must have been something like the Paris of India of those days, because its beauty is described so much in the scriptures. And Buddha also must have loved the town very much, because in his forty-two years' teaching he came at least twenty times to Shravasti; that is the most times he ever visited any place. Sarnath he visited only once -- because of the mosquitoes. Sarnath has really big mosquitoes; Poona mosquitoes are nothing, Poonaites are nothing!
When I was staying with a Buddhist monk in Sarnath, we had to sit behind a mosquito net the whole day -- he in his bed, I in mine -- and we had to talk.... I told him, "This is my first and last visit. I am not coming back again to Sarnath."
He said, "Do you know, Buddha himself never visited twice."
I had not known that. I said, "You tell me...."
He said, "Yes, he came here only once -- to Shravasti twenty times, Sarnath only once. What is the reason?" And we joked.
I said, "The reason is clear: he didn't have mosquito nets. In the first place, these mosquitoes must have tortured him. And these are really monsters, not mosquitoes -- very big ones! Poor Buddha must have escaped!"

He only remained one day there. Shravasti he went to twenty times; he stayed twenty rainy seasons in Shravasti. Now Shravasti has almost disappeared; a small village is thought to be where Shravasti used to be. It was a big city -- ten lakhs of people -- one of the most beautiful in the country.

And the king of Shravasti was Shrona. He must have loved beauty; he made the city so beautiful -- beautiful lakes and roads and palaces. And he invited all kinds of artists, musicians, poets -- his court was full of talented people. He had the most beautiful women around him. He lived in utter luxury. His days were spent moving from one pleasure to another. Naturally, soon he got fed up, tired, wearied.

And then Buddha came. He was feeling so bored with life, this Shrona, that he went to listen to Buddha -- maybe he has something to say. He was feeling so meaningless, so utterly meaningless, that he had started lately to contemplate suicide. Seeing Buddha and his divine beauty, his grace -- and Shrona was a very aesthetic person -- seeing Buddha he immediately fell in love with him.

He didn't go back to his palace. He asked Buddha with folded hands, "Give me sannyas. Initiate me."

Buddha hesitated a little bit because he knew everything about Shrona and his life; it would be difficult for him. He may not have tasted water for years; alcohol was the only thing that he used to drink. He had indulged so much that for a moment Buddha was hesitant.

But Shrona said, "Don't hesitate. I am fed up with my life, I am finished with it! If you don't give me sannyas I will commit suicide -- and that will be your responsibility!"

My own observation is also this: that a man really becomes a sannyasin when he comes to the point where there are only two possibilities: either suicide or sannyas.
Buddha had to initiate him immediately, because he did not want to be responsible for his suicide. But what Buddha had not expected started happening. Shrona became just the opposite of what he had been up to now. Up to now he had been absolutely indulgent in everything, in every possible thing. Now he became a great ascetic, so much so that he started torturing his body, he became a masochist. He would lie down on thorns, he would stand in the hot sun. He would not live as other sannyasins were living -- moderately, balanced, the life of the golden mean. No, he moved to the other extreme. Within six months it was impossible to recognize him, he had become so thin, so dark. He was a beautiful person; he had become ugly. He was starving himself. Buddhist sannyasins used to eat once a day and he used to eat only thrice a week, and that too, so little!
It happens: people can move to the extreme very easily. Mind lives in extremes -- from one extreme one can jump to the other extreme very easily. The most difficult thing is to remain in the middle, because to remain in the middle you will need awareness. Moving from one extreme to the other you don't need awareness. You were unconscious before as an indulgent person, now you are unconscious as a great ascetic. First you were stuffing yourself with food and you were unconscious, now you are starving yourself and you are unconscious.
The man of consciousness stays in the middle: neither too much nor too little. He always gives to the body what is

needed, to the mind what is needed. His life has a very very rhythmic quality to it. He responds to his requirements very consciously, responsibly, but he does not go in an insane manner this way or that.

After six months Buddha had to go to him. Shrona had wounds all over the body because he was lying down on thorns. He was stinking because he had stopped taking baths; he thought that too was luxury....

In India, Jaina monks don't take any baths, they don't clean their teeth, because that is thought to be too materialistic -- you are decorating the body. It is very difficult to talk to Jaina monks. They used to come to me before, but fortunately they no longer come here. It was so difficult to talk to them because their breath smell is simply unbelievable, their body odor is intolerable! But that is thought to be a great renunciation.

Buddha went to see Shrona. He was ill, with wounds all over the body, almost dying. Buddha asked him one question: he said, "Shrona, I have come to ask one question of you. I have heard that when you were a king you used to play beautifully on the sitar. You were a great lover of the sitar and you had practiced your whole life."

Shrona said, "Yes, that is true."

Buddha asked him, "So I have come to ask you one thing: if the strings of the sitar are too loose, will there be any music?"

Shrona said, "No, how can there be any music? If the strings are too loose, music cannot be created."

Buddha said, "Then if the strings are too tight, will there be any music?"

Shrona said, "No, that too is not possible. If the strings are too tight, they will be broken."
Buddha said, "Then tell me, when is music possible?"
Shrona said, "There is a point exactly in the middle when you cannot say the strings are loose and you cannot say the strings are tight. It is a great art to bring the strings to that middle point -- exactly in the middle, neither leaning to this side nor to that; no leaning at all, exactly in the middle."
Buddha stood up and he said, "Shrona, I have nothing else to say. I just came to remind you that life follows the same law. Be in the middle. You have moved from a too loose life to a too tight life. That's why you are not attaining to the music called nirvana, the music called meditation."

Prem Sohan, that exact middle cannot be found without awareness. And don't say, "Is watching and awareness ALL there is to do?"
Yes, it is all. It is more than you need, more than you will ever need. It will fulfill all your needs. It will teach you how not to repress and how not to indulge. It will make you so alert that you will be just a witness. And when one is just a witness of one's senses, one enjoys and yet one remains above. One becomes a lotus leaf, in the water and yet untouched by the water.

The last question:
Question 5
BELOVED MASTER,
I AM A VERY JEALOUS PERSON, PARTICULARLY AS FAR AS MY WIFE IS CONCERNED. EVEN IF SHE

LOOKS AT ANYBODY, I BECOME ENRAGED. WHAT SHOULD I DO?

Gyaneshwar, it has nothing to do with your wife. If the wife is not there you will be jealous about something else. Remember always: don't be too much concerned about outer causes, because causes are not outside you. Outside are only excuses; causes are inside you. You are full of jealousy; the wife simply functions as an excuse. Don't be too much worried about the excuse, because that is wasting time. Look inside yourself: why are you jealous?
Jealousy means ego, jealousy means unconsciousness. Jealousy means that you have not known even a moment of joy and bliss; you are living in misery. Jealousy is a by-product of misery, ego, unconsciousness.
Forget all about the wife; otherwise you will remain concerned about the wife, and that is a way of escaping from the real cause. The real cause is always inside. And not only about jealousy, remember, about all problems -- greed....
Somebody comes to me and says, "I am very greedy about money. How can I get rid of this greed for money?" It is not a question of money. Greed is greed. If you get rid of money you will become greedy for God; greed will still be there.

The night Jesus was saying goodbye to his disciples, one of the disciples asked him, "Lord, you are leaving us. There is one question, and it is on the minds of all your disciples. In the kingdom of God you will be sitting at the right side of God himself -- obviously, you will be his right hand. And

who will be sitting next to you? Amongst us twelve, who will be the second to you? That is the most important thing in our heads. Please say something about it; otherwise, once you are gone it will be impossible for us to decide and we will be quarreling and fighting over it."

Now, this is jealousy. Now, what kind of disciples has Jesus? As far as my observation goes, Jesus was not very fortunate about his disciples. Buddha was far more fortunate. Never in the whole life of Buddha has a disciple asked such a stupid question. And these are the apostles, the twelve apostles -- his messengers to the world!
Remember, if greed is dropped about money, immediately it will take another object, it will become focused on something else. So the first thing to remember: it has nothing to do with your wife, it has something to do with yourself. Forget about the wife completely, keep her out of the problem. She is not the problem, YOU are the problem! Take responsibility, and then things start changing.
If you take the responsibility, if you think, "I am responsible, nobody else," you will not be angry with the wife. You will not be fighting and nagging, you will not be nasty with her. You will start looking deeper and deeper. And in that very search you will become aware. That's what awareness is, that's how one becomes aware.
And when you are fully aware of your jealousy you will be surprised, you are in for a surprise: when you are fully aware of it, it disappears. It simply disappears, not leaving even a trace behind it.

Two men had had enough of the world so they decided to leave their wives, kids and jobs for the peace and quiet of the wilderness. They stopped for supplies at a sporting goods store owned by a wise old man.
"Take this," said the old storekeeper to the renunciates as he handed them a board lined with mink fur, with a small slit cut out in the middle which was also lined with fur.
"No way!" cried the men. "We know what that board is for and I tell you we are through with that kind of thing forever!"
But the wise old man slipped the board into one of the packs while they were not looking, and the men left.
Three years later one of the men returned to the old man's sporting goods store.
"Well, hello!" cried the storekeeper. "Where is your partner?"
"Dead," said the returning survivor.
"What happened?"
"I shot him."
"But why?"
"Well," said the man, "I caught him in bed with my board."

It is not a question of the wife -- even a board will do: "MY board!..." It is a question of the ego, and the ego exists only when you live in an unconsciousness, in a darkness. The ego exists only in the dark night of the soul.
Bring a little light inside. Meditate a little bit. Sit silently, doing nothing, looking inwards. In the beginning you will find only rubbish. Don't be worried -- go on looking.
Within three to nine months the rubbish will be gone, and a silence will start dawning on you and a stillness will arise.

In that stillness you will become aware of yourself and of the whole that surrounds you. That state is samadhi, and to know it is to know all, to be it is to be all.
Enough for today.
The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 4
Chapter #9
Chapter title: Awake to the law
30 August 1979 am in Buddha Hall

HE WHO GOES NAKED,
WITH MATTED HAIR, MUD-BESPATTERED,
WHO FASTS AND SLEEPS ON THE GROUND
AND SMEARS HIS BODY WITH ASHES
AND SITS IN ENDLESS MEDITATION --
SO LONG AS HE IS NOT FREE FROM DOUBTS,
HE WILL NOT FIND FREEDOM.

BUT HE WHO LIVES PURELY AND SELF-ASSURED
IN QUIETNESS AND VIRTUE,
WHO IS WITHOUT HARM OR HURT OR BLAME,
EVEN IF HE WEARS FINE CLOTHES,
SO LONG AS HE ALSO HAS FAITH
HE IS A TRUE SEEKER.

A NOBLE HORSE RARELY
FEELS THE TOUCH OF THE WHIP.
WHO IS THERE IN THIS WORLD AS BLAMELESS?

THEN LIKE A NOBLE HORSE

SMART UNDER THE WHIP,
BURN AND BE SWIFT.
BELIEVE, MEDITATE, SEE.
BE HARMLESS, BE BLAMELESS.
AWAKE TO THE LAW.
AND FROM ALL SORROW FREE YOURSELF.

THE FARMER CHANNELS WATER TO HIS LAND.
THE FLETCHER WHITTLES HIS ARROWS.
THE CARPENTER TURNS HIS WOOD.
AND THE WISE MAN MASTERS HIMSELF.

Gautama the Buddha has no philosophy of life. He is not a philosopher at all. He is a man of insight, he is wise; he knows how to see into life, into reality. He has a way of seeing but not a philosophy of life. He has a way of living but not a philosophy of life.

A philosophy of life is a false substitute -- it is avoiding transformation of your being. You can learn beautiful words, systems of thought, ideologies, and you can become so much engrossed in them that you can forget totally that you don't know even yourself, that you don't know how to see that you are blind, that you have not been able to create light in your heart, that the flame is absent, that you are living in deep darkness; that your life may be very sophisticated, cultured, but it is not true life. You live on the surface; you don't know its depths and its heights. It has both deep valleys and high peaks, but to reach to those depths and those peaks you will have to pass through an alchemical process.

Buddha is an alchemist. He shows you the way how to transform your energies from the lowest to the highest center of functioning, from the mud to the lotus, from the baser metal into gold, from stones into diamonds. He is a scientist of the inner. His approach is utterly scientific, not philosophic at all.

That's why he could not fit with the Indian mind; the Indian mind is too philosophical. The Indian mind has learned too much jargon, it has become very skillful in splitting hairs. Buddha is not concerned at all with all that nonsense. He goes directly to the problem.

The problem is that we are living with a darkness in the heart -- how to transform this darkness into a luminosity? We have the potential, but we don't know how to change it into actuality. Buddha is very pragmatic, very practical, the first man really to be so pragmatic about the inner world, about subjectivity, about interiority. People are very much interested in philosophies of life. If they don't have one they feel as if they are missing something. People are interested in phony words because they cost nothing. You can be a Hindu, you can read the Vedas and the Gita and Upanishads, and you can become very learned. You can become a great parrot, you can become a pundit, a great scholar, you can talk about great things for hours, but your life will remain ordinary -- it will not have any touch of the beyond.

You can be a Mohammedan or a Christian -- there are hundreds of ideologies in the world -- you can be a Catholic or communist. It does not matter what you believe in. What really matters is: are you capable of seeing? Do you have eyes to see the mystery of existence? Do you

have the heart to feel the magic of it? Are you open, available, vulnerable to the unknown? And when the unknown calls, are you courageous enough to go into the uncharted sea, not knowing what is going to happen next? Do you have that type of guts?

Goldberg had a vague feeling that something was missing in his life. One night he was particularly depressed and told his wife about his yearning for something.
"But Sam," reassured his wife, "you have everything!"
"I know, I know! But I don't have a philosophy of life -- I want that."
"Sam, what do you want that for? None of the neighbors have one."

But that's really the problem -- the neighbors have. Somebody is a Hindu, somebody is a Mohammedan, somebody is a Christian, somebody is a Jew, somebody is a communist; somebody talks about DAS KAPITAL and somebody about the Gita and somebody about the Koran, and you start feeling as if you are missing something because you cannot talk about great things. You start feeling these people must be knowing all that they are talking about. They know nothing. They are as blind as you are, or maybe they are more blind than you are. At least you are free of the philosophies -- that is one of the basic hindrances in seeing.
The first thing to understand about Buddha and his approach is that he does not want to give you a teaching. He certainly wants to give you a science -- he is not interested at all in making your minds more sophisticated.

He wants you to drop the mind. Sophisticated or unsophisticated, mind is a block, it hinders. No-mind is the capacity to see; mind is the capacity to believe, but it is not the capacity to see.

Hence Buddha has given a totally new meaning to meditation. Before him, meditation was concentration in the beginning and contemplation in the end. But concentration and contemplation both are part of the mind; the mind can play these games perfectly well. The mind is very much interested in concentration because through it, it becomes stronger. Concentration is a nourishment. And mind is immensely interested in contemplation too, because through contemplation, finer food, finer nourishment, become available.

If you concentrate you can become a scientist of the objective world; if you contemplate you become a great philosopher. But unless you know what meditation is you will never be a mystic; and without being a mystic, you will miss all -- your whole life will be a sheer wastage.

These sutras are tremendously important. In a few places the translation is not accurate, but on the whole it gives you the essence. Wherever I see it is not accurate I will remind you. Those inaccuracies are bound to happen -- because in the West nobody has talked like Buddha; hence no Western language is capable of translating Buddha accurately, adequately.

Jesus was a buddha, but his way of talking was not that of Buddha. Jesus talked as if he were talking to primary school children -- and that's exactly the case. The people he was talking to were really at a very very beginners' stage. He had to use parables, metaphors. He had to use phrases

which are anthropocentric: kingdom of God -- there is no God and there is no kingdom. And Jesus knew it! -- but he had to talk in words which people could understand. People can understand a king -- then God is the greatest king. But the difference is of quantity, not of quality. Kings have kingdoms; hence God, the greatest king, must have the greatest kingdom. But again the difference is of quantity, not of quality. And because it is not of quality it misses the whole point, it misses the target.

God is not a person but a presence. And God had no kingdom because God is a pervading presence of life, of beauty, of music, of poetry. He is spread all over space; he is not separate from it. He is not the creator, he is the very phenomenon of creativity itself. But Jesus could not talk that way -- Buddha could.

Buddha was talking to a very ancient people, to people who were very well acquainted with higher reaches -- even they were not able to understand. Jesus had to use language which could be understood. And Jesus was a carpenter's son; he himself knew the language of the ordinary people. Buddha came from a royal family, a son of a king -- very sophisticated -- knew all about philosophy and was fed up with it; knew all about beautiful parables, stories, mythologies, and was finished with all that. He had seen through them, that they keep people occupied but they don't transform them. He had discarded all that is nonessential; he talked only about the very essential. He was very telegraphic too: he would not use a single word more than was needed. Unless it was absolutely needed -- only then would he use it.

And of course, he changed the meaning of words; that always happens when a buddha, an awakened person, uses words. He gives new color, new nuances, new meanings to ancient words. Buddha transformed the word 'meditation'. Meditation had always been something of the mind, and Buddha brought a new quality, so totally new, diametrically opposite to the old meaning: he said, meditation means a state of no-mind. It is not concentration, it is not contemplation. It is not thinking, it is not thinking about God. It is not even prayer -- because thinking is of the head, intellectual; prayer is emotional. That is another side of the head, not very far away from it; a different language used by another part of the head.

Now scientists agree about it, that the head has two hemispheres. The left hemisphere speaks the language of intellect, logic, arithmetic; and the right hemisphere speaks the language of emotions, feelings, sentiments. But both are two sides of the same head.

Buddha was the first to indicate this: that concentration, contemplation, belong to one side of the head, the left hemisphere; and prayer, devotion, they belong to the right hemisphere. But both are of the head, and the true seeker has to go beyond the head; he has to transcend the duality of the head, the division of the head. Only when you transcend the division can you come to the one.

Hence, he gives a totally new meaning to meditation, to DHYANA. He makes it mean a state of no-mind. You will constantly have to remember that. Wherever the word 'meditation' is used, remember, Buddha means no-mind.

The second thing: wherever you come across the word 'belief', beware. Buddha never means what you mean by the

word 'belief'. His word is SHRADDHA. Shraddha does not mean belief, it does not even mean faith; it means trust, which is a totally different phenomenon.
Shraddha means a state of total trust. Belief is not total trust; doubt remains in it, repressed. Belief is a cover-up. You doubt but you have covered it with a blanket, with belief. You are afraid of the doubt. Doubt disturbs, so you cling to the belief, but the belief can never take you beyond the doubt.
Belief is doubt standing on its head, upside-down, that's all. The doubter doubts, the believer believes, but both are blind. They are in the same boat, maybe sitting back-to-back, but in the same boat. Hence the believer is always afraid of somebody provoking his doubt, and the doubter is always on guard that nobody should convince him of any belief. They both are entangled with each other.
What is trust? Trust is going beyond doubt AND belief. Belief is always in a certain idea; trust is always in that which is -- not in an idea but in existence itself, within and without. And between belief and trust there is another word, 'faith' -- beware of that too. Buddha never means faith when he uses shraddha, and he always uses shraddha. Faith is just in between: belief is in an idea, faith is in a person, and trust is in existence itself. Buddha never wants you to be faithful because faith creates fanatics, faith creates neurotics.
Just the other night, a young woman came to take sannyas. The way she approached me I became aware that she is neurotic. But I never say no to anybody. Who knows, there is always a possibility -- one can never say -- that the neurotic may become normal. And at least, if she is willing

to take sannyas, she has still some sense left; maybe she can be helped.

I could see it was going to be difficult -- the way she came, the way she sat.... And finally, when I called her close to me, she refused to come close. She stood up with raised hands and said, "I am Jesus Christ!" I didn't say anything to her, although I wanted to say, "So, old chap, you are back again! Have you forgotten what happened the last time? Maybe that's why you have come in the form of a woman this time." And declaring that she is Jesus Christ, she walked away.

Faith creates these types of neurotics. Christianity has many neurotic people, because the whole idea depends on faith: "Believe in Jesus Christ, have faith in him! He will deliver you!" -- as if he is responsible for your bondage! He can deliver you only if he has put you in the prison; otherwise, how can he deliver you? He is the savior and you are the saved; he is the shepherd and you are the sheep. Don't you see the indignity involved in it? You become just sheep. All the religions, more or less, have been doing this. If you believe in persons, you will be reduced into sheep -- you will not be human beings. Your humanity is destroyed. You are imprisoned in very subtle, invisible prisons. You cannot see them, they are transparent.

Buddha says: Be a light unto yourself. Don't believe in persons, don't believe in ideologies. And when you don't believe in any ideology, and you don't believe in any person, a great trust explodes, a trust in existence itself -- in the trees, in the rocks, in the people, in the stars, rivers, mountains, in all that is. Of course, the buddhas are part of it, but you don't believe in the Buddha particularly. You

simply believe in existence. You believe in the fragrance of a Jesus. But this belief is not rooted in any idea. In fact, it is something subjective, it has nothing to do with any object. If you believe in Jesus you cannot believe in Krishna. If you believe in Krishna you cannot believe in Mahavira. Naturally, if you believe in one you have to disbelieve in all others. That's how belief divides people. And the whole history is full of blood, murder, crusades. It is full of blood and violence in the name of religion, because you have been told to believe one against all others.

Trust is totally different. If you trust existence... existence implies Jesus as much as Krishna, as Buddha, as Zarathustra. They are all part of it. And you don't believe only in buddhas, you believe in the ordinary people that surround you too; not only people but animals, trees, rocks. It is not a question of what you believe in -- the object becomes irrelevant. You simply have a trusting heart, a great trust that we belong to this existence, we are part of this miraculous existence, that this existence cannot be unfriendly to us. It has given birth to us, and how can the mother be unfriendly?

This is a totally different meaning to trust. It is neither belief nor faith. Remember these two words because they are again and again translated wrongly.

The sutras:

HE WHO GOES NAKED,
WITH MATTED HAIR, MUD-BESPATTERED,
WHO FASTS AND SLEEPS ON THE GROUND
AND SMEARS HIS BODY WITH ASHES

AND SITS IN ENDLESS MEDITATION --
SO LONG AS HE IS NOT FREE FROM DOUBTS,
HE WILL NOT FIND FREEDOM.

These people -- the people who go naked, with matted hair, mud-bespattered, the people who go on long fasts, the people who sleep on uneven ground, or even on thorns, the people who smear their body with ashes -- these people have been thought of down the ages as if they are saints. They are simply masochists, they enjoy torturing themselves. They are very violent people.

The difference between them and Adolf Hitler and Genghis Khan and Nadirshah is only one: Genghis Khan, Nadirshah, Adolf Hitler, they enjoy torturing others, and these so-called saints enjoy torturing themselves -- but both enjoy torture. Now, if you torture others it is condemned, obviously, because "others" include you and you are afraid of being tortured. But if somebody tortures himself it is praised -- it has nothing to do with you; he is torturing himself.

In fact, the people who worship these masochists are sadists. You would like to torture them, but they are such good people, they are doing your job. What you would have liked to do, they are doing themselves. You can go and worship them.

Masochism is a disease: to torture oneself. And sadism is also a disease: to enjoy torturing others. If you are courageous enough, if you can risk... because great risk is there; if you torture others, they will take revenge. Adolf Hitler finally had to commit suicide, and Nadirshah lived his whole life in constant fear and trembling, because he

had murdered so many people. He had made so many enemies, he could not trust anybody. He was not even able to sleep well; a slight noise and he would jump up -- and that's how he died.

One night a stray camel entered into the campus where Nadirshah was camping. That stray camel reached near Nadirshah's camp; he heard the noise. It was dark.... He jumped out of his bed, thought that the enemy had arrived, started running, got caught in the rope of the tent, had a heart attack and died.

These people who torture others cannot live peacefully -- it is impossible, because they make so many enemies. But they enjoy torturing.

Now, the best way to torture is to torture yourself; then there is no fear. Nobody is against you; on the contrary, people worship you as a holy person. Now, look at the foolishness! If a person walks naked, what is holy in it? You can go where great religious gatherings happen in India, particularly KUMBHA MELAS, and you can see the naked sadhus, and you will be surprised! -- you don't see any holiness. On the contrary, you will see in their eyes the worst kind of criminals. You can go to the prison and look into the eyes of the murderers, and you will find them more innocent. These people who exhibit themselves naked on the roads are really psychologically ill. In psychological terms they are exhibitionists.

And this is a strange thing, that Hindus have worshipped these exhibitionists for centuries. And the same Hindus are against my sannyasins because they think my sannyasins are going against Hindu culture because they are not wearing proper clothes. You are going against Hindu

culture! Your culture has always worshipped the exhibitionists, your culture has always worshipped the perverted people.

Now, a person who spreads thorns and pebbles before he goes to sleep -- that is preparing the bed -- you worship him as holy? He has to be given electric shocks, not flowers, not to be garlanded; he needs psychological treatment. He is perverted. This is not natural! No animal ever does it; even animals are far more normal. Before they go to sleep they will remove the stones and thorns and they will prepare a soft bed for themselves, soft earth, and then they will go to sleep. Even animals seem to be far more intelligent, far more natural, than your so-called saints.

A person who throws dust on his body is simply being foolish, or maybe he is just an egoist, because this kind of behavior is worshipped in this country. Now, the same type of people raise questions against me: Why am I against saints? I am not against the saints. I am not against Buddha and I am not against Nanak and I am not against Kabir and I am not against Raidas, but I am certainly against these ill people, the exhibitionists, the masochists, the abnormal, the neurotic.... I don't call them saints, they are not! But out of a hundred, ninety-nine percent belong to these categories. It is only because you have been worshipping them for centuries that you don't ask: What are you doing? And you are angry at me because I am raising questions for the first time -- questions which disturb you. But Buddha also was doing the same, and you were angry at him too.

He says: HE WHO GOES NAKED, WITH MATTED HAIR, MUD-BESPATTERED, WHO FASTS AND SLEEPS ON THE GROUND AND SMEARS HIS BODY

WITH ASHES AND SITS IN ENDLESS MEDITATION -- SO LONG AS HE IS NOT FREE FROM DOUBTS, HE WILL NOT FIND FREEDOM. You can go on doing these things for years, your whole life -- you will not arrive anywhere. All these things are just empty rituals you are following because you have been told that this is what holiness is. You are so unintelligent that you cannot even see that: What kind of holiness is this? How can this be holy?

How can smearing your body with dust or ashes be holy? It is simply torturing yourself, because the body breathes.... Do you know that it is not only your nose that keeps you alive, but that there are millions of small doors in the body from where you breathe? You cannot even see them with bare eyes. Just try: paint a person's whole body, leaving his nose, paint it completely so all the holes and the pores of the body are closed. He will die within three hours. He can breathe from the nose -- that won't keep him alive more than three hours.

If all the pores are closed... and that's what is being done by smearing ashes on your body. You are closing the pores of the body. This is a way of torturing yourself, this is starving you of oxygen. And the less oxygen you get, the more stupid you become, because oxygen is one of the most essential nourishments for intelligence.

Without oxygen the mind starts becoming dull. That's why in the night you feel sleep coming to you more easily than in the day, because in the day the air has more oxygen in it and you are breathing more oxygen. That oxygen keeps you alert, awake. In the night the quantity of oxygen in the air falls low, the carbon dioxide is more -- that makes you feel

sleepy. By smearing your body with ashes you are trying to reduce the amount of oxygen reaching to your brain cells, you are starving the brain. You will become dull, stupid. And that's why you will rarely see any sharpness, any awareness.

They live like robots. Of course, they follow a certain law that is written in the scriptures and delivered to them by the same kind of stupid people. They follow a certain law without understanding anything, why they are doing it. I have asked many people who smear their bodies with ashes, "Why do you do it?" And they say, "Because it has been done since the beginning -- saints have always been doing it."

I have asked them, "What is the science behind it?" They look puzzled. They say, "Science...?" They are not aware of what they are doing. They are not aware that they are starving their brain cells of oxygen.

And they have many strategies like that: standing on the head for hours -- because of gravitation so much blood goes into the brain that it destroys the finer nerves of the brain. Your whole intelligence depends on those finer nerves. Or starving yourself -- call it fasting, then it becomes a religious thing. When you starve your body you are also starving your brain, because the brain is the subtlest part of the body.

Now it is scientifically proved that if a few vitamins are missing from the body you will lose intelligence. Sooner or later every child has to be provided with certain vitamins, certain chemicals, and his intelligence can be raised very high. In Soviet Russia they are already doing it. If you starve your body, then naturally your brain is starved. You

don't allow the brain the right food, you don't allow the brain the right amount of oxygen... and do you think you will be able to become a great meditator, a buddha? Whom are you trying to befool? But you are following a certain law, a certain ritual, with no understanding about it.

Sir Reginald Farthington was on trial before the High Court of Australia for the crime of molesting an ostrich. "Before passing sentence," announced the judge, "do you have anything to say?"
"Your Honor," said the Englishman, "if I'd known you were going to make such a fuss about it, I'd have married the bloody bird!"

This is the legal mind. This is how the legal mind functions: "I would have married the bloody bird!" It goes from one foolishness to another foolishness.
If you starve your body of the right food, of the right amount of oxygen, problems will arise. And you will go to the same people who are creating problems for you, and they have ready-made prescriptions.

One man came to me, a young man; he was under the spell of Swami Shivananda of Rishikesh.
Shivananda told him, "Live only on milk, because that is the purest food."
Now, if you have seen pictures of Shivananda... one can see that this man has not lived only on milk. He was so fat that even to raise his own hands was difficult for him, they were so heavy. So he had to walk with two people, his hands on their shoulders. This man must be obsessed with food, must

be eating too much. He must have been one of the fattest men in India, and he suggested to this young man to live only on milk.

And what was the problem? Why had this young man gone to him? The young man had gone to him to attain BRAHMACHARYA -- celibacy. He had read in the scriptures that unless you are absolutely celibate you cannot reach God. So he asked how to become absolutely celibate; now the suggestion was, "Live only on milk."

Now this is utter nonsense! If you live only on milk you will be more sexual than ever before, because from where are you going to get the milk? From cows or buffaloes. That milk is not created for man; cows' milk is created for bulls, and bulls are the most sexual animals in the world. Cows' milk has more chemicals to make you sexual than anything else in the world. It is the unholiest food.

But who cares? Who thinks about it?

Just because the scripture says it, Shivananda told him, "You live on milk." Now, it is only man, ONLY man, who lives on milk when he is small and just for a few months. Once he has become able to eat and digest solid food he drops the milk and moves to solid food. It is meant for children.

And one of the most important things that is growing in the child is his sexuality. He is becoming more and more mature and sexual, because the whole biology depends on sex. And after a time the child has to move to solid food. It is only man who continues to drink milk. It is okay in coffee or in tea, but just to live on milk -- it is going to be dangerous.

The young man became more sexual, and weaker. The body became weaker and the mind became more and more obsessed with sex. Again he went to the same saint. The saint said, "It is because you are suffering from TAMAS -- you are suffering from the very lowest kind of energy called tamas, which pulls you downwards."

"What has to be done?" the young man asked.

The saint, the so-called saint, said, "You need not sleep as much as you are sleeping, because sleep creates tamas" -- that too is written in the same scriptures: sleep creates tamas -- "so sleep only five hours."

First the food was taken away. He was starving, because for a fully grown-up person milk is not enough. He needs solid food; he is not a child. And then the milk is coming from cows -- which is meant for bulls, not for men -- so he is becoming more sexual. Now the sleep is reduced. Five hours of sleep for a young man is not right. Yes, for an old man it is perfectly okay; as you become older, less and less sleep is needed, because the body is going to die, it no longer needs to recover. Otherwise, a young man's body recovers itself every day.

For recovery, for regaining lost strength, for recreating the cells that have died yesterday, you need a long sleep -- seven or eight hours, not less than that. Five is not enough. Now he started suffering from sleepiness; the whole day he would be yawning and feeling sleepy.

His father brought him to me and he said, "What is to be done? Now he is again trying to go to Rishikesh, and each time he goes he brings a problem. He was perfectly okay; reading these nonsense books he became interested in becoming BRAHMACHARI -- a celibate -- and then the

whole trouble started. Now he cannot read, is losing interest in everything, is becoming obsessed with sex and food and sleep. Now these three are the things he is obsessed with. He is driving himself crazy and the whole family too."
I looked at the young man -- he was really in a mess. But he said, "I am following a great saint."
I asked him, "How do you know that he is a great saint? What is your criterion? Because he repeats the scriptures? How do you know that the scriptures are written by those who know?"
He said to me, "Please don't create doubt in me! I want to remain a believer, because without faith, without belief, there is no deliverance."
I said to him, "You don't need any deliverance. There is no need for any deliverance. You are already delivered! You are already in God! There is no need to search for him. You are part of truth. Just live naturally, sanely, and you will be able to understand the mystery of life. There is no need to become insane. All these ways are driving you insane."
And then one finds some way or other to satisfy the natural needs -- one becomes a hypocrite. Your whole religious training helps you only to become hypocrites. It does not make you holy; it simply makes you pseudo, phony.
You repress something from one side and it starts asserting from the other side.

Fogarty began to drop in at Barney's Bar regularly, and his order was always the same: two martinis. After several weeks of this, Barney asked him why he did not order a double instead.

"It is a sentimental thing," said Fogarty. "A very dear friend of mine died a few weeks ago, and before his death he asked that when I drink I have one for him too."
A week later Fogarty came in and ordered one martini.
"What about your dead buddy? Why only one martini today?"
"This is my buddy's drink," came the reply. "I am on the wagon."

You can always find a way. Mind is very cunning, utterly cunning. You cannot get rid of the cunningness of the mind by such stupid things. And if you are doing such stupid things, you can sit long, endlessly, in meditation... nothing is going to happen, because meditation's first requirement is intelligence: awareness of your situation and of what you are doing to yourself and why -- not just following dead scriptures, not just following the so-called saints because the masses call them saints.
SO LONG AS HE IS NOT FREE FROM DOUBTS, HE WILL NOT FIND FREEDOM. What does Buddha mean by this? -- SO LONG AS HE IS NOT FREE FROM DOUBTS.... How does one become free from doubts? You will be surprised: unless you become free from beliefs you cannot become free from doubts. It is belief that creates doubt. For example, if you believe in God then the question arises whether God really exists or not. The doubt cannot come first; first comes the belief.
You are told by your parents, by your society, that there is a God. Because you are told there is a God, one day or other your intelligence asserts and starts asking, "What is the

proof? How do we know for certain, for sure, that God really is?" Now doubt is coming....

In Soviet Russia, where they don't teach the children that there is a God, nobody doubts God's existence -- there is no question of doubt. Nobody believes in the first place -- why should they doubt? In India too, if you are born in a Jaina family you never doubt the existence of God. Why? -- because in the Jaina tradition there is no God, no belief. But a Jaina doubts about the existence of the soul, because he is told that there is a soul, invisible -- the body will die but the soul will continue on its journey.

Now the doubts arise: "Where is this soul? What is this soul? Has anybody ever seen it? Has anybody come back to the world after death and said that, 'I am still alive! You can't see me, but I am'?" The Jaina doubts about the soul, not about God.

The Hindu doubts about God, the Mohammedan doubts about God, the Christian, the Jew, they all doubt about God -- because God is their belief. The Jaina and the Buddhist never doubt about God because that is not their belief, but the Jaina doubts about the soul. The Buddhist never doubts about the soul either, because that is not his belief.

Buddha has taken away all the beliefs, so that you need not doubt: no God, no soul, no hell, no heaven, no moksha. Buddha has taken all the beliefs away! See his scientific approach of destroying doubt -- very paradoxical.

Just the opposite has been done by others. Others have also tried to take your doubts away, but their method has been to impose belief on you so that the doubt goes deep into the unconscious, becomes repressed -- you don't see it anymore. It is covered by the belief, but it never dies; on

the contrary, it moves deeper into your being and becomes more and more part of your being. All your believers know it perfectly well, that there is doubt in their hearts. At the very core there is doubt; only on the circumference is belief.

Buddha is the first human being in the world who has really tried to destroy doubt. But strange is his way: his way is to take away all the beliefs; then you have taken the very ground in which doubts grow. Be without belief and you will be without doubt. Without belief, without doubt, where can mind remain? Mind needs these two pillars to support it. These are mind's two wings: doubt and belief. This is the duality on which mind feeds and lives. Once belief and doubt both are gone, you have destroyed the very foundation of the mind.

And to be a no-mind is meditation. Not by sleeping on thorns, not by going naked, not by fasting, not by torturing yourself, but by great understanding of things. From where does doubt come? Go into it, search, and you will find it always comes because of a certain belief.

Now the modern mind can attain to meditation more easily than humanity was ever capable of, for one single reason: that the modern mind is no longer so much burdened by belief. Hence there is not so much doubt either. Nowadays you rarely come across people who are skeptical, people who are full of doubt, people who are atheists -- you rarely come across such people nowadays. In the old days they were many. And the reason is simple: now nobody believes! So if somebody says, "I don't believe in God," you will say, "So what? Who believes? Keep quiet!" Now

nobody can argue against God because nobody is arguing FOR the poor man!

This is a very new situation. And your old traditions cannot accept the challenge of this new situation. If you declare that, "I am an atheist," people will say, "So be it. Why brag about it? Why make a fuss about it? Perfectly okay, we are happy -- you be an atheist." Who bothers about the church and who bothers about the temple? Even the people who go, go only as a social formality; even they don't believe. This is a rare opportunity for the search; it has never been so spacious as it is today. Of course, your old traditional people are very much worried; they think this is the worst kind of age that has ever happened. This is not the worst kind of age -- this is the best, the pinnacle. This is the time, the right time, a ripe time. We can inquire with total hearts into reality, because no belief hinders, and because there is no belief, there is no doubt.

This is freedom. Buddha calls it freedom. SO LONG AS HE IS NOT FREE FROM DOUBTS, HE WILL NOT FIND FREEDOM. "Freedom" means freedom from the mind. Then you are simply in a silence, and in that silence you melt, you merge with the whole. And to melt and merge with the whole is to be holy. Not by fasting, not by torturing, but by becoming one with the whole, one becomes holy.

BUT HE WHO LIVES PURELY AND SELF-ASSURED
IN QUIETNESS AND VIRTUE,
WHO IS WITHOUT HARM OR HURT OR BLAME,
EVEN IF HE WEARS FINE CLOTHES,
SO LONG AS HE HAS FAITH

HE IS A TRUE SEEKER.

BUT HE WHO LIVES PURELY.... What does Buddha mean by "living purely"? He means living innocently, with no belief, with no doubt, living not out of mind but out of meditation. He has his own meaning of purity. He does not mean by "living in purity" rotten, old ideas. Purity does not mean that you should eat food only prepared by a brahmin; purity does not mean that you should eat only when the sun is in the sky; purity does not mean that you should only wear this and you should not wear that.

Purity means living out of no-mind, living spontaneously, moment to moment like a child, innocently -- living from a state of not knowing. All knowledge is cunning, and all knowledge corrupts. Living from a state of not knowing -- that is purity.

Socrates says: I know only one thing, that I know nothing -- this is purity.

Buddha used to tell his disciples, "Please never ask me metaphysical questions, because I don't know. Don't ask about God and don't ask about the soul, and don't ask about heaven and hell." He had a list prepared of eleven questions; those eleven questions contained all the questions philosophy is full of.

Whenever he would enter a new town, his disciples would go around and tell people, "Please don't ask these eleven questions, because Buddha will not answer these questions. He is interested only in practical questions. Ask about greed and how to get rid of it; ask about anger and how to go beyond it. Ask about possessiveness and how to drop it, ask about transformation. Ask how you can drop the mind

and attain to meditation. But don't ask metaphysical questions because they don't help you at all. They create belief, and with belief comes doubt. And divided into belief and doubt you become a schizophrenic, you become zero. You lose your integrity."

BUT HE WHO LIVES PURELY AND SELF-ASSURED.... Now, this word 'self-assured' is also not rightly translated. What Buddha means is one who trusts his own being -- it is not "self-assured." "Self-assured" gives the sense of ego; Buddha means an egoless trust. One who trusts in the whole existence also trusts in himself, because he is part of the whole. He listens to his heart's voice and follows it. Unafraid he goes with his heart. He trusts his intuition. And once you have known the art of how to listen to your intuition, you will be surprised: intellect can err, intuition never errs -- it is infallible. It always directs you in the right course of action.

IN QUIETNESS AND VIRTUE.... "Quietness" means meditation, thoughtlessness, no thought disturbing, the lake of consciousness absolutely without any waves and ripples. And the consequence of such silence is virtue. Virtue is not something practiced by you; you cannot practice virtue. If you practice virtue, on the surface you will wear a mask, but behind the surface you will go on living in your old vicious ways. Of course, you can hide from others, but how can you hide from yourself?

That's what happens to your priests, your so-called saints; their whole life becomes very cunning -- they say one thing, they live a totally different life. They are bound to be so because the virtue is cultivated.

A sociologist was taking a survey based on the sexual proclivities of various national and ethnic groups. He approached an elderly Italian gentleman in a black suit and, after the usual preliminaries, asked him how often he had sexual intercourse.
"Oh, maybe ten, twelve times a year," stated the old fellow.
"But you are Italian and Italians are supposed to be very sexy," came the response.
"Listen, I don't think that is so bad for a sixty-year-old priest who does not own a car!"

Your priests, your saints, your so-called virtuous people, respectable people, they have double lives: on the surface one thing, in the depth totally the opposite of it.

Sister Semolina had lately arrived at the jungle mission. She was under the instruction of Mother Maria, who called her into her office late one afternoon.
"I must go to the capital and I will be away overnight," said Mother Maria. "I want to warn you: if Father Dominique comes to your room tonight do no let him in, no matter what he tells you."
Next day, Mother Maria returned to find Sister Semolina waiting in her office. "I am here to confess," she said tearfully. "Last night I disobeyed your orders. Father Dominique came to my door, and, oh Mother, he was so convincing! He said to me that I was the gateway to heaven and that he had the key to heaven and that if I let him put his key into my locked gate we could be in heaven together."

"That bastard!" exclaimed Mother Maria. "He told me it was Gabriel's horn, and I have been blowing it for fifteen years!"

But this is natural, it has to be so. These jokes are not just jokes, they have great truths in them. It is inevitable because your whole idea of virtue is to impose upon yourself good qualities, praised down the centuries. But if you impose something upon yourself, what are you going to do to your nature? You will become two persons, and the nature is certainly more powerful than anything imposed. The nature has to be transformed. Character has not to be cultivated; it has to be a by-product of consciousness. That is Buddha's great contribution to the world.

IN QUIETNESS AND VIRTUE.... Virtue comes number two. First comes quietness, meditativeness, purity, innocence, trust.

WHO IS WITHOUT HARM OR HURT OR BLAME, EVEN IF HE WEARS FINE CLOTHES, SO LONG AS HE ALSO HAS FAITH HE IS A TRUE SEEKER. Again read instead of "faith," "trust." He who has trust, he is a true seeker. The believer is not a true seeker -- he has already believed! He is phony from the very beginning. If you already believe in God, how can you seek and search? You have killed the quest from the very beginning, you have aborted the quest.

One can go into inquiry only when one has no belief and no doubt. When one is simply open, with no prejudice, no conclusion, no ready-made answers given by others, when one simply goes as a clean slate, as a mirror, then one comes across truth.

Truth can be known only by a mirrorlike mind. A mirrorlike mind is a no-mind. But if you are already a believer you will never know the truth. A Christian cannot know, a Mohammedan cannot know, a Hindu cannot know, a Buddhist cannot know. Unless you drop all these ideologies, unless you put them aside and go into the journey absolutely open, not even a small prejudice lurking somewhere in your mind....

Once a very famous professor, Doctor Bannerji, came to see me. He said that he wanted to prove scientifically the theory of reincarnation, the theory of rebirth. He wanted to prove that the Christians and the Mohammedans and the Jews are wrong, and he wanted to prove it scientifically. He had come to take my support.
I said, "The way you are saying it, the search is unscientific from the very beginning!"
He asked, "Why?"
I said, "You have already decided that Mohammedans, Christians, Jews are wrong. You have not entered into the search yet and the decision is already there that Hindus and Jainas and Buddhists are right. And how can you say you want to prove it scientifically? -- how can it be scientific? "The first requirement of a scientific mind is not to start with a conclusion. You drop your conclusions. You will have to be perfectly alert that you don't know what the reality is -- then go into it. And then inquire, remaining very impartial. Even if it goes against your theory, let it go; even if it goes against Hinduism, let it go. Truth has to be revealed, not Hinduism to be proved. You are too much of a Hindu," I told him; "you can't be a scientist."

He had come to be with me for two hours -- within twenty minutes he left. He said, "I am in a hurry, I have to go somewhere."
I said, "You are not in any hurry and you are not going anywhere! You had asked for two hours and I have given you two hours -- and you cannot leave this place before two hours are up! You will have to answer me first: What kind of scientific approach is this?"
Of course he was unable. It was so clear, so obvious that in science you don't start with a conclusion -- you start only with a hypothesis: may be, may not be... perhaps. You start with a "perhaps"; the "perhaps" keeps you open.

Buddha cannot mean faith, Buddha cannot mean belief. He means trust -- trusting that if you go without any conclusion you will find. Because the truth is there! It is not something that has to be created, it is already there! Truth does not mean something in heaven; truth means the herenow reality. Whatsoever it is, XYZ, start with a "perhaps," be an inquirer.
And then Buddha says: EVEN IF HE WEARS FINE CLOTHES.... There is no need to be naked, there is no need to renounce, there is no need to go on a fast. The real thing to be renounced is your conclusions, your beliefs, your prejudices.

A NOBLE HORSE RARELY
FEELS THE TOUCH OF THE WHIP.
WHO IS THERE IN THIS WORLD AS BLAMELESS?

Buddha was a prince before he became enlightened, and when he was a prince he really loved horses. He was a lover of horses. In those days, horses were the greatest support in war. And there were lovers of horses: in English, the name Philip simply means a lover of horses -- Buddha was a Philip.

When he became enlightened he remembered the horses many times. In many ways he talks about horses. He says there are four kinds of horses. First, the worst: even if you beat them, the more you beat, the more they become stubborn. They have no aristocracy, no grace, no dignity. You can insult them, you can whip them, you can beat them -- they are very thick-skinned. If they don't want to move, they will not move.

Then the second kind: if you beat them they will move; they have a little dignity, a sense of self-honor. Then the third kind, a little higher: you need not beat them -- just the noise of the whip is enough. And the highest, the fourth: even the noise of the whip is not needed -- only the shadow of the whip is enough.

Buddha says men are also of four kinds. The highest, the most intelligent, the real seekers of truth, only need just the shadow of the whip; just a little hint from the master is enough. They need not be beaten, they need not be forced. A NOBLE HORSE RARELY FEELS THE TOUCH OF THE WHIP. There is no need for the noble horse to feel the touch of the whip -- just the shadow. So there are four kinds of disciples too. The highest kind simply takes the hint. Sometimes not even a word is uttered; the master just looks into your eyes, and that's enough.

That's what happened a few days ago.... A well-known therapist from America, Naomi, took sannyas -- an old woman. I can say she belongs to the fourth: just the shadow of the whip -- I just looked into her eyes -- and that was enough. And she has become mine and I have become hers. Immediately the contact happened, the connection. It cannot be broken now.

Yesterday she wrote a letter, because she is leaving today and she is afraid. In the few days she has been here she has known new depths of being -- she has not been here long, only a few days. She has seen me only once, just for two minutes. She says she has known great depths, subtle experiences have happened; they are very delicate, and she is a little bit afraid. "Going back to the West so soon, in the gross marketplace of the West, will I be able to continue growing?" She asked me, "Will I be close to you there as I am here? Will I be part of your commune even though I am thousands of miles away?"

Naomi, love knows no distance. You can be thousands of miles away -- if your heart is full of love, if your heart remembers me, you are as close as anybody can be.

My commune is going to spread all over the earth. Wherever you will see a sannyasin, my commune exists there. Wherever you will find a sannyasin, I am there with him. Wherever a sannyasin remembers me I am present to him, far more deeply than I can be physically present -- because I am no longer in my body, just somehow hanging around the body. I am no longer the body. If you love me you will know that I am something totally different from the body; it is a nonphysical phenomenon.

And, Naomi, you can be in contact wherever you are. The moment you close your eyes you will find me inside you. The master becomes part of the disciple. Slowly slowly, the master is no longer outside, he is more and more inside. And it has started happening -- the process is triggered, and it is a process which cannot be stopped; even the gross material world of the West cannot stop it. And you will not be there for long either; soon you will be pulled here. Now this is your home. Wherever you are you will find yourself an outsider.

A NOBLE HORSE RARELY FEELS THE TOUCH OF THE WHIP. WHO IS THERE IN THIS WORLD AS BLAMELESS? Buddha asks. WHO IS THERE IN THIS WORLD AS BLAMELESS? -- that one is capable of becoming a buddha. That one is capable first of becoming a disciple, then becoming a master.

THEN LIKE A NOBLE HORSE
SMART UNDER THE WHIP,
BURN AND BE SWIFT.

Be like a noble horse -- smart, aware, watchful. BURN AND BE SWIFT. If you are aware.... Awareness is fire; it burns all that is wrong in you. It burns your ego. It burns your greed, it burns your possessiveness, it burns your jealousy -- it burns all that is wrong and negative, and it enhances all that is beautiful, graceful, divine.
And when the gross and the ugly are burned, a great sharpness happens to your being, a great swiftness comes to

your life, a great intensity and passion, a great totality and wholeness.

BELIEVE, MEDITATE, SEE.

Let me remind you again: don't read "believe," read "trust": Trust, MEDITATE, SEE.
These are the three steps, simple, very simple. The first thing is trust: have a loving trust for all that is, then meditation becomes easy because you can relax. The person who trusts can relax into existence. The person who cannot trust remains tense, remains anxious, afraid. The person who trusts can melt, can disappear, evaporate. He knows that, "Even if I fall into the ocean, I am just a dewdrop..." but he also knows that, "As a dewdrop I will disappear, but I will exist as the ocean. I will not be losing anything; I will be gaining all." Meditation is a dewdrop disappearing in the ocean.
And then there is seeing. That's why I say Buddha has no philosophy but a philosia -- he has no system of thought but a way, a method, to see.

BE HARMLESS, BE BLAMELESS.
AWAKE TO THE LAW.

Remain in tune with that law of existence. Flow with the river; don't try to go upstream. Let let-go be your fundamental sutra, and then you will be harmless and you will be blameless.
AWAKE TO THE LAW -- AES DHAMMO SANANTANO -- awake to the eternal law.

AND FROM ALL SORROW FREE YOURSELF.

Sorrow arises whenever you go against the law of existence, and bliss whenever you go in rhythm with it, dancing with it hand in hand.

THE FARMER CHANNELS WATER TO HIS LAND.
THE FLETCHER WHITTLES HIS ARROWS.
THE CARPENTER TURNS HIS WOOD.
AND THE WISE MAN MASTERS HIMSELF.

This is the way to be wise and to be a master of oneself. Without being a master of oneself, life is empty, vain, meaningless. It can't have any poetry, it can't have any joy, it can't have any ecstasy. And ecstasy, joy, is your birthright -- but you can have it only when you attain to this worth, to this worthiness.

Become aware, trust, start seeing -- drop all beliefs and all doubts, and the goal is not far away. You need not go anywhere. If you can trust, meditate, see, if you can awaken to the eternal law, you are the master -- not the master of anybody else but the master of yourself. And that is the true mastery. Jesus calls it the Kingdom of God.

But you will have to be reborn, you will have to learn a new way of life -- a new way, let me remind you, not a new philosophy. And Buddha is giving you hints. These hints can be used if you listen attentively, intelligently, meditatively.

Enough for today.

The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 4

Chapter #10

Chapter title: Aes dhammo sanantano
31 August 1979 am in Buddha Hall

Q2 on video

The first question:
Question 1
BELOVED MASTER,
HOW CAN I GO TO THE OTHER SHORE WHEN I AM TRYING TO BE HERENOW? IT IS A MESS IN MY MIND WHEN I THINK OF THAT, BUT SOMEWHERE IN MY HEART I FEEL A KIND OF REST.

Deva Darpan, "the other shore" is only a metaphor. There is no other shore; this is the only shore there is. To be herenow is to enter the other shore.
We can live in two ways: we can live in time or we can live in eternity. If we live in time, metaphorically that is called "this shore"; if we live in eternity, metaphorically that is called "the other shore." The gate to enter into eternity is herenow. To live in time is to live either in past or in future. Mind lives in time -- mind IS time. It is always entangled either with the past or with the future -- and both are not. The past is no more, the future not yet, and the mind lives in something that is not. Mind's existence is a very shadowy, pseudo existence; it is just a reflection in the mirror, the moon seen reflected in the lake.
To be herenow means getting out of time. You will have to pull yourself from the past, you will have to be out of the

past. You will have to slip out of the past as a snake slips out of the old skin. And you will have to be very alert not to get entangled into the future -- future projections, dreams. If you can avoid past and future you are alert, you are aware.

That's what Buddha means by SAMMASATI -- right awareness. Then you are now and you are here. Where else can you be? That's where you really are!

Even though you go on moving into the past and into the future, all that movement is like a dream. You fall asleep, you remain in your room, but in your dream you can wander all over the earth, or you can go to the planets, to the moon, or to the stars. But in the morning when you wake up you will not find yourself on the moon. You may have been the whole night in your dream on the moon; you are going to wake up in your room. So even when you were walking on the moon, in your dream you were in your room -- really you were in your room.

We are always in the present; there is nowhere else to be. But we can dream, we can imagine, we can revive memories, we can project in the future great illusions... but still we are herenow! The day, the moment, you become aware that you are here and you cannot be anywhere else, that you are now and you cannot be then, you sink into the reality, you go to the depth of reality itself, you change your gear from time to eternity.

The cross in its original sense represented time and eternity. It does not represent simply Jesus' crucifixion; the cross is an older symbol than Jesus. In fact it is only a part of the ancient Eastern symbol, SWASTIKA, just a part of it. The swastika in the East has always represented time and

eternity; the cross also represents time. Time is horizontal, it is linear; it moves from one moment to another moment. And the vertical line on the cross represents eternity -- depth, height. In time you swim, in eternity you dive. Herenow simply means this gap between the past and the future, this small interval. From this small interval you enter into a totally different world -- that is called "the other shore."

Darpan, you need not be puzzled. But sometimes if you catch hold of metaphors too literally you can become very much confused. And I have to use metaphors; there is no other way to express that which cannot really be expressed, to express that about which the only right course is to be silent. The only possible way is to use metaphors, parables, stories, because they give you indirect hints.

The reality is so delicate and so fragile; it is like a very delicate flower. If you try to catch hold of it directly you destroy it. You cannot hold it in your fist; it is very mercurial. You can only move in a very indirect way, and very subtle has to be your movement -- not even the footsteps should be heard. You can only whisper with reality; you cannot shout and you cannot argue.

That's what a metaphor is: a dialogue which is done in whispers, a dialogue which is done in a poetic way; not prose, not clear-cut, not mathematical -- vague, mysterious. You cannot attack reality; you can only persuade, you can seduce reality. It is a love affair, not a rape.

That's where religion and science are different. Science is a kind of rape on reality. It tries to snatch truth from reality forcibly, violently; hence it destroys the natural equilibrium, the natural balance. It destroys ecology, it

destroys the harmony, the accord of existence. It IS a rape, because science speaks in the language of conquest. Religion is a love affair, it is not a rape. Religion woos reality, persuades, slowly slowly, in a very indirect way. One has to be exquisitely graceful, hence these metaphors. "The other shore" is a beautiful metaphor, but let me remind you: this is the other shore, this is that. You are not going to change the shore, you are simply going to change your consciousness. The change has not to happen in the outside -- not that you take a boat, a ferry, and you go to the other shore. That will be a change in the outer circumstances. No, you drop the mind and you become consciousness, and the other shore has arrived. You have not moved even a single inch, you may not have done anything at all -- you may have been simply sitting with closed eyes....

That's what Buddha was doing when he reached the other shore. In Bodhgaya he was sitting underneath a tree by the side of the river Niranjana. It was early morning, a beautiful, silent morning, and he opened his eyes. The last star was disappearing from the sky; he saw the last star disappearing, and something inside, in him, also disappeared... the last trace of the ego. The sky became empty, HE became empty, and these two emptinesses met, merged, melted into each other. The sky entered into him, he entered the sky.

On the visible side, on the outside, nothing was changed; everything was exactly the same. The Niranjana continued to flow, the birds must have continued to sing; not even a leaf has fallen from the tree, nothing has changed... and all has changed. Now Buddha is no longer a mind; he has

become meditation. He is no longer in thoughts; he has become a pure witness, a SAKSHIN.
This is the other shore I am talking about.
That's why when you think, Darpan, you feel a little confused, but when you don't think about it you also feel a kind of rest. Watch! Confusion must be felt in the head and the rest in the heart. The heart has its own reasons, its own way of understanding things.
When I am talking to you, I am not only talking to your minds -- that is only the superficial part. What is really transpiring between me and you is something of the heart. The mind is being used as a stepping-stone towards the heart, that's all. I am using words as stepping-stones, as means, not as an end in themselves.
That's why these two things are felt by you simultaneously: a confusion in the head and a deep rest in the heart. The heart understands -- the heart understands that this moment, the herenow, is the other shore. But the heart is not very articulate; the head is very articulate. This is one of the dilemmas: the head cannot understand but is very articulate, and the heart can understand but is not very articulate. It understands but its understanding remains silent; in fact the more it understands, the more silent it becomes. The head understands nothing; in fact the less it understands, the more noisy it is. You have to see this point.
Use the head to reach to the heart, but don't become rooted in the head. Don't stay there! Use it as a stepping-stone, as a ladder, but don't make your house there; otherwise your whole life will be of confusion, anxiety, anguish. Use it, and forget all about it. Enter into the heart and listen to the

silent dance of the heart energy. Listen to the relaxed, restful song of the heart, the soundless sound, the one hand clapping.
The heart is very close to the mystery of existence; the head is the farthest away. The head is this shore and the heart is that shore -- but you are already on that shore. The head is simply dreaming things. When you get out of the head you simply get out of something which never existed in the first place.

The second question:
Question 2
BELOVED MASTER,
YOU CONTINUOUSLY TELL US TO "BE AWARE," TO "BE A WITNESS." BUT CAN A WITNESSING CONSCIOUSNESS REALLY SING, DANCE AND TASTE LIFE? IS A WITNESS A MERE SPECTATOR OF LIFE AND NEVER A PARTICIPANT?

Anand Nur, mind is bound to raise this question sooner or later, because mind is very much afraid of your becoming a witness. Why is the mind so much afraid of your becoming a witness? -- because your becoming a witness is the death of the mind.
Mind is a doer, it wants to do things, and witnessing is a state of nondoing. The mind is afraid that, "If you become a witness, I will not be needed anymore." And in a way the mind is right....
Once the witness arises in you the mind has to disappear, just like if you bring light into your room and the darkness has to disappear -- it is inevitable. Mind can exist only if

you remain fast asleep, because mind is a state of dreaming and dreams can exist only in sleep.

By becoming a witness you are no longer asleep, you are awake. You become awareness -- so crystal-clear, so young and fresh, so vital and potent. You become a flame -- intense, burning from both the ends -- as if, in that state of intensity, light, consciousness, mind dies, mind commits suicide. Hence the mind is afraid.

And mind will create many problems for you, it will raise many many questions. It will make you hesitate to take the jump into the unknown, it will try to pull you back. It will try to convince you that, "With me is safety, security; with me you are living under a shelter, well guarded. I take every care of you. With me you are efficient, skillful. The moment you leave me, you will have to leave all your knowledge and you will have to leave all your securities, safeties. You will have to drop your armor and you will be going into the unknown. You are unnecessarily taking a risk for no reason at all." And it will try to bring beautiful rationalizations. This is one of the rationalizations which almost always happens to every meditator.

It is not you, Anand Nur, who is asking the question; it is the mind, your enemy, who is putting the questions through you. It is mind who is saying, "Beloved Master, you continuously tell us to 'be aware,' to 'be a witness.' But can a witnessing consciousness really sing, dance and taste life?"

Yes, Anand Nur -- in fact only a witnessing consciousness can really sing, dance and taste life. It will appear like a paradox -- it is! But all that is true is always paradoxical,

remember. If truth is not paradoxical then it is not truth at all, then it is something else.

Paradox is a basic, intrinsic quality of truth -- let it sink into your heart forever! Truth as such is paradoxical. Although all paradoxes are not truths, all truths are paradoxes. The truth has to be a paradox because it has to be both the poles -- the negative and the positive -- and yet a transcendence. It has to be life and death, and plus. By "plus" I mean the transcendence of both -- both and both not. That is the ultimate paradox.

When you are in the mind, how can you sing? The mind creates misery; out of misery there can be no song. When you are in the mind, how can you dance? Yes, you can go through certain empty gestures called dance, but it is not a real dance.

Only a Meera knows a real dance, or a Krishna, or a Chaitanya. These are the people who know real dance. Others know only the technique of dancing, but there is nothing overflowing; their energies are stagnant. People who are living in the mind are living in the ego, and the ego cannot dance. It can make a performance but not a dance. The real dance happens only when you have become a witness. Then you are so blissful that the very bliss starts overflowing -- that is the dance. The very bliss starts singing; a song arises on its own accord. And only when you are a witness can you taste life.

I can understand your question, Anand Nur. You are worried that by becoming a witness one will become merely a spectator of life. No, to be a spectator is one thing, and to be a witness a totally different thing, qualitatively different.

A spectator is indifferent, he is dull, he is in a kind of sleep. He does not participate in life. He is afraid, he is a coward. He stands by the side of the road and simply goes on seeing others living. That's what you are doing all your life: somebody else acts in a movie and you see. You are a spectator! People are glued to their chairs for hours together before their TVs -- spectators. Somebody else is singing, you are listening. Somebody else is dancing, you are just a spectator. Somebody else is loving and you are just seeing. You are not a participant. Professionals are doing what you should have done on your own.

A witness is not a spectator. Then what is a witness? A witness is one who participates yet remains alert. A witness is in a state of WU-WEI. That is Lao Tzu's word: it means action through inaction. A witness is not one who has escaped from life. He lives in life, lives far more totally, far more passionately, but yet remains deep down a watcher; goes on remembering that, "I am a consciousness."

Try it walking on the road: remember that you are a consciousness. Walking continues -- and a new thing is added, a new richness is added, a new beauty. Something interior is added to the outward act. You become a flame of consciousness, and then the walking has a totally different joy to it; you are on the earth and yet your feet are not touching the earth at all.

That's what Buddha has said: Pass through a river, but don't let the water touch your feet.

That's the meaning of the Eastern symbol of the lotus. You must have seen Buddha's statues, pictures of him sitting on a lotus -- that is a metaphor. A lotus is a flower that lives in the water and yet the water cannot touch it. The lotus does

not escape to the Himalayan caves; it lives in the water and yet remains far, far away. Being in the marketplace but not allowing the marketplace to enter into your being, living in the world and yet not of the world -- that is what is meant by a "witnessing consciousness."

That's what I mean by saying to you again and again: Be aware! I am not against action, but your action has to be enlightened by awareness. Those who are against action, they are bound to be repressive -- and all kinds of repression make you pathological, not whole, not healthy. The monks living in the monasteries, Catholic or Hindu; the monks of the Jainas and the Buddhists, who have escaped from life -- they are not true sannyasins. They have simply repressed their desires and they have moved away from the world, the world of action. Where can you be a witness if you move away from the world of action? The world of action is the best opportunity to be aware. It gives you a challenge, it remains constantly a challenge.

Either you can fall asleep and become a doer; then you are a worldly man, a dreamer, a victim of illusions -- or you can become a witness and yet go on living in the world; then your action has a different quality to it. It is really action. Those who are not aware, their actions are not real actions but reactions; they only react. Somebody insults you and you react. Insult the Buddha: he does not react -- he acts. Reaction is dependent on the other -- he pushes a button and you are only a victim, a slave; you function like a machine.

The real person, who knows what awareness is, never reacts; he acts out of his own awareness. The action does not come from the other's act; nobody can push his button.

If he feels spontaneously that this is right to do, he does it; if he feels nothing is needed, he keeps quiet. He is not repressive; he is always open, expressive. His expression is multidimensional. In song, in poetry, in dance, in love, in prayer, in compassion, he flows.
If you don't become aware, then there are only two possibilities: either you will be repressive or indulgent. Both ways you remain in a bondage.

A nun was raped just outside the monastery. When she was finally found, she was carried inside and the nearby physician was called.
He came, raised his hands and said, "This is work for a plastic surgeon!"
A plastic surgeon was called. When he saw the poor nun he exclaimed, "Oh, my God! What a mess! Where should I start?"
The mother superior replied, "Well, that's easy. First get that smile off her face!"

The third question:
Question 3
BELOVED MASTER,
WHAT IS YES? I FIND THAT I HAVE NO REAL UNDERSTANDING OF IT. I HAVE SEEN THAT WHENEVER I SAY YES, THERE IS A HINT OF SURPRISE, AS IF I AM AMAZED THAT THERE IS NO REASON TO SAY NO. MY YES IS ALWAYS INSTEAD OF NO. WHERE IS THE SEAT OF THIS EXPERIENCE, YES...?

Prem Satyamo, yes contains the very essence of all religions. Saying yes to existence is to be religious. Saying no is resistance, saying no is conflict, saying no is egoistic. Saying no is keeping your separation, keeping yourself aloof. Saying yes is merging, melting into the whole. Saying yes is opening up, just like a bud opens and becomes a flower. The no is a closed state of mind; yes is an open flower.
The difference between no and yes is the difference between a dead and an alive person. The person who lives in the no remains encapsulated, remains in a windowless world where the sun and the rain and the wind cannot reach; where God can go on knocking but even the sound of the knock will not reach; where love cannot reach.
The closed person, the person who lives with no, lives in the ego. The greater the ego, the less are the bridges between the person and existence. When the ego is total, the person is completely enclosed by a wall; he lives in a prison of his own creation. He cannot say yes to the moon and he cannot say yes to the trees and he cannot say yes to anything! He has forgotten to say yes, and even if he sometimes says yes, his yes is nothing but a camouflaged no.

I have heard a story about Joseph Stalin:
Molotov, his foreign minister, phoned him from the UNO. His wife was sitting by his side while he took the phone call. Joseph Stalin said, "No, no, no, yes, no!"
The wife was surprised. Not by the no's, so many no's -- she knew her husband perfectly well, he was a man of no. He was one of the most egoistic men possible. His name is

significant: 'stalin' means a man of steel. He was not really a man but a steel man, a machine, a robot. No was just natural to him.
The wife was puzzled that between those four no's there was one yes. She asked him, "Can I ask you one question? I don't want to interfere in your politics and what is going on between you and Molotov and what you are saying. Just one thing... and I have become very curious: did you really say one yes amongst all those four no's, or did I mishear you? Did you really say yes?"
Stalin said, "Yes, I said yes."
The wife asked, "Then one question more: Why did you say yes?"
He said, "When I said three no's, Molotov asked, 'Did you say no?' I said, 'Yes.'"

There are people who can say yes only when it is nothing but a camouflaged no. And there are also people, very rare, who can say no only as a camouflaged yes. These are the buddhas. Yes, sometimes they also say no, but their no is not a negative no; the heart of their no is yes. They are incapable of saying no. If they have to use the word sometimes, in certain circumstances, it really means yes.
A man like Buddha can sometimes be very hard, but he is hard because of his compassion and love. George Gurdjieff was very hard on his disciples just because of his infinite compassion, his total love.
Yes is the very essence of religion, no the very foundation of irreligion. The atheist is not one who does not believe in God; the atheist is one who believes in no. And the theist is not one who believes in God; the theist is one who believes

in yes -- because there have been theists like Buddha and Mahavira who do not believe in God, yet where else can you find more religious people? And there are millions of people who believe in God, and their life gives no indication of any religion -- no fragrance. They stink of irreligion, of violence, of hatred, of jealousy, of possessiveness. Flowers of love don't bloom in their life. Yes is the foundation of a true religious life.

You ask me, "What is yes?"

Yes is dropping of the ego.

Yes is coming out of the mind. Yes is trust.

Just the other day Buddha was talking about trust: Trust, meditate, and see. Yes means trust, and trust is the beginning of meditation. Meditation means relaxing with existence. Unless you trust, unless you can say yes to existence, how can you relax? People cannot relax because they are afraid. People cannot relax because they fear that if they relax they may be cheated. People can relax only with others whom they trust.

With a stranger in your room you may not be able to sleep in the night. Who knows, he may cut your throat. Who knows, he may steal your money and escape. But with your wife or husband you go into deep sleep, you can trust. The child can go with his father or mother anywhere. Even if the father is going into fire, the child can go singing a song, dancing, inquiring, questioning, unafraid, because he knows his hand is in his father's hand.

This trust is yes: knowing that this existence is our mother, that nature is our source -- it can't be against us, it can't be inimical to us. Seeing this, understanding this, trust arises.

Then you can say yes. Then you can say "Amen"; that simply means yes.
And the moment you can say yes and you can relax, meditation becomes natural. Without any effort, without any strain, without any tension, you start falling into spaces called meditation... empty of all rubbish and junk, but full of God -- full of godliness rather; empty of the world, but full of something that you had never known before; full of a light which is immaterial, full of fragrance which comes from nowhere, out of the blue. Emptiness yet a plenitude, emptiness and yet a fullness -- not negative.

And when there is meditation, seeing arises, DARSHAN is born -- you become capable of seeing. Your eyes are so clear, so pure; no clouds, no confusion, no thoughts. Your eyes are so perceptive, so penetrating, that you can reach to the deepest core of the mystery of this existence, that you can have a glimpse of the magic that surrounds you, the eternal magic. AES DHAMMO SANANTANO: you can have a look into the inexhaustible law.
Satyamo, you ask, "What is yes? I find that I have no real understanding of it."
Nobody has! Once you have a real understanding of yes, you have all that is needed for the journey to the other shore. Then you are ready to go to the other shore. The yes becomes the boat, and it is capable of crossing all the storms. Howsoever stormy the ocean may be, the boat of yes is capable of reaching the other shore. If you have the boat of yes, then nobody can prevent you from reaching to God.

You say, "I have seen that whenever I say yes, there is a hint of surprise, as if I am amazed that there is no reason to say no."

Yes. Anybody starting saying yes, learning how to say yes, is bound to be surprised again and again. The places where you would have said no before, now you are saying yes. You are bound to be surprised because there is no reason to say no. Why did you say no your whole life? Just watch people, and yourself -- almost ninety-nine percent of no's are just out of the ego; there is no valid reason for them. The child wants to go and play outside. It is so sunny and the birds are singing and the wind is blowing and the butterflies and the bees are humming... and the child asks the mother, "Can I go out and play in the garden?" She says "No" -- not even thinking, not even listening to what he is really asking for, not even giving him a single thought, a moment's awareness. No simply comes automatically, as if it is built in. She has not thought, she has not looked at the child at all. She is not saying no to what the child has asked because she is going to say no anyway. It has no reference to the child; it has some reference to her power trip.

So many women don't really want to be mothers. They are not even worthy of being mothers, but they want to be mothers, they desire to be mothers, for a totally different reason -- not for motherhood.

Motherhood is a great meditation. Motherhood is one of the greatest arts: you are creating an alive being. The sculptor is nothing compared to the mother, because he will be creating only a marble statue. The painter is nothing, the poet is nothing, the singer is nothing, the musician is nothing, because they will be playing with things, objects.

The mother is the greatest poet and the greatest painter and the greatest musician and the greatest sculptor, because she is creating a consciousness -- life itself.

But women are not interested in motherhood, their interest is totally wrong. Although they say that they would like to be mothers, really what they want is power. A woman feels very powerful when she has children -- because man has taken all other power trips from her. She is not allowed to be in the marketplace, she is not allowed to be in the church, she is not allowed to be in politics. She is not given any opportunity anywhere to have her ego fulfilled; almost ninety percent of opportunities have been taken by the man. The woman has been forced to live in the house; she can have only one power trip -- over her children.

Hence the no. She has not listened, she has not seen the child; she has simply said no. And it is absolutely meaningless! If she had listened there was no reason to say no. This is perfectly right: when the sun is dancing outside, why should the child remain in the house, dark and dismal? And when the wind is blowing outside, the child should also be allowed to dance in the wind. The child should be allowed to dance in the rain too, but the mother rationalizes, "He may catch cold or he may fall ill -- that's why I am saying no." But those are just rationalizations. In fact, each child has a birthright to dance in the rain, in the wind, in the sun. It gives health, it gives vitality. It brings him closer to nature and closer to God. The mother forces him and takes him to the church or to the temple where he can't see anything, no God at all. And where God is so much alive, so much throbbing, in nature.... The child

would like to climb a tree, it is such a challenge -- God is calling him from the tree, from the top of the tree!
All children should be allowed to climb trees, to climb mountains. They should be given all chances to accept all kinds of challenges. They should be helped to move into danger. They should be prepared, not protected; prepared to move into danger -- helped, persuaded, rewarded, to move into danger because a man who knows how to move in danger is bound to stumble upon God sooner or later. But the mother will say no, the father will say no.

For many years a Negro kid had been praying to God to make him white. One morning he woke up and found that his skin WAS white. He got out of bed very excitedly and shouted, "Momma, Momma! Look, I have turned white!"
From the kitchen Momma replied, "Shut up, Tommy, I am getting bored with you. Tell it to your father."
Tom went into the bathroom. "Daddy, Daddy! Look, I am white now."
The father did not even turn his eyes away from the mirror. He said in a tired voice, "Oh Tommy, please, I have no time. Go and tell your sister this nonsense."
Tom was puzzled more and more. He went to his sister. "Mary, Mary, have you seen? God did a miracle -- my skin turned white!"
Mary answered, "Fuck off, man! I'm late, I gotta go."
At this point Tom was quite pissed off, and looking at his watch he said, "Well, I've been white for only five minutes but I already can't stand these fucking niggers anymore!"

No comes easy, no has become our way of life.

You ask me, Satyamo, "I feel surprised, as if amazed that there is no reason to say no."

Yes, there is no reason to say no. And if you can avoid saying mechanical no's, if sometimes there is really a reason to say no, your no will have a positive value; it will not be negative. The man who lives in the climate of yes sometimes may have to say no, but his no will not be negative, it can't be. And vice versa. The person who lives in the climate of no, even if he says yes sometimes, it is not positive, it is not really yes; it is only a disguised no. Its value is negative.

You say, "My yes is always instead of no."

In the beginning it is bound to be so. You have become so habituated to saying no that your first yes will be instead of no. But that is not the real yes yet, it is only a substitute; it will have something of the no in it, some dirtiness of the no will still cling to this yes. It is as if your cup is dirty and you pour tea into it and your tea also becomes dirty. If your yes is only a substitute for no, if it is instead of no, then it will have some qualities of no still clinging to it. But in the beginning it is bound to be so, so don't be worried about it. Clean your cup a little more!

Start saying yes for no reason at all, just as you have been saying no up to now for no reason at all. It can be one of the most beautiful chantings, far better than repeating "Rama, Rama, Krishna, Krishna, Jesus, Jesus." Far more beautiful and far more significant, far more meaningful, will be to sit silently and repeat meaningfully, consciously, "Yes, yes, yes." It can be a far deeper going mantra than any other can ever be, because Rama and Krishna and Jesus are so far away, they are just stories; you can't really relate

with them. The world has changed so much that they can't be more than stories.

I have heard that Jesus came back after eighteen hundred years just to have a look at the world, see how things are going -- hoping that things must have changed by now. Eighteen hundred years of Christianity, thousands and thousands of Christian priests all over the world, thousands of churches -- the world must have changed!
He landed on the bank of Lake Galilee where he had walked once on water. Just by chance a rabbi had come for a morning walk. Jesus wanted to see the rabbi, see who he is, so he walked on the water. The rabbi looked a little puzzled. Jesus came back and said to the rabbi, "Did you see what I have done?"
The rabbi said, "Yes, I have seen. Why didn't you learn to swim like everybody else? Are you crazy or something?"

The world has changed!
I have heard about another rabbi. He had come from America to visit the Holy Land. He was passing Lake Galilee -- he wanted to see the place also -- and he asked the boatman how much it would cost; he would like to have a trip round the lake. "Can you take me to the other shore and back?"
The boatman said, "Fifty dollars."
The rabbi said, "That is too much! I have seen bigger lakes than this and I have never paid more than five dollars. Fifty...?"
The boatman said, "But you don't recognize, rabbi, that this is the place where Our Lord walked on water!"

The rabbi said, "Seeing the cost, anybody would walk on the water! I cannot pay fifty dollars -- and I come from America. That poor carpenter's son, how could he have paid fifty dollars?"

The world has changed. If these people, Jesus and Krishna and Rama, suddenly land now, they will not be recognized, they will be thought crazy. They will look so outlandish, they will look as if they are coming from a film set, out of a movie -- movies like THE TEN COMMANDMENTS! They will not look real.

But yes can be a totally different matter.

"Jesus" you will repeat mechanically, but saying "Yes," really meaning it... bowing down to the earth and saying yes... lying on the earth naked and saying yes to the earth as if the earth is your mother, which it is... swimming in the lake and saying yes to the water, not only saying it, but feeling it all over, each fiber of your being, each cell of your being pulsating with yes... taking a sunbath and saying yes, not verbally, I mean, but existentially... being in the mood of yes... receiving the sun, welcoming the sun and the sand and the texture of the sand, and the coolness of the wind... welcoming all these gifts of God that go on showering on you -- and you don't even feel grateful.

Yes is gratitude.

No is ugly, ungratefulness.

But in the beginning, Satyamo, it is going to be so: your yes will be only instead of no. But it is a good beginning. Slowly slowly, you will come to a yes which is not instead of no but has its own roots in your being. When that yes has happened to you which has no reference to no -- not that it

is not only instead of no but it has no reference to no, it is not the opposite of no, it has no resounding of no at all; you have forgotten the no, only yes exists, as if there is no opposite word to it -- that is the ultimate peak of yes.
In that moment yes becomes prayer, in that moment yes becomes a bridge. The ego disappears, the separation is gone. One feels one with the whole.
You ask me, "Where is the seat of this experience, this yes...?"
The heart is the seat. The seat of no is the head; the seat of yes is the heart. They don't come from the same place, they don't come from the same world. They are utterly different. In the dictionary they belong together, but in existence itself they are utterly different -- different planes, different dimensions.

The last question:
Question 4
BELOVED MASTER,
WHY DO PEOPLE THINK SO DIFFERENTLY FROM EACH OTHER?

Govind, thinking can never be the same. Here there are three thousand sannyasins sitting around me -- three thousand sannyasins means three million minds. One sannyasin does not mean one mind -- many, thousands, a crowd. Each person is a crowd, and each person is a different crowd, because each person has been brought up in a different way.
Somebody has been brought up as Christian and somebody as a communist -- how can they think in a similar way?

How can they avoid being different? And not only different but antagonistic towards each other? Somebody has been brought up as an Indian and somebody as a Chinese -- how can they think in the same rhythm? Impossible.
Thinking comes from the outside -- upbringing, education, conditioning, culture. And there is no way to put two people in a similar situation -- not even twins think in the same way. There is no way at all to put two people exactly in the same situation. Even twins born in the same family will have different conditionings, because the mother may love one child more than the other; the father may have just the opposite preference. One child may be physically weak, the other may not be; one child may be more or less ill, the other may be healthy. The one child may be interested in games because he is healthy, the other may avoid games because he remains ill. The child who goes to play will have different friends from the child who never goes to the games -- he WILL have different friends -- and so on, so forth. Small differences make so much difference that you cannot imagine.

It is reported that the great Napoleon remained afraid of cats his whole life. He was not afraid of lions but he was afraid of cats. Strange! He was not afraid of anything -- not even of death -- but in front of a cat he was simply not in his senses. When he was just a six-month-old child, a wild cat jumped on his chest, and he became so frightened and the fear went so deep into his heart, into his unconscious, that he was incapable of overcoming it.
It is said that he was defeated only once in his life, in the last war with Nelson. Nelson brought seventy cats to

frighten him. Just in front of the army... the first battalion was of cats! And the moment Napoleon saw seventy cats -- one was enough! -- he lost all intelligence. He started trembling and perspiring.

He told his second in command, "Now I cannot think about the army!" -- and he was defeated. The credit goes to the cats, not to Nelson. Statues have been raised of Nelson and people have forgotten the cats completely. Statues should be raised of the cats; Nelson is not the real conqueror.

Small things... now, how can you avoid such small differences? Impossible. Even in twins it is difficult.

So no two persons can be brought up in the same way; hence the difference in thinking. Differences only disappear when you meditate. If all three thousand sannyasins are in a state of meditation here -- just a silence, no thought -- then there are not three thousand sannyasins at all, because three thousand zeros joined together become one zero. Three thousand zeros are not three thousand zeros -- they become one zero.

And that is what is happening, slowly slowly. The more you become meditative, the more your differences are dropping. This may be the only place on the whole earth where differences are disappearing. Mohammedans and Christians and Hindus and Jainas and Buddhists and Parsis -- they are all together, without even thinking to what religion the other belongs. Swedish and Germans and French and Italians and Chinese and Japanese and English and Americans, all nationalities, and nobody takes any note of it, nobody even thinks about it. This may be the only communion happening on the earth, a real brotherhood.

And the reason is not that I am teaching you to be brothers, learn tolerance.... Remember, those who learn tolerance remain intolerant. The very word 'tolerance' is ugly. The moment you say, "I can tolerate others," that shows intolerance. You may have repressed your intolerance, but it is intolerance. To tolerate others means intolerance -- what else can it mean?

Here, nobody is tolerating anybody. People have simply forgotten the differences, because we are moving out of the mind. My whole effort is to bring you out of the mind. If you remain in the mind, you are different. If you come out of the mind, you are one. Meditation brings a kind of unity which is not a synthesis. I am not interested in synthesizing Hinduism with Christianity and Christianity with Islam and Islam with Buddhism. That is all nonsense.

My effort is totally different: I am trying to bring you out of your mind. When the Christian comes out of his mind he is no longer Christian, and when the Hindu comes out of his mind he is no longer Hindu. It is not a synthesis, it is dropping of the mind. Mind creates all the differences.

You ask me, Govind, "Why do people think so differently from each other?"

They have been brought up differently, they have been conditioned differently. They cannot think as others think -- that is impossible! They cannot interpret the way others interpret. A Jew can read the New Testament, but it will not be the same book -- although it is the same book visibly, it will not be the same book that Christians read, because to the Jew, Jesus is a renegade, Jesus betrayed Judaism. Now that is very deep-rooted. The Christian reading the New

Testament is not reading an ordinary book -- it is the holiest of the holy. Jesus is God's only begotten son.
When the Hindu reads the same book, he reads it indifferently; it doesn't matter much. And he goes on comparing it with the Upanishads and the Gita and finds it poor. Not that it is poor -- he reads the Gita in a different way. That is the Lord's song and this is just a carpenter's son, Jesus -- how can he be compared with Krishna? Krishna is an incarnation of God, and this man Jesus seems to be an intelligent child. Krishna comes directly from the seventh paradise. Krishna is incomparable, he is the perfect master. Jesus is good; one can say at the most, "a good man." The comparison from the very beginning becomes impossible.
The Jaina reads the Gita, but he cannot read it the way the Hindu reads it. Their eyes are different, their perspectives are different. The Jaina scriptures say that Krishna has fallen into hell because he was the cause of this great war. Arjuna seems to be closer to the heart of a Jaina, because Arjuna was saying, "I don't want to fight, I don't want to kill. What is the point of killing these people? Just for the kingdom? And one day my death will come and that kingdom will be gone, so what is the point? I am going to renounce, I am going to become a monk."
And if he had escaped there is every possibility he may have become a Jaina monk. If you really want to become a monk then the best way is to become a Jaina monk, because that is the worst kind of monk possible. Other monks are so-so; the Jaina monk is really a monk! You cannot improve upon it.

But Krishna persuaded Arjuna not to escape. He must have been a man like me, who said, "This is escape. You are a coward. Live in the world! Fight! -- because you are a warrior, and that is your type. You can't be a monk, that is not in your nature. Follow your nature."

Krishna says to Arjuna, "SWADHARME NIDHANAM SHREYAH PARDHARMO BHAYAWAHAH." Never follow anybody else's idea -- that is very dangerous because you will become imitative. Always follow your own nature, self-nature; only then will you attain to freedom. It is better to die following one's nature than to live following somebody's else's nature, because that will be a pseudo life. To die following one's nature is beautiful, because that death too will be authentic.

Krishna convinced Arjuna -- that is how the whole Gita was born. It is a dialogue between Arjuna and Krishna. Arjuna was trying to escape and Krishna was pulling him back into the world -- and finally he succeeded.

Jainas have been very angry -- they missed a good monk. They have thrown Krishna into the seventh hell for a very long period, because he was the cause of millions of people's deaths. India has never known a greater war since. Now, how can a Jaina read the Gita with the same interpretation as the Hindu? Impossible. From the very beginning the mind is prejudiced.

People are bound to think differently, because they are brought up differently, in different religions, through different priests, different schools, different colleges, different universities. They have been fed different ideas, ideologies -- they are bound to think differently. And there is no way to make them think similarly -- impossible.

The only possible way is to bring them out of their minds. Then they slip out of the whole upbringing. Then suddenly there is oneness; then you see with pure eyes, uncontaminated by the culture and the tradition; then you see really as things are, not as you are supposed to see them. You become a pure mirror.
Thinking can never create one world: only meditation can create one world.

Clusky went to confession for the first time in twenty-five years. "Tell me," asked the priest, "did you ever sleep with a woman?"
"Eh, no, Father," replied Clusky.
"Now, son," said the priest, "I will ask you again. Did you ever sleep with a woman?"
"Ah, ey, ah -- no, Father!"
"There is you and me and God listening. I'm going to ask you once more. In the last twenty-five years, have you ever slept with a woman?"
"Well, eh, come to think of it, Father," said Clusky, "I did doze off a time or two!"

Now you see the difference: people listen according to their idea. And it is natural....

Claude was sitting at a sidewalk cafe sipping a glass of wine. Just then his friend Rene came running up to him.
"Claude," he gasped, "I just saw a man going into your house."
"Who is this man, Rene? What did he look like?"

"He was six feet tall and had black hair and a black mustache," reported Rene.
"And did he wear a checked cap with a striped Basque shirt?" asked Claude.
"Yes," agreed Rene. "You have described the man."
"That was only Pierre," he said. "He will make love to anybody!"

Both the persons are thinking differently. Their approach is different, their attitude is different; then the conclusions become different.

Foong, the laundryman, had been in America ten years and kept sending money to his wife in China, telling the bank clerk proudly that his wife had just had a new baby.
"But Mr. Foong," said the clerk, "you have been here in America ten years."
"Yes, yes," says the Chinaman happily. "I got velly good fliends in China."

People are full of different conceptions, philosophies of life, ways of looking at things; hence they are bound to think differently. Thinking makes you different from others, separate from others; thinking is a function of the ego. Nonthinking... suddenly all differences evaporate. And that's what I teach, and that's what Buddha's whole message is: Become a no-mind. Become pure consciousness, an empty sky with no clouds of thoughts. Then who are you -- Hindu, Mohammedan, Christian? Indian, Japanese, German? Black, white? Man, woman? Who are you? Young, old? Rich, poor? Famous, notorious?

WHO ARE YOU? All these differences disappear. You are a pure silence.
That silence is your supreme self. To attain it is to attain nirvana. To attain it is to be available to benediction, to all God's blessings.
Meditate more and more so that you can disappear, so that you can allow God to be. The moment you are not, God is -- and God is one, and you are many. Not only outside are you many, inside also you are many. And when you disappear -- the many disappear from the inside and from the outside -- then these are all waves of the same ocean. And to know the ocean that is hidden behind all the waves of different shape, color, form, is to know the truth.
And truth liberates.
AES DHAMMO SANANTANO -- this is the ultimate, the inexhaustible law, that truth liberates.
Enough for today.

The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 5

Talks given from 11/10/79 am to 20/10/79 am
English Discourse series
10 Chapters
Year published: 1990
The original tape and book title was "The Book of the Books, Vols 1 - 6". Later reissued as twelve volumes under the present title.

The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 5
Chapter #1
Chapter title: The world is on fire
11 October 1979 am in Buddha Hall

THE WORLD IS ON FIRE:
AND ARE YOU LAUGHING?
YOU ARE DEEP IN THE DARK.
WILL YOU NOT ASK FOR LIGHT?

FOR BEHOLD YOUR BODY --
A PAINTED PUPPET, A TOY,
JOINTED AND SICK AND FULL OF FALSE IMAGINATIONS,
A SHADOW THAT SHIFTS AND FADES.

HOW FRAIL IT IS!
FRAIL AND PESTILENT,
IT SICKENS, FESTERS AND DIES.
LIKE EVERY LIVING THING
IN THE END IT SICKENS AND DIES.

BEHOLD THESE WHITENED BONES,
THE HOLLOW SHELLS AND HUSKS OF A DYING SUMMER.
AND ARE YOU LAUGHING?

YOU ARE A HOUSE OF BONES,
FLESH AND BLOOD FOR PLASTER.

PRIDE LIVES IN YOU,
AND HYPOCRISY, DECAY AND DEATH.

THE GLORIOUS CHARIOTS OF KINGS SHATTER.
SO ALSO THE BODY TURNS TO DUST.
BUT THE SPIRIT OF PURITY IS CHANGELESS
AND SO THE PURE INSTRUCT THE PURE.

THE IGNORANT MAN IS AN OX.
HE GROWS IN SIZE,NOT IN WISDOM.

The most fundamental question before Gautama the Buddha was, "What is wisdom?" And the same is true for everyone. Down the ages the sages have been asking, "What is wisdom?" If it can be answered by you, authentically rooted in your own experience, it brings a transformation of life.
You can repeat the definitions of wisdom given by others, but they won't help you. You will be repeating them without understanding them, and that is one of the pitfalls to be avoided on the path. Never repeat what you have not experienced yourself. Avoid knowledge, only then can you grow in wisdom.
Knowledge is something borrowed from others, wisdom grows in you. Wisdom is inner, knowledge outer. Knowledge comes from the outside, clings to your surface, gives you great pride and keeps you closed, far far away from understanding. Understanding cannot be studied; nobody can teach it to you. You have to be a light unto yourself. You have to seek and search within your own being, because it is already there at the very core. If you

dive deep you will find it. You will have to learn how to dive within yourself -- not in the scriptures, but within your own existence.

The taste of your own existence is wisdom. Wisdom is experience, not information.

Buddha renounced the world; it is reported in all the scriptures, but the report is not given in the true context. It is reported that the Buddha renounced the world because he was against the world -- because unless you renounce the world you cannot gain the eternal, the other world, the other shore. This is giving a totally false interpretation to Buddha's great renunciation.

He certainly renounced the world, but not to gain anything in the other. If there is any motive in your renunciation, it is not radical enough, it is not a revolution. It is again the same old business, the same old bargaining mind; it is based in desire and desire is the world. The world does not consist of things, the world consists of motives, desires, ambitions.

If you renounce the world to gain something, whatsoever it is -- nirvana, enlightenment, moksha, freedom, truth or God, whatsoever it is -- if you renounce the world to gain something, it is not renunciation.

Hence I will not say that Buddha renounced the world to attain something. The very idea of attaining something IS the world. The very idea of attaining something is to live in imagination, is to live in the future. And a man of understanding lives in the present, not in the future. A man of understanding does not really renounce the world -- the world simply falls from him, the world simply becomes irrelevant; it loses meaning. His insight is such that he can

see through and through the falsity of all desire -- not to attain something, but seeing the futility of desire, desiring ceases. That is true renunciation.

That's what Buddha did. In fact to say he did it is not right. Language creates so many problems. When you start talking about the buddhas, language is not an adequate vehicle; it becomes very inadequate. To say Buddha renounced the world is not exactly the truth. It will be better if we say the world disappeared from his vision. It was not an act but a happening.

When he became aware, alert, watchful, a witness, when he saw the absurdity of desire, desire ceased on its own. It is not an act. How can you go on desiring if you see the absurdity of it? You will not try to pass through a wall. Seeing that it is a wall, you will not try to pass through it. If you are still trying to pass through a wall, hitting it hard with your head, that simply shows your eyes are closed. And you are not seeing it as a wall -- somewhere you are imagining that it is a door. You are hoping to get through it. The moment you see it as a wall the transformation has happened.

To understand is enough -- there is no need to practice it. People practice only because they don't understand.

Many come to me and ask, "Give us a certain discipline to practice." For centuries they have been given disciplines to practice. I give you no discipline -- because you can practice a discipline, you can become very skillful, you can become very artful, crafty; still deep down you will remain the same person, because it is not a question of practicing a discipline.

The question is of SEEING, the question is of understanding your life, its unconscious motives. The question is to understand the darkness in which you are living. And the miracle is that if you can understand the darkness in which you are living, suddenly there is light, because understanding is light.

Buddha has been very much misunderstood, not only by his enemies but by his friends too -- in fact by friends more than by enemies. The enemies can be forgiven, but the friends cannot be forgiven.

Millions have followed him for these twenty-five centuries with a wrong understanding. Their very first step is wrong. The Buddhist monk has not been able to understand what Buddha is really pointing at. He has completely forgotten the moon which the finger of Buddha is pointing at. He is clinging to the finger, he is worshipping the finger, he has become obsessed with the finger. He has completely forgotten that the finger is only a means to point at the moon. Forget the finger and look at the moon. You cannot look at the moon if you cannot forget the finger.

Thousands and thousands of commentaries have been written on these beautiful sutras. But if the first step is wrong then everything goes wrong. The first wrong step all the commentaries have taken is saying that Buddha renounced the world. It is not true. The world simply fell; it ceased to have any meaning for him.

The night he moved away from his palace to the mountains, when he was crossing the boundary of his kingdom, his charioteer tried to persuade him, tried to convince him to go back to the palace.

The charioteer was an old man, he had known Buddha from his very childhood; he was almost of the same age as Buddha's father. He said, "What are you doing? This is sheer madness. Have you gone insane or what? Look back!"

It was a full-moon night and his marble palace was looking so beautiful. In the full moon the white marble of his palace was a joy to see. People used to come from faraway places just to have a glimpse of Buddha's palace in the full moon, just as people go to see the Taj Mahal. White marble has a tremendous beauty when the moon is full. There is some synchronicity between the full moon and white marble, a certain harmony, a rhythm, a communion.

The charioteer said, "Look back at least once at your beautiful palace. Nobody has such a beautiful palace."

Buddha looked back and told the old man, "I don't see any palace there but only great fire. The palace is on fire, only flames. Simply leave me and go back; if you see the palace, go back to the palace. I don't see any palace there -- because death is arriving every moment, and I don't see any palace there because all palaces disappear sooner or later. In this world everything is momentary and I am in search of the eternal. Seeing the momentariness of this world I can no longer befool myself."

These are his exact words, "I cannot befool myself anymore."

Not that he is renouncing the world! What can he do? If you see something as rubbish, if you see that the stones that you have carried all along are not real diamonds, what are you going to do with them? It will not need great courage to drop them, to throw them away; it will not need great

intelligence to get rid of them. They will immediately fall from your hands. You were not clinging to those stones but to the idea that they were diamonds. You were clinging to your fallacy, your illusion.

Buddha has not renounced the world, he has renounced his illusions about it. And that too is a happening, not an act. When renunciation comes as a happening it has a tremendous beauty, because there is no motive in it. It is not a means to gain something else. It is total. You are finished with desiring, you are finished with future, you are finished with power, money, prestige, because you have seen the futility of it all.

Seeing is transformation. Remember this as the very fundamental; then these sutras will have a totally different meaning to you. The meaning depends on the context. If you place these sutras in a wrong context they will have a different meaning, and that's what has happened to Buddha. I repeat: he has been misunderstood more than anybody else in the world. And the reason is that he is one of the most profound masters of the world. His insight is so deep that it is bound to be misunderstood.

Jesus speaks to the common masses in parables, in simple language. He is not a philosopher; he is not very educated or cultured either. He is a son of the earth. He had been working for years with his father as a carpenter -- carrying wood from the forest, cutting wood, helping the old man. Buddha is a totally different kind of person. He is not a son of the earth, he is a prince. He has never mixed with the crowds, he does not know their language. He speaks a language which can be understood only by the very sophisticated. He tried hard to bring it to the level of the

masses, but it is almost impossible. And it is not only a question of language either.

Jesus talks about prayer, which is simple to understand, because prayer is a duality and the whole world consists of dualities. Prayer is a duality because it is a dialogue between you and an imaginary God, but still a dialogue. In prayer you are again desiring, asking to be forgiven for your sins, to be rewarded. Your prayer is a demand; you are a beggar when you are praying. And the prayer is based on the idea of God, and God is nothing but a projection of the human mind. God is anthropocentric. The Bible says God created man in his own image. The truth is just the contrary: man has created God in his own image. Your God simply represents you, your ambitions, your ideals. Your God is a projection of your mind. It is easy to talk about God, and it is easy to be understood when you talk about God; it is easy to talk about prayer, and easy to be understood when you talk about prayer, because everybody is living on that plane.

Buddha talks about meditation, not about prayer. Prayer has no place in his vision. Buddha never talks about God because he knows perfectly well that God has been manufactured by man either out of fear or out of greed; that God is the greatest desire of man and it is because of God that man remains in bondage, never becomes a light unto himself, always remains a beggar, dependent, a slave. Buddha wants you to become emperors, not beggars. He wants you to be free of all projections -- God, paradise, the other world, all are included in your projections. Buddha wants you to get rid of mind itself, because that is what meditation is all about: entering into the world of no-mind.

This is something very subtle, of immense depth; it is not easy to be understood.

Once Buddha was gone, great misunderstanding arose around him. The day he died his followers became divided into thirty-six sects. And what was the reason for their division, and so soon? The reason was that everybody was trying to impose his interpretation on Buddha, and of course they all had their own interpretations.

I am not interpreting Buddha at all because I am not a Buddhist, I am not a follower. I have experienced the same truth as Gautama the Buddha, so when I am speaking on Buddha it is as if I am speaking on myself. It is not a commentary, it is not an interpretation. Buddha is just an excuse to speak to you, a beautiful excuse to communicate my own realization to you. Let it be remembered that it is my own experience that I am talking about. I am using Buddha as a peg to hang my own understanding and experience on. And I love the man, I am in immense love with this man, because nobody else has ever touched such depths and such heights as Gautama the Buddha. He remains the Everest, the highest peak human consciousness has ever reached.

Be very meditative while you are listening to these sutras; that is the only way to understand them. Not analysis, not thinking, not a logical approach, but a meditative silent listening, JUST listening. And truth has a mystery about it: if you can listen silently you will see whether it is true or not, it will be a vision. Immediately. It will strike your heart if it is truth, something will start vibrating in your heart, your heart will immediately respond. It is not a question of the mind.

When you are listening meditatively you are not listening from the mind at all. Of course the words are very ancient -- twenty-five centuries have passed -- Buddha speaks in the language of his day. Don't be deceived by the language, don't be distracted by his language. It is natural because there is a gap of twenty-five centuries between you and him. He can't speak the language that you understand. That's why I am talking about him, on him -- to give you a new version, a twentieth-century version of the same experience, of the same understanding, of the same transformation.

The first sutra:

THE WORLD IS ON FIRE....

What does Buddha mean by fire? He means anguish. What Soren Kierkegaard means by anguish, anxiety, despair, misery, that's what Buddha means by fire. It is a symbol. Everybody is on fire because everybody is divided, split, schizophrenic. Everybody is on fire because there is great anxiety in the world; the anxiety of "whether I am going to make it this time or not." There is great anguish in every heart -- the anguish of not knowing oneself, the anguish of not knowing from where we are coming and to where we are going, and who we are and what this life is all about. What is the meaning of life? -- this is our anguish, our agony.
Life seems to be so futile, so utterly meaningless, a mechanical repetition. You go on doing the same things again and again -- for what? The anguish is that man feels

very accidental; there seems to be no significance. And man cannot live without experiencing some significance, without experiencing that he contributes something meaningful to the world, that he is needed by existence, that he is not just a useless phenomenon, that he is not accidental, that he is required, that he is fulfilling something tremendously significant. Unless one comes to feel it, one remains on fire.

The existentialist thinkers have made many words well-known. One of those words is 'anguish'; anguish is spiritual agony. It is not that everybody feels it; people are so dull, so stupid, so mediocre. Then they will not feel the anguish, they will go on doing small things their whole lives and they will die. They will live and they will die not knowing what life really was.

In fact when people are dying they become aware for the first time that they have been alive; in contrast to death they become alert: "I have missed an opportunity." That is the pain of death. It has nothing to do with death directly but only indirectly. When one is dying one feels great pain; the pain has nothing to do with death. The pain is: "I was alive and now all is finished and I could not do anything meaningful. I was not creative, I was not conscious, I lived mechanically, I lived like a somnambulist, a sleepwalker."

The mediocre mind goes on living without being worried. He seems to be happier than the intelligent person; he laughs, he goes to the club and to the movies, he has a thousand and one occupations, and he is very busy without any business. The more intelligent you are, the more sensitive you are, the more you will feel that this life -- the

way you are living it -- is not the right way, is not the right life; something is wrong in it.
The unintelligent person lives like driftwood; he becomes so much concerned with sightseeing that he forgets all about the ultimate, he forgets all about the goal, he forgets all about the journey. He becomes too absorbed in sightseeing. He is curious but his curiosity is superfluous. He never inquires, because inquiry needs guts, inquiry is risky. Inquiry means you will be facing great problems, you will be coming across ultimate problems, and who knows whether you will be able to solve them or not? He remains only curious. The curious person is the stupid person; his curiosity keeps him occupied, his curiosity keeps him engaged, so he never becomes aware of the real problems.

Marty and his wife Louise sat at the bar of a Chicago hotel. Marty pointed to a striking blonde sitting at the other end and said, "That's a hooker."
"I don't believe it," said Louise.
"I will show you," said Marty. He walked over and chatted with the blonde -- five minutes later they were in his room.
"How much?" asked Marty.
"Fifty bucks."
"I will give you twenty."
"Forget it," said the prostitute as she walked out the door.
A few minutes later Marty rejoined his spouse at the bar. The call girl walked over and tapped him on the shoulder.
"You see," she said, "that's what you get for twenty dollars."

The stupid mind remains curious about such things, about others -- who is who, and they never ask, "Who am I?" They never ask the real question for the simple reason that the real question will take them on an arduous journey. They may have to drop many many things on the way: their prejudices, their ideologies, their philosophies, their religions, their churches -- because if you really want to know who you are, you have to drop being a Christian or a Hindu or a Mohammedan, you have to drop being a communist or a fascist. If you really want to know who you are you have to forget all about your being white or black, Indian or American, Chinese or Japanese, because these are just accidental things. They don't constitute your essence. Your soul is neither Christian nor Hindu nor Mohammedan; your soul is not even male or female. Your innermost center is beyond all concepts. All that has been told to you, all that has become your identity, has to be dropped. To raise the real question means to pass through an identity crisis; you will have to forget all about what you think you are.

And there is going to be an interval, a gap when you will not know who you are -- and that is a painful experience. The Zen people say: Before one meditates, mountains are mountains and rivers are rivers. When one goes deep in meditation, mountains are no longer mountains and rivers are no longer rivers. That is a great crisis when mountains are no longer mountains and rivers are no longer rivers. You are passing through an identity crisis. The old is lost and the new has not been found. You have left the old shore and the new shore is not even visible. And the Zen people say: When the meditation is complete, when you

have entered into no-mind, mountains are again mountains and rivers are again rivers; of course on a totally different plane, but things are again things. Everything settles again, crystallizes again, but now with a difference.

First others had told you that mountains are mountains and rivers are rivers, now YOU know -- and that makes the real difference. Information is never transformation.

Buddha says: THE WORLD IS ON FIRE! Fortunate are those who can understand it, not only intellectually but existentially. Can't you see your life is nothing but anguish? Now there are two ways to get rid of this anguish, this fire; one is to become so involved in meaningless things that you can forget your anguish, so that the anguish cannot raise its head because you are so occupied: the whole day occupied with money, power, prestige, running after shadows, and when you come back home you are so utterly tired that you fall asleep. And then too you remain engaged in your dreams. Dreams are nothing but reflections of your day; the same game continues in your sleep.

People pass their whole lives in this way. People cannot sit silently even for a few minutes. And the whole Buddhist approach is that unless you are capable of sitting silently for hours together, doing nothing, just being, you will never know who you are and you will never go beyond your anguish. So the first way is to become occupied, involved in anything, whatsoever it is, the only purpose being that you can keep the ultimate question of your life repressed. There is no time.

People come to me, I tell them to meditate. They say, "But we don't have any time." And these are the same people who are sitting for hours in the movies and they have time.

And these are the same people who go to the Rotary Club and just go on doing stupid things. These are the same people whom you will find in the hotels, at football matches; these are the same people who will be playing cards and chess, and if you ask them they will say, "We are playing just to kill time." Time is killing you and you think you are killing time. Nobody has ever been able to kill time: time kills everybody.
And when you tell them to meditate the immediate response is, "But where is the time to meditate?" And it is not that they are consciously saying it; it is a very unconscious reaction. It is not that they are deceiving, they are deceived. It is not that they are just trying to deceive you by saying, "I don't have any time," they really feel, they think, that they don't have any time.

THE WORLD IS ON FIRE:
AND ARE YOU LAUGHING?

The world is on fire and you are playing cards?... and you are playing chess? The world is on fire and you are reading a detective novel? The world is on fire and you are gossiping? The world is on fire and you are going to a movie? And remember YOU ARE the world Buddha is talking about.
But sometimes it happens... Soren Kierkegaard has a beautiful parable. He says: once in a circus it happened that suddenly the tent of the circus started burning. Somebody may have thrown a lit cigarette or... nobody knows what happened but the tent was on fire. The clown of the circus came to announce it; he announced that "The tent is on

fire!" and people laughed. They thought, "He is playing a trick on us." And they clapped and applauded the clown and the clown was shocked.
He said, "I'm not joking. The tent IS on fire." And people clapped more and laughed more. The clown was at a loss as to what to do! He started beating his chest and saying, "Believe me! THE TENT IS ON FIRE, YOU ARE IN DANGER!"
But nobody believed him; people continued laughing. And many were burned.
This is not a parable: this is reality. Buddhas have been calling to you that the world is on fire, but you think they may be just taking things too seriously.

"My beautiful foxy lady," whispered the suave dude, "you are the only chick for me. I dig you, I am crazy about you, I am nuts about you. I can't make it through the night without your love."
"Hey, wait a minute," protested the bashful girl. "I don't want to get serious."
"Hell, baby," he queried, "who's serious?"

Nobody seems to be serious. Everybody is clowning, everybody is laughing -- or at least pretending to laugh, at least pretending to be happy, at least bragging about his pleasures, the joys of life, and maybe not only deceiving others but being deceived by his own bragging. One may start believing in one's own lies: then they start appearing almost like truths.
Buddha is saying: ARE YOU LAUGHING? AND THE WORLD IS ON FIRE!

Certainly it shows only one thing:

YOU ARE DEEP IN THE DARK.
WILL YOU NOT ASK FOR LIGHT?

This is ancient language. Now, since Sigmund Freud, we can translate darkness as unconsciousness and light as consciousness. That will be easier to understand, because when you talk about darkness and light it looks poetic, and Buddha is very scientific though he is full of poetry. But his poetry is not mere poetry, it has a great science in it, great alchemy in it. His poetry is because of his experience, but his poetry is not just to entertain you. His poetry is out of his grace, his very being is poetic, but his message is scientific, as scientific as it can be. He is talking about the unconscious and the conscious.

He says you are deep in the dark if you are not aware that the world is on fire, that people are living in anguish -- and they may not even be aware of it. That way the anguish is doubled or multiplied, because if you are aware of your anguish you can get out of it. When the house is on fire and you are asleep, the danger is far more. If the house is on fire and you are awake, the danger is far less -- you can escape, you can get out of the house. Neighbors can help you to come out, you can make a phone call to the fire department. You can do something! At least you can jump out of the window. But if you are asleep then things are more difficult.

YOU ARE DEEP IN THE DARK. Buddha says: Looking at you it seems you are not conscious at all, you are living an unconscious life. Now it is a psychological truth. The

whole contemporary psychology, whether Freudian or non-Freudian, Adlerian or Jungian, ALL the schools of modern psychology agree upon one thing: that only a very small part of man is conscious, a very tiny part. The major part of his being is unconscious, is in darkness; you see only the tip of the iceberg, the rest is in darkness. And from that dark continent which is your unconscious come all the motives, desires, instincts, urges -- and the conscious has to follow them. The conscious is only a servant, it is not a master; it is in the service of the unconscious. The unconscious becomes angry and the conscious follows suit; the unconscious becomes full of a sexual urge and the conscious follows it. And the conscious has become very clever in rationalizing. It rationalizes everything. The conscious believes that it is the master and the unconscious laughs at it.

Just watch yourself. If you are angry you never say, "I was angry because of my unconsciousness." You say, "I was angry because anger was needed. I was deliberately angry. I HAD to be angry; otherwise people would start taking advantage of me. And the person had to be punished, he had to be taught a lesson. I was angry because I WANTED to be."

This is rationalization. You were angry because you could not be otherwise; you were not the master of the situation. It was not within your hands to choose to be angry -- or not to be angry. You were driven by anger and it came from some basement of your being. It came like a cloud, it came like great smoke and you were blinded by it. You were surrounded by the cloud and you drifted with it, but later on just to save your face, your ego, your pride, you start

rationalizing. You say, "I did it." You have NOT done it: you were FORCED to do it. Watch your sexual desire, watch your greed, watch your anger, and you will be convinced of what Buddha is saying.

A burly truck driver sauntered into a tavern in a mean mood, obviously looking for a fight.
"Everybody on this side of the bar is a no-good, dirty bum!" he shouted. "Anybody want to make something of it just stand up!" Nobody stood up.
"Everybody on this side of the bar is a faggot! A fairy!" No one moved, then suddenly a man stood up.
"You wanna fight?" snarled the truck driver.
"No," lisped the man, "it's just that I'm on the wrong side of the bar."

That's how the mind goes on playing the game -- rationalizing everything.

The psychiatrist was telling his patient, "It took us three years, but now you are cured. This is your last treatment."
"Thanks, Doc," said the patient. "But before I leave, kiss me."
"I tell you that you're cured. You are a healthy person again."
"I know, Doc, but kiss me."
"You don't understand. I got rid of all those crazy ideas. You are cured."
"Sure," his patient persisted, "but just kiss me."
"Kiss you? I shouldn't even be on the couch with you!"

Now, the psychiatrist and the patient, the helpers and the helped, the guide and the guided are all in the same boat. Unless you can find a buddha you will be following some other blind person. Unless you are with a man like Buddha, Jesus, Zarathustra, Lao Tzu, you will be with people who are just like you. That is one of the greatest calamities that is happening to the modern mind, to the modern man. The spiritual guides have disappeared -- long ago they disappeared. They were replaced first by the priests. Now the priests are being replaced by the psychiatrists, psychoanalysts, psychologists. The priests were blind, now the psychiatrists, the psychoanalysts are blind. They don't know what they are doing, they don't know where they are. They go on helping people and they are unconscious, sometimes even more than the patient. They are insane, sometimes more so than the patient, but they are professional experts, they have studied, they are full of information. They know everything about light without ever having experienced any light. They know everything about what integration is, but it is only ABOUT -- they don't have any inner integration. Their own beings are in fragments, falling apart.

One can be helped only by a buddha, by one who is awakened, because only the awakened can wake those who are fast asleep. If you are asleep and your psychoanalyst is asleep, who is going to wake you up?

In the ancient days people searched far and wide for a buddha; they traveled thousands of miles just in search of a master. Not that they were not aware of many knowledgeable people who knew all about the Vedas and the Upanishads and the Gitas and the Korans and the

Bibles; they knew about the scholars, but they had a clear-cut distinction between one who knows on his own authority and one who knows on the authority of the scripture. They never followed the man who had no authentic experience of his own, who had not encountered his self, who was not a flame. And it takes time to search. You will come across hundreds of masters; ninety-nine point nine percent will be pseudo, false coins. But the only way to seek and search is to go on seeking and searching and whenever you come across a pseudo master, watch! Is what he is saying wisdom or knowledge? Is what he is saying his own or is it within quotes? And it is not very difficult; just a little patience is needed and you will know the pseudo as pseudo.

Harold started hitchhiking and in just a few moments he was picked up by Eleanor, a luscious-looking librarian.
"Would you like a cigarette?" he asked.
"No, thanks," she replied. "I don't smoke!"
They rode in silence for a short time and Harold said, "I know a nice bar up the road here; would you like to stop and have a drink?"
"Thank you, no," said Eleanor. "I don't drink!"
Ten minutes later, Harold took a wild shot and said, "Why don't we stop at the next motel and make love?"
She said, "Alright!"
They stopped, made it like mad for two solid hours, and then were back driving in her car.
"Say, I'm curious," said Harold. "When I asked you to have a smoke, you said no. When I offered to buy you a drink,

you turned me down. Yet you went to the motel with me. How come?"
"Well," said the librarian, "I always practice what I preach. I tell my Sunday school that you don't have to smoke or drink to have a good time!"

You will come across such preachers everywhere who practice what they preach, but what they preach is not their own experience; what they preach is all borrowed. It may look like wisdom but it is not. And you cannot avoid it. You will have to knock on many doors before you find the right one. That's the only way, that's how things are. And it is good to knock on many doors because knowing many pseudo masters, slowly slowly you will become aware of what it is to be a real master. By knowing the false you will become capable of knowing the real. To know the false as false is a great step towards the real.
THE WORLD IS ON FIRE: AND ARE YOU LAUGHING? YOU ARE DEEP IN THE DARK. WILL YOU NOT ASK FOR LIGHT? And to ask for light is to ask for meditation.
Modern psychology has still not arrived at that point; it is still entangled with analysis. Analysis cannot bring light in. You can go on analyzing darkness for years, for lives, for centuries; by analyzing darkness you will not arrive at light. How can you arrive at light by analyzing darkness? You will have to find someone who knows how to create light -- that has nothing to do with darkness! When the light is created, darkness disappears, darkness is no longer found. But vice versa is not true: don't start pushing away darkness in order to attain to light -- you will be wasting your life,

your energy, your opportunity. Don't fight with darkness! Psychoanalysis is still fighting with darkness, with disease. And that is the difference between religion and psychoanalysis. Religion is a positive effort to create light; psychoanalysis is a negative effort to dispel darkness -- at the most it can help you to be normally abnormal, that's all. At the most it can help you to adjust to a society which itself is ill. It can help you to be in working condition again. That's all the society needs and requires of you, that you should be a good doctor or a good engineer or a good stationmaster or a good clerk or a good collector. That's all that society asks; society is not concerned with your inner health, with your wholeness. Society wants you to be a perfect machine.

And if you are doing the work given to you well, efficiently, that's enough. Society is not at all interested in your transformation; on the contrary, it is very much afraid of your transformation, because if you become transformed society will not be so easily able to oppress, exploit you. It will not be so easy to enslave you. If you become transformed, if you become full of light, you will be rebellious. Light brings rebellion.

Darkness is very helpful for those who have vested interests because darkness never allows you to escape out of your prison. When you are in the dark you can be convinced that it is not a prison, that it is your house or even that it is a temple of God.

But when there is light nobody can deceive you. You will be able to see that you have been forced to live in a prison cell. And once you have seen that you have been forced to live in a prison cell, you are going to do everything possible

to get out of it. Society is very much afraid of buddhas -- hence the crucifixion of Jesus, the poisoning of Socrates, the murder of Mansoor. Many attempts were made on Gautam Buddha's life.

It is strange that man has always been against those who could have helped humanity; you have been against those who would have taken you to the heights of life and consciousness, those who would have helped you to be fulfilled. Why have you been against these people? You are part of a great slave system -- the state, the society, the church. You function as a Christian, as a Hindu, as a Mohammedan; these are names of slaveries, beautiful labels on ugly things.

A really religious person is neither Hindu nor Mohammedan nor Christian -- he cannot be! He is simply a human being. His religion has no adjective to it, he is simply religious. Seek light! And the only way to seek light is to learn how to meditate, how to be aware, how to be more watchful.

Buddha's way was VIPASSANA -- vipassana means witnessing. And he found one of the greatest devices ever: the device of watching your breath, just watching your breath. Breathing is such a simple and natural phenomenon and it is there twenty-four hours a day. You need not make any effort. If you repeat a mantra then you will have to make an effort, you will have to force yourself. If you say, "Ram, Ram, Ram," you will have to continuously strain yourself. And you are bound to forget many times. Moreover, the word 'Ram' is again something of the mind, and anything of the mind can never lead you beyond the mind.

Buddha discovered a totally different angle: just watch your breath -- the breath coming in, the breath going out. There are four points to be watched. Sitting silently just start seeing the breath, feeling the breath. The breath going in is the first point. Then for a moment when the breath is in it stops -- a very small moment it is -- for a split second it stops; that is the second point to watch. Then the breath turns and goes out; this is the third point to watch. Then again when the breath is completely out, for a split second it stops; that is the fourth point to watch. Then the breath starts coming in again... this is the circle of breath.

If you can watch all these four points you will be surprised, amazed at the miracle of such a simple process -- because mind is not involved. Watching is not a quality of the mind; watching is the quality of the soul, of consciousness; watching is not a mental process at all. When you watch, the mind stops, ceases to be. Yes, in the beginning many times you will forget and the mind will come in and start playing its old games. But whenever you remember that you had forgotten, there is no need to feel repentant, guilty -- just go back to watching, again and again go back to watching your breath. Slowly slowly, less and less mind interferes.

And when you can watch your breath for forty-eight minutes as a continuum, you will become enlightened. You will be surprised -- just forty-eight minutes -- because you will think that it is not very difficult... just forty-eight minutes! It it is very difficult. Forty-eight seconds and you will have fallen victim to the mind many times. Try it with a watch in front of you; in the beginning you cannot be watchful for sixty seconds. In just sixty seconds, that is one

minute, you will fall asleep many times, you will forget all about watching -- the watch and the watching will both be forgotten. Some idea will take you far far away; then suddenly you will realize... you will look at the watch and ten seconds have passed. For ten seconds you were not watching. But slowly slowly -- it is a knack; it is not a practice, it is a knack -- slowly slowly you imbibe it, because those few moments when you are watchful are of such exquisite beauty, of such tremendous joy, of such incredible ecstasy, that once you have tasted those few moments you would like to come back again and again -- not for any other motive, just for the sheer joy of being there, present to the breath.

Remember, it is not the same process as is done in yoga. In yoga the process is called PRANAYAM; it is a totally different process, in fact just the opposite of what Buddha calls vipassana. In pranayam you take deep breaths, you fill your chest with more and more air, more and more oxygen; then you empty your chest as totally as possible of all carbon dioxide. It is a physical exercise -- good for the body but it has nothing to do with vipassana. In vipassana you are not to change the rhythm of your natural breath, you are not to take long, deep breaths, you are not to exhale in any way differently than you ordinarily do. Let it be absolutely normal and natural. Your whole consciousness has to be on one point; watching.

And if you can watch your breath then you can start watching other things too. Walking you can watch that you are walking, eating you can watch that you are eating, and ultimately, finally, you can watch that you are sleeping. The day you can watch that you are sleeping you are

transported into another world. The body goes on sleeping and inside a light goes on burning brightly. Your watchfulness remains undisturbed, then twenty-four hours a day there is an undercurrent of watching. You go on doing things... for the outside world nothing has changed, but for you everything has changed.

A Zen master was carrying water from the well and a devotee who had heard about him and had traveled far to see him asked him, "Where can I see so-and-so, the master of this monastery?" He thought this man must be a servant, carrying water from the well -- you cannot find a buddha carrying water from the well, you cannot find a buddha cleaning the floor.
The master laughed and he said, "I am the person you are seeking."
The devotee could not believe it. He said, "I have heard much about you but I cannot conceive you carrying water from the well."
The master said, "But that's what I used to do before I became enlightened. Carrying water from the well, chopping wood -- that's what I used to do before and that's what I continue to do. I am very proficient in these two things: carrying water from the well and chopping wood. Come with me; my next thing is going to be chopping wood -- watch me!"
The man said, "But then what is the difference? Before enlightenment you used to do these two things, after enlightenment you are doing the same two things -- then what is the difference?"

The master laughed, he said, "The difference is inner: before, I was doing everything in sleep, now I am doing everything consciously. That's the difference: activities are the same, but I am no longer the same. The world is the same, but I am not the same. And because I am no longer the same, for me the world is also no longer the same."

The transformation has to be inner. This is real renunciation: the old world is gone because the old being is gone.

FOR BEHOLD YOUR BODY --
A PAINTED PUPPET, A TOY,
JOINTED AND SICK AND FULL OF FALSE IMAGININGS,
A SHADOW THAT SHIFTS AND FADES.

Buddha says, don't be too much attached to the body, don't get identified with the body, beware! That is a bondage. Live in the body, use the body, but be alert -- it is not you. FOR BEHOLD YOUR BODY.... If you want to create light in yourself, this is the beginning: BEHOLD YOUR BODY -- A PAINTED PUPPET, A TOY, JOINTED AND SICK AND FULL OF FALSE IMAGININGS, A SHADOW THAT SHIFTS AND FADES.
How many people have lived on the earth? And they have all faded away, dust unto dust, they have all disappeared -- as if they had never existed at all. And the same is going to happen to you, to everybody. Today you are here, tomorrow you are gone. And then it is only in a few people's memories that you will live for a few days; they

will remember you -- just a memory, a picture in their minds. And then those people will die and even the memory will fade away. After two thousand years, do you think there will be anybody who will know that you had ever existed? It is just a shadow, momentary; even though the moment lasts for seventy years, eighty years, it doesn't matter.

Buddha says truth is eternal, and whatsoever is not eternal is a dream -- beware of the dreams! And your mind is also part of your body; that's why he says beware of false imaginings. Your mind goes on giving you false ideas; it says, "Look how healthy I am, how strong I am, look how beautiful I am." It goes on deceiving you, it goes on telling you that death always happens to others, not to you. Nobody is an exception. And the mind is such a deceiver, so cunning, so crafty that it can make you believe anything. It can make you believe in money, and you will have to leave all your money when you go. But you cling to money, people are ready to die for money.

In fact, that's how many people die: their whole lives are spent accumulating money; they sell their lives just to accumulate a few pieces of gold. That gold will remain here and you will be gone, and the gold has no attachment to you. It is you who have created all kinds of attachments. And the mind always goes on creating a future; it goes on saying to you, "What has not happened yet is going to happen tomorrow -- wait!" It keeps you hoping, it keeps you trying in new ways, in new pastures. If this woman has not satisfied you then the mind says, "It is because this woman is such -- find another!" And this will go on and on. If this man is not satisfactory, the mind says, "It is because

this man is wrong." But the mind never allows you to see the fact that no man, no woman, can ever satisfy anybody. Satisfaction is not possible in this world. Contentment is possible only when you move into your state of being, when you become a no-mind. Contentment is the flavor of no-mind.
And when you can manage, mind gives you fantasies, foolish, stupid, absurd. But mind is a great seducer....

Muriel and Tina were discussing their recent experiences over cocktails.
"Say," asked Muriel, "how did you make out with that eccentric millionaire you met yesterday?"
"He gave me five hundred dollars," said Tina. "That screwball wanted to make it in a coffin."
"No kidding!" exclaimed Muriel. "I'll bet that shook you up?"
"Yeah, but not as much as the six pall-bearers."

The mind can seduce you into anything, into any stupid thing. And once anything gets into your mind, it tortures you, it haunts you. You have to do it -- it seems that is the only way to get rid of it. But before you get rid of it, mind gives you another idea. Mind is very inventive as far as imagination is concerned. Mind can go on inexhaustibly creating new ideas for you; that's what has been happening for centuries, for lives. You have lived in this world for so many lives repeating the same kinds of things again and again, maybe a little bit different but the things are the same... and still you go on hoping.

Buddha says beware of the false imaginings; the body is a shadow, you have to leave it one day. You are not it.

HOW FRAIL IT IS!
FRAIL AND PESTILENT,
IT SICKENS, FESTERS AND DIES.
LIKE EVERY LIVING THING
IN THE END IT SICKENS AND DIES.

Remember death, never forget it for a single moment! Because of this insistence, many people have thought Buddha is death-obsessed; he is not. You may be life-obsessed but he is not death-obsessed. He is simply bringing everything to a balance.

He says, as much as you are involved in life you have to remember death too, then there will be a balance, an equilibrium. He used to send his disciples, his sannyasins, to watch whenever a dead body was being burned: "Just go, sit there, meditate and watch and remember this is going to happen to your body too."

Death has to be meditated upon; otherwise life can go on giving you false hopes. If you remember death, life cannot deceive you anymore. Death will keep you alert.

Buddha is not death-obsessed, but he has come to know one thing: that it is only by becoming aware of death that one gets rid of the obsession with the body, the obsession with food, the obsession with sex, the obsession with money, the obsession with the world. You have to live in life, but let there be a consciousness, constantly, that this life is slipping out of your hands and death is coming closer

every moment. That will not allow you to be a victim of false desires and false hopes.

BEHOLD THESE WHITENED BONES,
THE HOLLOW SHELLS AND HUSKS OF A DYING SUMMER.
AND ARE YOU LAUGHING?

YOU ARE A HOUSE OF BONES,
FLESH AND BLOOD FOR PLASTER.
PRIDE LIVES IN YOU,
AND HYPOCRISY, DECAY AND DEATH.

That's why people don't want to watch their lives. They don't want to go deeper into their beings because what they find is not soul, God, freedom, light. What they find in the beginning is ego, hypocrisy, decay and death. Yes, if you enter inside, first you will find these things. They are the first layers. But if you go on moving in spite of death, ego, decay, hypocrisy -- you go on moving courageously, then soon things start changing. Instead of death you start entering into eternal life, into life that is timeless; and instead of ego you come across your real self, your supreme self; and instead of death you come across immortality. But one has to go deeper.

The first penetration will make you afraid, you will become scared -- darkness all around and death. And people escape from that first layer. They become so afraid that they never try again.

The great English philosopher, David Hume, has written, "Reading again and again in the scriptures, 'Know thyself,'

one day I tried. I closed my eyes and tried to go in. What I found was darkness, many many crazy thoughts, imagination, memory, desires, so many things crowding around, much noise and turmoil, but I could not find any immortal self." Just one day he tried, and that was that -- as if one becomes a buddha in one day. And not even one day, it must have been one hour or half an hour -- not twenty-four hours. Even a man of such keen intelligence as David Hume could not see a small point: who is the watcher? He said, "I found memories, ideas, and so on and so forth, many things, but I did not find any self." You see the absurdity of the statement? Who has found the ideas and the imagination and the memory? Who is this witness? That is the self! It is SO simple. You cannot be the idea; you are seeing the idea -- how can you be it? The seer can never be the seen, the watcher can never be the watched, the subject cannot be the object. But even a man like David Hume thinks that there is no soul, there is no self, and all these buddhas have been talking nonsense. And he never tried again. The experience must have been ugly, it IS ugly in the beginning; hence you need a master so that you don't escape from the first layer of your being.

THE GLORIOUS CHARIOTS OF KINGS SHATTER.
SO ALSO THE BODY TURNS TO DUST.
BUT THE SPIRIT OF PURITY IS CHANGELESS
AND SO THE PURE INSTRUCT THE PURE.

If you go on diving deeper and deeper into your being you will come to a pure consciousness which is changeless, timeless, deathless. This is what has been taught by the

buddhas to the potential buddhas: AND SO THE PURE INSTRUCT THE PURE. It can be understood only in deep purity of the heart; it cannot be understood by the cunning mind, it can be understood only by the innocent heart. The buddhas can be understood only through the heart, through love, not through logic.

THE IGNORANT MAN IS AN OX.
HE GROWS IN SIZE,NOT IN WISDOM.

Man is born only as a potential. If you don't develop your potential, if you don't grow spiritually, you are just like an ox. The body will go on becoming bigger and bigger, but that is not growth. Growing old is not growing up, growing physically is not growing spiritually. And unless you grow spiritually you are wasting a precious opportunity.
Man is the only being on the earth who can attain to buddhahood. Elephants and lions and tigers can't become buddhas. Only man can become a buddha, only man can become a thousand-petaled lotus, only man can release the fragrance called God.
Don't waste a single moment in anything else. Do the necessary things, the essential things, but pour more and more energy into watchfulness, awareness. Wake up! Unless you become a buddha you have not lived at all, because you will not know the great poetry of life, the great music of existence. You will not know the celestial celebration that goes on and on, you will not know the dance of the stars. It is for you to become part of this celebration. This bliss is for you! All these flowers and all

these songs and all these stars are for you. You are entitled to miracles -- but grow up, wake up!
Enough for today.
The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 5
Chapter #2
Chapter title: The heart has no questions
12 October 1979 am in Buddha Hall

The first question:
Question 1
BELOVED MASTER,
DO YOU REALLY HAVE TO BREAK MY HEART?

Yes, Somendra. It is a thankless job, but it has to be done. Man exists on three planes: the head -- the world of thoughts, the thinking process -- the most superficial plane. Below it is the heart -- the world of feelings, emotions, sentiments -- a little deeper than thought, but not the deepest. And the third is the realm of being -- no thought, no feeling -- you simply are.
My work starts by destroying the thinking process first -- obviously, because that is where you are. I have to hammer your head mercilessly. Once your energy has moved from the head to the heart, I start breaking your heart too. First I use your heart as a temptation: I tell you to move from the head to the heart. It is just to give you a goal which is not very far away, because a too distant goal cannot appeal to you. If it is too far away it appears impossible; the goal has to be within your grasp.

Rooted in the mind, the world of being is very very far away; it looks almost nonexistential. Hence the heart is a midway place, a resting place; it is not the goal. One day you have to be ready to leave it too, but before that I use it as a temptation for you.

I talk about love and the beauty and the ecstasy of feeling... it is only a device so that you can move from the head to the heart. Once you have moved from the head to the heart, then I start hammering on your heart too. Then I have to help you to get rid of the feelings -- because feelings are as stupid as thoughts.

Logic is stupid, love is not less stupid -- sometimes even more! Logic is a game, love too is a game, and you have to be aware of all the games that you are capable of playing. Logic deceives, love does too. One has to rise to the heights or dive to the depths where logic and love both disappear. They are two sides of the same coin: on the one side is your head, on the other side is your heart.

The philosopher deals with the head, the poet with the heart, but the mystic is beyond both. The mystic is transcendental; he is pure being, just consciousness, neither thought nor feeling.

Hence, Somendra, I have to break your heart. I have destroyed your mind -- the first step has been taken. The second step is harder, because the heart is closer to being than the head. It is very easy to see the rubbish of the head; it is very difficult to see the rubbish of the heart. The head reflects nothing of the being; hence to disidentify yourself from the head is not such a great problem. It is easy to see that the thoughts are separate from you; it is very difficult to see that the feelings are different from you. They are so

close and they reflect something of your being. Feelings are more attuned with your being; hence the possibility of being deceived by them.
The greater work starts when you start disidentifying yourself from your heart. The heart is not your soul; certainly it is better than the head. And why is it better? It is better only because it is closer to the being, but even though it is closer there is still a distance. Closeness is also a distance. You have to fall still deeper. You have to come to a point, to a center, from where you can see thoughts and feelings all separate from you, where you become just a mirror.
That moment is the moment of enlightenment; you become a buddha. Less than that will not help, less than that is not worthwhile.

The second question:
Question 2
BELOVED MASTER,
IF HEAVEN AND HELL ARE ON THE SAME PLANE, ONLY DIVIDED BY A TATTERED FENCE, WHY IS THE POSITIVE SIDE OF THE MIND SUPPOSED TO BE BETTER THAN THE NEGATIVE?

Saguna, it is the same question put in a different way: mind is negative, heart is positive. The language of the mind is rooted in no; the mind immensely enjoys saying no. The more you can say no, the more you are thought to be a great thinker.

There is a beautiful story by Turgenev, THE FOOL.

Once in a town there was a man who was condemned by the whole crowd as the greatest idiot who had ever lived. Obviously he was continuously in difficulty. Whatsoever he would say, people would start laughing, even if he was saying something beautiful, true. But because it was known that he was an idiot, people would think that whatsoever he did and said was idiotic. He might be quoting sages but still people would laugh at him.

He went to a wise old man and told him that he felt like committing suicide, that he could not live anymore. "This constant condemnation is too much -- I cannot bear it any longer. Either help me out of it, or I am going to kill myself."

The old wise man laughed. He said, "There is not much of a problem, don't be worried. Do only one thing, and come after seven days -- start saying no to everything. Start questioning each and everything. If somebody says, 'Look -- look at the sunset, how beautiful it is!' ask immediately, 'Where is there any beauty? I don't see any -- prove it! What is beauty? There is no beauty in the world, it is all nonsense!' Insist on proofs; say, 'Prove where beauty is. Let me see it, let me touch it! Give me a definition.' If somebody says, 'The music is ecstatic,' immediately jump into it and ask, 'What is ecstasy? What is music? Define your terms clearly. I don't believe in any ecstasy. It is all foolishness, all illusion. And music is nothing but noise.'

"Do this with everything, and after seven days come to me. Be negative, ask questions -- questions which cannot be answered: What is beauty? What is love? What is ecstasy? What is life? What is death? What is God?"

After seven days the idiot came to the wise man -- followed by many many people. He was garlanded and beautifully dressed. The wise man asked, "What happened?"
And the idiot said, "It was magic! Now the whole city thinks that I am the wisest man in the world. Everybody thinks I am a great philosopher, a great thinker. And I have silenced everybody, people have become afraid of me. In my presence they remain silent, because whatsoever they say, I immediately turn it into a question and I become absolutely negative. Your trick worked!"
And the wise man asked, "Who are these people who are following you?"
He said, "These are my disciples -- they want to learn from me what wisdom is!"

This is how it is: the mind lives in the no, it is a no-sayer; its nourishment comes from saying no to each and everything. The mind is basically atheistic, negative. There is nothing like a positive mind.
The heart is positive; just as mind says no, the heart says yes. Of course, it is better to say yes than to say no, because one cannot really live by saying no. The more you say no, the more you become shrunken, closed. The more you say no, the less alive you are. People may think you are a great thinker, but you are shrinking and dying; slowly you are committing suicide.
If you say no to love, you are less than you were before; if you say no to beauty, you are less than you were before. And if you go on saying no to each and everything, chunk by chunk you are disappearing. Ultimately a very empty

life is left -- meaningless, with no significance, with no joy, with no dance, with no celebration.

That's what has happened to the modern mind, to the modern man. The modern man has said more no's than ever before. Hence the question: What is the meaning of life? Why are we alive at all? Why go on living? We have said no to God, we have said no to the beyond, we have said no to all for which man has lived down the ages. We have proved to our heart's content that all the values man has lived for are worthless -- but now we are in difficulty, in deep anguish. Life has become more and more impossible for us. We go on living only because we are cowards; otherwise we have destroyed all the reasons to live. We go on living because we cannot commit suicide; we are afraid of death, hence we go on living. We live out of fear, not out of love.

It is better to be positive, because the more positive you are, the more you are moving towards the heart. The heart knows no negative language. The heart never asks, "What is beauty?" It enjoys it, and in enjoying it, it knows what it is. It cannot define it, it cannot explain itself, because the experience is such that it is inexplicable, inexpressible. Language is not adequate enough, no symbols help. The heart knows what love is, but don't ask. The mind knows only questions and the heart knows only answers. The mind goes on asking but it cannot answer.

Hence philosophy has no answers... questions and questions and questions. Each question becomes, slowly slowly, a thousand and one questions. The heart has no questions -- it is one of the mysteries of life -- it has all the answers. But the mind will not listen to the heart; there is

no communion between the two, no communication, because the heart knows only the language of silence. No other language is known by the heart, no other language is understood by the heart -- and the mind knows nothing of silence. The mind is all noise: a tale told by an idiot, full of fury and noise, signifying nothing.

The heart knows what significance is. The heart knows the glory of life, the tremendous joy of sheer existence. The heart is capable of celebrating, but it never asks. Hence the mind thinks the heart is blind. The mind is full of doubts, the heart is full of trust; they are polar opposites.

That's why it is said that it is better to be positive than to be negative. But remember: the positive is joined with the negative, two sides of the same phenomenon.

I am not here to teach you the ways of the heart. Yes, I use them, but only as a device: to bring you out of your mind I use the heart as a vehicle; to take you to the other shore I use the heart as a boat. Once you have reached the other shore, the boat has to be left behind; you are not expected to carry the boat on your head.

The goal is to go beyond duality. The goal is to go beyond no and yes both, because your yes can have meaning only in the context of no; it cannot be free of the no. If it is free of the no, what meaning will it have? Your yes can exist only with the no, remember; and your no can also exist only with the yes. They are polar opposites, but they help each other in a subtle way. There is a conspiracy: they are holding hands, they are supporting each other, because they cannot exist separately. Yes has meaning only because of the no; no has meaning only because of the yes. And you

have to go beyond this conspiracy, you have to go beyond this duality.

Saguna, it is the same question as Somendra's only asked in a different way, from a different angle. But it is not a new question, it is not a different question; it is the same question verbalized differently.

I am not teaching you the positive way of living, I am not teaching you the negative way of living: I am teaching you the way of transcendence. All dualities have to be dropped: the duality of mind and heart, the duality of matter and mind, the duality of thinking and emotion, the duality of the positive and the negative, the duality of male and female, yin and yang, the duality of day and night, summer and winter, life and death... all dualities. Duality as such has to be dropped, because you are beyond duality.

The moment you start moving away from both yes and no, you will have your first glimpses of the ultimate. Hence the ultimate remains absolutely inexpressible; you cannot say no, you cannot say yes.

Gautama the Buddha never said no to God, never said yes to God. He seems to be the only person in the whole history of man who is neither an atheist nor a theist. This is unique, something immensely valuable. He is a pioneer; he is breaking into a new dimension, he is a breakthrough.

People were continuously asking, as they have always asked, "Does God exist?" and they expected a categorical answer, yes or no. They were very puzzled by Buddha, because he would never answer clearly whether God exists or not. On the contrary, he would divert the question into something else; he might start talking about something else. And his impact and his magnetism were such that you

would forget all about what you had come to ask him; you would remember only later on that he deceived you. You had asked about God and he didn't say a single word about it.
Many thought, "He does not believe in God and that's why he keeps silent about God, because he is afraid that if he says no then religious people will leave him." Many thought, "He knows God is, but he does not say so because he does not want the atheists to leave him." And many thought, "Because he knows nothing, he is utterly ignorant, that's why he remains silent about the most fundamental question." But they were all wrong.
He was silent because God means something which is transcendental; yes is irrelevant as much as no is irrelevant. Nothing can be said about God; to be silent about him is the only right answer. He was REALLY answering. Very few, rare people understood him.

Once a man came. He touched Buddha's feet and asked him, "Does God exist?" -- the perennial question.
Buddha said -- that was always his way, it will show you his method -- he said, "When I was young I used to love horses very much." Now, the man is asking about God, and he starts talking about horses! But he was a sweet talker... the man became interested in horses, and Buddha said, "I came across four kinds of horses. One is the most stupid and stubborn kind: you beat the horse, still he would not budge. Many people are like that. The second kind is: you beat him and he would move, but he would move only if you beat him, if you whip him. Many people are like that. And the third kind you need not beat -- you simply show

him the whip and that's enough; if he knows you have the whip in your hand, that's enough. And I have also come across very rare horses: even the whip is not needed -- just the shadow of the whip is enough."

And then he closed his eyes and sat silently. The man also closed his eyes and sat in silence with Buddha.

Buddha's chief disciple, Ananda, was present; he was watching the whole thing. He could see that the man had asked about God, and Ananda was also curious about what Buddha was going to say -- and he started talking about horses! Ananda was not happy about it: "This is no way, this is devious, this is cheating the person. He is asking about God and you talk about horses!" He made it a point, "When this man is gone I am going to ask. This is too much! If he talks about God, at least you can talk about meditation, but not about horses! If you don't want to talk about God, talk about meditation, talk about silence, but something relevant. Talk about desirelessness, or at least you can say, 'God is indefinable. Nothing can be said about God, but I can show you the way so you can also experience it.' That would be right, compassionate. But what kind of a joke is this -- you talk about horses?"

But more than that, he was puzzled when Buddha closed his eyes and the man also followed. And there was such great silence, so solid, so substantial, almost tangible; you could have touched it, you could have felt the texture of it. Ananda was not a very silent man, but even he was moved by these two men facing each other sitting in such a tremendous silence. He could see Buddha's face and he could see the face of the man becoming transformed just before his eyes. A grace descended, a great peace arose.

And then after an hour or so the man opened his eyes, touched Buddha's feet in deep gratitude, thanked him and went away.

Ananda asked Buddha, "It is incomprehensible to me: he asks about God and you talk about horses. But I know you, I have heard you doing this to many people -- but more than that I am puzzled about what transpired between the two of you. I know you, so it was not a great puzzle for me that you closed your eyes and you became silent. I know that it is more difficult for you to talk than to be in silence -- silence is natural to you, spontaneous to you -- but what happened to the other man? I could see that he was becoming silent and after a few minutes he was in such a deep silence -- as if he had lived with you for years. Even I have not known such silence! And then what happened in that silence? What communion happened? What communication happened? What transpired? For what was he grateful? Why did he thank you so much?"

Buddha said, "There are four kinds of horses -- you are the first kind, Ananda, and he is the fourth! Just the shadow of the whip is enough, he understood. And I was not talking about horses, I was talking about God; but God cannot be talked about directly. And I was not talking about horses, I was talking about meditation. But I knew the man -- he is also a lover of horses. When I saw him coming on his horse I knew it immediately: he had such a rare kind of horse, only a lover of horses could choose such a horse. That's why I talked about horses -- that was the language he could understand, and he understood it. And when I closed my eyes he saw the shadow of the whip. He closed his eyes -- he understood that the ultimate cannot be talked about, but

you can be silent about it, utterly silent about it, and in silence it is known. It is a transcendental experience: it is beyond mind and beyond heart, it is beyond yes and beyond no, it is beyond negative, beyond positive."

But if you are going to choose between the negative and the positive, then I will say: choose the positive -- because it is easier to slip out of the yes than to slip out of the no -- because no does not have much space in it; it is a dark dark prison cell. Yes is wider; it is more open, more vulnerable. To move from no you will find it very difficult: you don't have much space, you are enclosed in it from every side, and all the doors and all the windows are closed. No is a closed space.

To live in the negative is the most stupid thing a man can do, but millions are living in the negative. Modern man particularly is living in the negative. He is repeating the story of Turgenev, THE FOOL, because living in the negative he feels great, his ego feels very satisfied. Ego is a prison cell created by the bricks of no's; negativity is its food.

So if you have to choose, Saguna, between the negative and the positive, choose the positive. At least you will have a little wider scope; a few windows and doors will be open, the wind and the sun and the rain will be available to you. You will have a few glimpses of the open sky outside and the stars and the moon. And sometimes the fragrance of flowers will start coming to you, and sometimes you will be thrilled by the joy of just being alive. And it is easier to move from the yes to the beyond.

From the no come to the yes, and from the yes go to the beyond. The beyond is neither positive nor negative -- and the beyond is God, and the beyond is enlightenment.

The third question:
Question 3
BELOVED MASTER,
WHY DO I FEEL SO MUCH PAIN IN LETTING GO OF THE THINGS THAT ARE CAUSING ME MISERY?

Deva Akal, the things that are causing you misery must be giving you some pleasure too; otherwise the question does not arise. If they were pure misery you would have dropped them. But in life, nothing is pure; everything is mixed with its opposite. Everything carries its opposite in its womb. What you call misery, analyze it, penetrate into it, and you will see that it has something which you would like to have. Maybe it is not yet real, maybe it is only a hope, maybe it is only a promise for tomorrow, but you will cling to the misery, you will cling to the pain, in the hope that tomorrow something that you have always desired and longed for is going to happen.
You suffer misery in the hope of pleasure. If it is pure misery it is impossible to cling to it. Just watch, be more alert about your misery. For example, you are feeling jealous. It creates misery. But look around -- there must be something positive in it. It also gives you some ego, some sense of your being separate from others, some sense of superiority. Your jealousy at least pretends to be love. If you don't feel jealous you will think maybe you don't love anymore. And you are clinging to jealousy because you

would like to cling to your love -- at least your idea of love. If your woman or your man goes with somebody else and you don't feel jealous at all, you will immediately become conscious that you no longer love. Otherwise, for centuries you have been told that lovers are jealous. Jealousy has become an intrinsic part of your love: without jealousy your love dies; only with jealousy can your so-called love live. If you want your love you will have to accept your jealousy and the misery that is created by it.

And your mind is very cunning and very clever in finding rationalizations. It will say, "It is natural to feel jealous." And it appears natural because everybody else is doing the same. Your mind will say, "It is natural to feel hurt when your lover leaves you. Because you have loved so much, how can you avoid the hurt, the wound, when your lover leaves you?"

In fact, you are enjoying your wound too, in a very subtle and unconscious way. Your wound is giving you an idea that you are a great lover, that you loved so much, that you loved so deeply, that your love was so profound, that you are shattered because your lover has left you. Even if you are not shattered you will pretend to be shattered -- you will believe in your own lie. You will behave as if you are in great misery, you will cry and weep, and your tears may not be true at all, but just to console yourself that you are a great lover, you have to cry and weep.

Just watch every kind of misery: either it has some pleasure in it which you are not ready to lose, or it has some hope in it which goes on dangling in front of you like a carrot. And it looks so close, just by the corner, and you have traveled

so long and now the goal is so close, why drop it? You will find some rationalization in it, some hypocrisy in it.
Just a few days ago a sannyasin wrote to me that her man has left her and she is not feeling miserable -- what is wrong with her? "Why am I not feeling miserable? Am I too hard, rocklike? I don't feel any misery," she wrote to me. And she is miserable because she is not feeling misery! She was expecting to be shattered. "On the contrary," she wrote, "I can confess that I am feeling happy -- and that makes me very sad. What kind of love is this? I am feeling happy, unburdened; a great load has disappeared from my being." She asked me, "Beloved Master, is it normal? Am I alright or is something basically wrong with me?"
Nothing is wrong with her, she is absolutely right. In fact, when lovers, after a long long togetherness and all the misery that is bound to happen when you are together, leave each other, it is a relief. But it is against the ego to confess it, that it is a relief. For a few days at least you will move with a long face, with tears flowing from your eyes -- phony, but this is the idea that has prevailed in the world. If somebody dies and you don't feel sad you will start feeling that something is certainly wrong with you. How can you avoid sadness when somebody has died? -- because we have been told it is natural, it is normal, and everybody wants to be natural and normal. It is not normal, it is only average. It is not natural, it is only a long long cultivated habit; otherwise there is nothing to weep and cry about.
Death destroys nothing. The body is dust and falls into dust, and the consciousness has two possibilities: if it still has desires then it will move into another womb, or if all

the desires have disappeared then it will move into the womb of God, into eternity. Nothing is destroyed. The body again becomes part of the earth, goes into rest, and the soul moves into the universal consciousness or moves into another body.

But you cry and weep and you carry your sadness for many days. It is just a formality, or if it is not a formality then there is every possibility that you never loved the man who has died and now you are feeling repentant; you never loved the man totally and now there is no more time. Now the man has disappeared, now he will never be available. Maybe you had quarreled with your husband and he died in the night in his sleep. Now you will say that you are crying because he has died, but really you are crying because you have not even been able to ask his forgiveness, you have not even been able to say a goodbye. The quarrel will hang over you like a cloud forever.

If a man lives moment to moment in totality, then there is never any repentance, no guilt. If you have loved totally, there is no question. One day if the lover leaves that simply means, "Now our ways are parting. We can say goodbye, we can be thankful to each other. We shared so much, we loved so much, we have enriched each other's lives so much -- what is there to cry and weep about and why be miserable?"

But people are so entangled in their rationality that they can't see beyond their rationalizations. And they always rationalize everything; even things which are obviously simple become very complicated.

"I am in love with my horse," said Andrew to the psychiatrist.
"That's nothing," replied the shrink. "A lot of people love animals. My wife and I have a dog that we love very much."
"Ah, but doctor, it is a physical attraction that I feel towards my horse!"
"Hmm!" said the analyst. "What kind of horse is it? Male or female?"
"Female, of course!" said Andrew. "What do you think I am -- queer?"

You ask me, Akal, "Why do I feel so much pain in letting go of the things that are causing me misery?"
You are not yet convinced that they are causing you misery. I am saying that they are causing you misery, you are not yet convinced. And it is not a question of MY saying it. The basic thing is: YOU will have to understand, "These are the things which are causing me misery," and you will have to see that there are investments in your misery. If you want those investments you will have to learn to live with the misery; if you want to drop the misery, you will have to drop those investments too.
Have you watched it, observed it? -- if you talk about your misery to people, they give great sympathy to you. Everybody is sympathetic to the miserable man. Now, if you love getting sympathy from people you cannot drop your misery; that is your investment.
The miserable husband comes home, the wife is loving, sympathetic. The more miserable he is, the more his children are considerate of him; the more miserable he is,

the more his friends are friendly towards him. Everybody takes care of him. The moment he starts becoming happy they withdraw their sympathy, of course -- a happy person needs no sympathy. The more happy he is, the more he finds that nobody cares about him. It is as if everybody becomes suddenly hard, frozen. Now, how can you drop your misery?

You will have to drop this desire for attention, this desire for getting sympathy from people. In fact, it is very ugly to desire sympathy from people -- it makes you a beggar. And remember, sympathy is not love; they are obliging you, they are fulfilling a kind of duty -- it is not love. They may not like you, but still they will sympathize with you. This is etiquette, culture, civilization, formality -- but you are living on false things. Your misery is real and what you are getting in the bargain is false. Of course, if you become happy, if you drop your miseries, it will be a radical change in your life-style; things may start changing.

Once a woman came to me, the woman of one of the richest men in India, and she told me, "I want to meditate, but my husband is against it."

I asked her, "Why is your husband against meditation?"

She said, "He says, 'The way you are, I love you. I don't know what will happen after meditation. If you start meditating you are bound to change; then I don't know whether I will be able to love you or not, because you will be another person.'"

I said to the woman, "Your husband has a point there -- certainly things will be different. You will be more free, more independent. You will be more joyous, and your husband will have to learn to live with a new woman. He

may not like you that way, he may start feeling inferior. Right now he is superior to you."

That's why down the ages man has not allowed women to meditate, to participate in deep religious experiences. Man has not allowed women to read the Vedas, the Upanishads, the great scriptures of the world. In many religions the women are not allowed to enter into the mosque or the synagogue. In Jainism it is said that you cannot be liberated from the body of a woman; first you will have to be born as a man, then only can you be liberated. From the body of a woman there is no way to God.

Why? Why this fear? The reason is very psychological: man has always been afraid of women becoming happier than him, more peaceful than him, more attuned, more integrated than him -- because once they are more integrated, more attuned to their beings and to the being of the whole, more in harmony with existence, more in accord.... And women can attain to harmony more easily than men, remember. For certain biological reasons, a woman is more capable of going into meditation than a man is. The male energy is aggressive, violent, outgoing, extrovert, and the female energy is introvert, passive, ingoing.

Hence what Jainism says is absolutely wrong -- not only absolutely wrong: just the opposite may be the truth. It is easier to enter into God through the body of a woman than through the body of a man. The woman's body is more harmonious, the man's body is not so harmonious. The woman's body is more balanced, more rounded; that's why she looks so beautiful. Her body is less tense, more relaxed.

Mothers become aware after a few months' pregnancy whether it is a male child or a female child in their womb, because the male child starts parading and doing things inside the womb, kicking... he cannot be at rest. You can watch small girls -- they are perfectly happy sitting in a corner with their dolls. And the boys? -- they can't sit.
Just a few days ago a little boy took sannyas. I had to ask him, "Can you be silent for one minute so I can explain your name to your mother?" But he was not even able to be silent for one minute. Small girls come for sannyas; when I say to them, "Close your eyes and sit silently," they sit so beautifully; they can sit for hours. When small boys come and I say to them, "Close your eyes," they have to clench their eyes! They are afraid that if they don't do too much they will open. They are so curious about what is happening, what is going on outside.
When small girls take sannyas they look at me. And the boys? -- they look at Krishna Bharti and his camera! They are all over the place! I am putting a mala on them and they are looking at people to see what the response is. "Are people laughing, enjoying, watching?" They are great performers! And a great curiosity keeps them constantly tense.

While on their honeymoon, Kit and Netty bought a talkative parrot and took it back to their hotel room. As they made love the bird kept up a running commentary. Finally Kit flung a bath towel over the cage and said, "If you don't shut up I am sending you to the zoo!"

Getting ready to leave the following morning, they could not close a bulging suitcase and decided one of them would stand on it while the other attempted to fasten it.
"Darling," said Kit, "you get on top and I will try."
That didn't work. So he said, "Now I will get on top and you try."
That didn't work either.
"Look," said Kit, "let us both get on top and try."
The parrot yanked away the towel and said, "Zoo or no zoo, this I've gotta see!"

The parrot must have been a male!
I told the woman, "Your husband is right: before you enter on the path of meditation you have to consider it, because there are dangers ahead."
She didn't listen to me; she started meditating. Now she is divorced. She came to see me after a few years and said, "You were right. The more silent I became, the more my husband became furious at me. He was never so violent -- something strange started happening," she told me. "The more silent and quiet I was becoming, the more aggressive he was becoming." His whole male chauvinist mind was at stake. He wanted to destroy the peace and the silence that was happening to the woman so he could still remain superior. And because it could not happen the way he wanted, he divorced the woman.
It is a very strange world! If you become peaceful your relationship with people will change, because you are a different person. If your relationship was because of your misery it may disappear.

I used to have a friend. He was a professor in the same university where I was a professor; he was a great social worker. In India, what to do with the widows is still a problem. Nobody wants to marry them, and widows are not in favor of marrying either; that seems like a sin. And this professor was determined to marry a widow. He was not concerned whether he was in love with the woman or not -- that was secondary, irrelevant -- his only interest was that she should be a widow. And he persuaded her slowly slowly, and she was ready.

I told the man, "Before you take the plunge, consider it for at least three days -- go into isolation. Are you in love with the woman, or is it just a great social service that you are doing?" Marrying a widow in India is thought to be something very revolutionary, something radical. "Are you just trying to prove that you are a revolutionary? If you are trying to prove that you are a revolutionary, then you are bound for trouble -- because the moment you are married she will no longer be a widow and your whole interest will be gone."

He didn't listen to me. He got married... and after six months he told me, "You were right." He cried. He said, "I could not see the point: I was in love with her widowhood, not with her for herself, and now certainly she is no longer a widow."

So I said, "You do one thing -- commit suicide! Make her a widow again and give somebody else a chance to be a revolutionary! What else can you do?"

Man's mind is so stupid, so unconscious. Buddha says it is in deep sleep, slumber, snoring.

Akal, you cannot let go of things that are causing you misery because you have not yet seen the investments, you have not yet looked deeply into them. You have not seen that there is some pleasure you are deriving out of your misery. You will have to drop both -- and then there is no problem. In fact, misery and pleasure can only be dropped together. And then arises bliss.

Bliss is not pleasure, bliss is not even happiness. Happiness is always bound together with unhappiness and pleasure is always bound together with pain. Dropping both.... You want to drop misery so that you can be happy -- that is an absolutely wrong approach. You will have to drop both. Seeing that they are together, one drops them; you cannot choose one part.

In life, everything has an organic unity. Pain and pleasure are not two things. Really, if we make a more scientific language, we will drop these words: pain and pleasure. We will make one word: painpleasure, happinessunhappiness, daynight, lifedeath. These are one word because they are NEVER separable.

And you want to choose one part: you want to have only the roses and not the thorns, you want only the day and not the night, you want only love and not hate. This is not going to happen -- this is not the way things are. You will have to drop both, and then arises a totally different world: the world of bliss.

Bliss is absolute peace, undisturbedness, neither disturbed by pain nor disturbed by pleasure.

To celebrate their fortieth anniversary, Seymour and Rose went back to the same second-floor hotel room where they had spent their honeymoon.
"Now," said Seymour, "just like that first night, let us undress, get in opposite corners of the room, turn off the lights, then run to each other and embrace."
They undressed, went to opposite corners, switched off the lights and ran towards each other. But their sense of direction was dulled by forty years, so Seymour missed Rose and he went right through the window. He landed on the lawn in a daze.
Seymour tapped on the lobby window to get the clerk's attention. "I fell down from upstairs," he said. "I am naked and I gotta get back to my room."
"It's okay," said the clerk. "Nobody will see you."
"Are you crazy? I gotta walk through the lobby and I am all naked!"
"Nobody can see you," repeated the clerk. "Everybody is upstairs trying to get some old lady off a doorknob!"

People are so foolish! Not only the younger ones -- the older you get, the more foolish you become. The more experienced you are, it seems the more stupidity you accumulate through life. It really rarely happens that a person starts watching, observing his own life and his own life patterns.
See what your misery is, what desires are causing it, and why you are clinging to those desires. And it is not for the first time that you are clinging to those desires; this has been the pattern of your whole life and you have not arrived anywhere. You go on in circles, you never come to

any real growth. You remain childish, stupid. And you are born with the intelligence that can make you a buddha, but it is lost in unnecessary things.

A farmer who had only two impotent old bulls bought a new, young, vigorous bull. Immediately the stud began mounting one cow after another in the pasture. After watching this for an hour, one of the ancient bulls started pawing the ground and snorting.
"What's the matter?" asked the other. "You getting young ideas?"
"No," said the first bull, "but I don't want that young fellow to think I am one of the cows."

So even in their old age people go on carrying their egos. They have to pretend, they have to pose, and their whole life is nothing but a long long story of misery. Still they defend it. Rather than being ready to change it, they are very defensive.
Akal, drop all defensiveness, drop all armors. Start watching how you live your day-to-day life, moment to moment. And whatsoever you are doing, go into its details. You need not go to a psychoanalyst, you can analyze each pattern of your life yourself -- it is such a simple process! Just watch and you will be able to see what is happening, what has been happening. You have been choosing -- and that has been the problem -- you have been choosing one part against the other, and they are both together.
Buddha says: Attain to choiceless awareness -- don't choose at all. Just watch and be aware without choosing,

and you will attain to bliss, you will attain to the lotus paradise.

The last question:
Question 4
BELOVED MASTER,
WHO AM I?

Narayano, it is a question to be made a meditation. It is not a question to be asked, it is a question to be contemplated -- because nobody can answer it for you and nobody's answer can become your answer. This is one of those questions which is not really a question but a mystery.
Yes, you can go on asking the scholars, and some stupid scholar will say, "You are God, you are soul, you are this and you are that, you are eternal consciousness, immortal being." But do you think those words are going to have any meaning for you? They will be empty words. This is not a question to be asked, this is a question to be entered into. Raman Maharshi made it his only meditation; that is the only meditation that he gave to his disciples -- a very potent method. Just sitting silently, first ask verbally, "Who am I?" And then slowly slowly, let the words disappear and only a feeling remain, "Who am I?" -- just a feeling. And finally let the feeling also disappear... a nonverbalized, nonemotionalized question mark. Not that you are asking, "Who am I?" but you have become the question mark itself. Sitting silently, remaining this question mark, you will enter into your being, you will know.
Knowing does not happen through scriptures, it cannot be taught. I know the answer, but my answer is MY answer; it

cannot become your answer. You can repeat it like a parrot, you can believe in it, but it will not transform you. No information ever brings any transformation.

To ask this question is wrong: to contemplate this question is right. I cannot answer who you are, but I can say only this: start asking you own being, "Who am I?" and your mind will start supplying you with many answers. If you are a Christian it will give Christian answers, if you are a Hindu it will give Hindu answers, if you are a Buddhist it will give Buddhist answers. All those answers are false. So go on saying, "NETI, NETI -- neither this nor that." Go on saying, "This is not the answer." Whatever answer is supplied by the mind is deceptive -- beware!

When you have destroyed all the answers given by the mind and the mind is empty and has no answers to give anymore, the answer will arise in you. When the mind ceases, the answer arises. It will not be in words, it will be an experience.

Don't ask me, Narayano, ask yourself. Sit silently whenever you can find time.

But you must be asking others this question. People go on, from one master to another master, asking the same questions, receiving the same answers. The question remains in its place; the answers make no difference. You must have asked this question of many people -- your search is long. You have been to all the ashrams and they have all supplied you with answers, and still you are not satisfied. When are you going to see the point, that no answer given by the outside can ever be satisfactory, it cannot give you contentment?

Drop this question. Don't ask it, because if you ask somebody, there are people who are going to answer. There are people who live on your questions -- the pundits, the priests, the scholars, the professors -- their whole business is to go on supplying answers to your questions. And can't you see the point, that no answer ever becomes your answer?
It is time, start asking yourself. At least this question, "Who am I?" has to be asked in the deepest recesses of your being. You have to resound with this question. It has to vibrate in you, pulsate in your blood, in your cells. It has to become a question mark in your very soul.
And when the mind is silent, you will know. Not that some answer will be received by you in words, not that you will be able to write it down in your notebook that "This is the answer," not that you will be able to tell anybody that "This is the answer." If you can tell anybody, it is not the answer. If you can write it down in a notebook, it is not the answer. When the real answer happens, it is so existential that it is inexpressible.
To ask others is stupid. To ask oneself is wise.

The circus had finished its final performance in the country town when one of its zebras took sick. The local veterinarian suggested rest for the beast, so the circus owner made arrangements to board it at a nearby farm.
The zebra took to the new life by meeting all the animals of the barnyard. He came across a chicken and asked, "I am a zebra, who are you?"
"I am a chicken," said the chicken.
"What do you do?" asked the zebra.

"I scratch around and lay eggs."
The zebra walked up to a cow. "I am a zebra. Who are you?"
"I am a cow," said the cow.
"What do you do?" asked the zebra.
"I graze in the field and give milk."
The zebra met a bull next. "I am a zebra," he said. "Who are you?"
"I am a bull."
"And what do you do?" asked the zebra.
"What do I do!" snorted the bull. "Why, you silly looking ass -- take off your pajamas and I will show you!"

Enough for today.
The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 5
Chapter #3
Chapter title: What you desire you will become
13 October 1979 am in Buddha Hall

VAINLY I SOUGHT THE BUILDER OF MY HOUSE
THROUGH COUNTLESS LIVES.
I COULD NOT FIND HIM....
HOW HARD IT IS TO TREAD LIFE AFTER LIFE!

BUT NOW I SEE YOU, O BUILDER!
AND NEVER AGAIN SHALL YOU BUILD MY HOUSE.
I HAVE SNAPPED THE RAFTERS,
SPLIT THE RIDGEPOLE
AND BEATEN OUT DESIRE.

AND NOW MY MIND IS FREE.

THERE ARE NO FISH IN THE LAKE.
THE LONG-LEGGED CRANES STAND IN THE WATER.

SAD IS THE MAN WHO IN HIS YOUTH
LIVED LOOSELY AND SQUANDERED HIS FORTUNE --

SAD IS A BROKEN BOW,
AND SADLY IS HE SIGHING
AFTER ALL THAT HAS ARISEN AND PASSED AWAY.

Gautama the Buddha is the greatest breakthrough that humanity has known up to now. Time should not be divided by the name of Jesus Christ; it should be divided by the name of Gautam Buddha. We should divide history before Buddha and after Buddha, not before Christ and after Christ, because Christ is not a breakthrough; he is a continuity. He represents the past in its tremendous beauty and grandeur. He is the very essence of the whole search of man before him. He is the fragrance of all the past endeavors of man to know God, but he is not a breakthrough. In the real sense of the word he is not a rebel. Buddha is, but Jesus looks more rebellious than Buddha for the simple reason that Jesus' rebellion is visible and Buddha's rebellion is invisible.
You will need great insight to understand what Buddha has contributed to human consciousness, to human evolution,

to human growth. Man would not have been the same if there had been no Buddha. Man would have been the same if there had been no Christ, no Krishna; there would not have been much difference. Remove Buddha and something of tremendous importance is lost; but his rebellion is very invisible, very subtle.

Before Buddha, the search -- the religious search -- was fundamentally a concern with God: a God who is outside, a God who is somewhere above in the heavens. The religious search was also concerned with an object of desire, as much as the worldly search was. The worldly man sought money, power, prestige, and the otherworldly man was seeking God, heaven, eternity, truth. But one thing was common: both were looking outside themselves, both were extroverts. Remember this word, because this is going to help you understand Buddha.

Before Buddha, the religious search was not concerned with the within but with the without; it was extrovert, and when the religious search is extrovert it is not really religious. Religion begins only with introversion, when you start diving deeply within yourself.

People had looked for centuries for God: Who is the builder of the universe? Who is the creator of the universe? And there are many who are still living in a pre-Buddha time, who are still asking such questions: Who is the creator of the world? When did he create the world? There are some stupid people who have even determined the day, the date and the year when God created the world. There are Christian theologians who say that exactly four thousand and four years before Jesus Christ -- Monday, 1st January! -- God created the world or started creating the world, and

he finished the job in six days. Only one thing is true about it: that he must have finished the job in six days, because you can see the mess the world is in -- it is a six-day job! And since then he has not been heard about. On the seventh day he rested, and since then he has been resting....
Maybe Friedrich Nietzsche is right, that he is not resting -- he is dead! He has not shown any concern. Then what happened to his creation? It seems to be completely forgotten. But Christians say, "No, he has not forgotten. Look! He sent Jesus Christ, his only begotten son, to save the world. He is still interested." That is the only interest Christians say he has shown, in sending Jesus Christ... but the world is not saved. If that was the purpose of sending Jesus Christ to the world, then Jesus has failed and through him God has failed -- the world is the same. And what kind of concern was this -- that his messenger was crucified and he could not do anything?
There are many who are still living in this pre-Buddha worldview.
Buddha changed the whole religious dimension, he gave it such a beautiful turn: he asked REAL questions. He was not a metaphysician, he never asked a metaphysical question; to him metaphysics was all rubbish. He was the first psychologist the world had known, because he based his religion not on philosophy but on psychology. Psychology in its original meaning means the science of the soul, the science of the within.
He didn't ask: Who created the world? He asked: Why am I here? Who am I? Who is creating me? And it is not a question of the past -- "Who created me?" -- we are constantly being created. Our life is not like a thing created

once and for all; it is not an object. It is a growing phenomenon, it is a river flowing. Each moment it is passing through new territory. "Who is creating this life, this energy, this mind, this body, this consciousness, that I am?" His question is totally different. He is transforming religion from extroversion into introversion.

The extrovert religion prays to God; the introvert religion meditates. Prayer is extrovert; it is addressed to some invisible God. He may be there, he may not be there -- you can't be sure or certain; doubt is bound to persist. Hence every prayer is rooted somewhere in doubt, in fear, in uncertainty, in greed.

Meditation is rooted in fearlessness, in greedlessness. Meditation is not begging anything from anybody, it is not addressed to anybody. Meditation is a state of inner silence. Prayer is still noise, you are still talking -- talking to a God who may not be there. Then it is insane, neurotic; you are behaving in a mad way. Mad people go on talking; they don't bother much whether there is anybody to listen to them or not. That is a sure sign that they are mad -- they imagine that somebody is there; not only that, they can almost see the other. Their visualization is great, their imagination is very substantial. They are capable of changing shadows into substance, imagination into realities, fiction into facts. To you they seem to be involved in a monologue; to themselves they are involved in a dialogue. You cannot see who is present there -- they are alone -- but they see that somebody is there.

It is because of this fact that psychoanalysis is very cautious about religion, because the religious person behaves just like the neurotic. And there are many

psychoanalysts who think that religion is nothing but a mass neurosis -- and they have a point: the extrovert religion is a mass neurosis.

But psychoanalysts have not yet become aware of Buddha. Buddha will give them a new insight into religion, into true religion. There is no prayer, no God. Meditation is not a dialogue, or even a monologue -- meditation is pure silence.

People ask me, "What should the object of meditation be?" They are asking a wrong question, but I can understand why they are asking it. They have lived in the religions of prayer, and prayer cannot be without somebody there to pray to. Prayer needs an object of worship; prayer is a dependence. The worshipper is not independent; he is dependent on the object of his worship and he is afraid also. But the meditator has no object. Meditation does not mean to meditate upon something. The English word 'meditation' gives a wrong connotation; in English there is no word to translate the Buddhist word DHYANA. In fact, in no other language of the world is there a word which is absolutely synonymous with dhyana. It is because of this fact that when Buddhism reached China they could not translate it into Chinese; hence dhyana became CH'AN -- it is the same word. The Sanskrit word is dhyana, but Buddha used Pali, another language, the language that was understood by the people amongst whom he lived. In Pali, dhyana becomes JHANA; from jhana, in Chinese it became ch'an, and from ch'an, in Japanese it became ZEN. Chinese had no equivalent, the Japanese had no equivalent. In fact, no other language has any equivalent because no other language has given birth to a man like Buddha. And

without a Buddha it is impossible to give this new meaning, this new vision, this new dimension.
In English, 'meditation' means meditating upon something; but then it is thinking, at the most contemplation -- it is not meditation. Meditation means BEING meditative, silent, peaceful, with no thoughts in the mind, a consciousness without content. That is the true meaning of meditation: a pure consciousness, a mirror reflecting nothing. When a mirror is not reflecting anything, it is meditation.
Buddha turned the whole religious quest from metaphysics into a great psychology, because he asked: What are the causes of my life and my death? He is not concerned with the universe. He says: We should start from the beginning, and anything, to have a real significance in life, has to be concerned with me MYSELF: who am I and why am I? What are the causes that go on creating me?
His first sutra is:

VAINLY I SOUGHT THE BUILDER OF MY HOUSE THROUGH COUNTLESS LIVES.

He is saying, "I have been seeking and searching for God for countless lives. It was all in vain, it was futile. I could not find any God, because in fact God is not a person and you cannot find him. God is not a 'he'."
Now there is great controversy whether God is a he or a she. He is neither. And if you insist that we have to choose between these two words, 'he' and 'she', I will suggest that 'she' is far better because she contains he, but he does not contain she. But in truth, God is not a person at all; hence the question of whether he is he or she is irrelevant.

God is a quality, not an object. God is not God but godliness -- and godliness has to be found first within yourself. Unless you have a taste of it in your own being you will not be able to see it anywhere else. Once you have tasted it, once you have become drunk on the divine, then you will see it in the trees -- in the green of the trees, in the red of the trees, in the gold of the trees. You will see it in the sun, in the moon, in the stars. You will be able to see it in the animals, birds, people, rivers, mountains. The whole existence will reflect your understanding, will become a mirror to you. You will be able to see your own face everywhere. We can see only that which we are, we cannot see that which we are not.

This is Buddha's great contribution: he dropped prayer, he dropped the idea of God, and he gave a new approach -- that new approach is meditation.

He says: VAINLY I SOUGHT THE BUILDER OF MY HOUSE THROUGH COUNTLESS LIVES. I COULD NOT FIND HIM.... Not because something was lacking in his effort, not because his effort was partial and not total, no. He was not that kind of man: his effort was so total that it could not have been more total. It was because of his total effort that he came to this great understanding, that he came to this great realization.

He went to all kinds of teachers and whatsoever a teacher told him to do, he did it with such passion, intensity, that no teacher was ever able to find any fault with him. And whatever task was given to him, he always fulfilled it. And it happened with so many teachers that finally they said to him, "This is all that we know, and we cannot say that you have not followed us. You have followed so totally that

there is no question about your sincerity and your search, but more than this we don't know. You will have to go and find some other master -- this is all that we know. We are sorry that we could not help you more. And if any time you can find something more than this, remember us, and if we are still alive, convey your new realization to us."

This happens very rarely. It is always easy to find fault with the disciple, and if the disciple is at fault, then certainly the master, the so-called master, is at ease. A real disciple is a danger to the pseudo master, because with a real disciple his pseudoness is exposed sooner or later. It is because of the pseudo disciples that pseudo masters live. And there are so many pseudo seekers... just curiosity, they are seeking just out of curiosity; it is not existential. It is very rare to find a disciple like Buddha, because if you find a disciple like Buddha, sooner or later, either you will be proved right through his transformation, or you will be proved pseudo. But you cannot blame him, because he will put his total energies into the effort.

Buddha tried every possible way. He went to all the known and not-so-known teachers who were alive in the country, and from everywhere he came back empty-handed. Finally he decided, "There is something wrong in asking others, there is something basically wrong in going behind others, following others. It is better, it is time, that I should dive deep within myself, that I should seek and search alone." And that's how meditation was born.

Buddha dropped all extrovert efforts, became totally introverted, his whole energy turning in. He started tuning himself to his innermost core. God cannot be found outside you, because there is no God who can ever be outside you.

God is the ultimate fragrance of your consciousness. When your consciousness opens like a lotus, the fragrance that is released is God -- better to call it godliness.

God is not a noun but a verb. Let this sink deeply into your heart: that God is not a noun but a verb. In fact, the whole existence is a verb. Change all your nouns into verbs and you will be on the right track, because everything is alive and flowing -- how can you call it a noun? A noun gives a fixed idea. A noun is always dead and a verb is always alive.

And God is alive. He is alive in you, he is alive in me, he is alive in the birds. Wherever life is, God is; God is synonymous with life.

VAINLY I SOUGHT THE BUILDER OF MY HOUSE THROUGH COUNTLESS LIVES. It was a misunderstanding and, unfortunately, a misunderstanding which still persists. Rather than searching for their own selves, people go on searching for God. They will not find God, and meanwhile they are missing the opportunity of finding themselves.

The very word 'God' has created trouble. Start using 'godliness', 'divineness', 'love'. Drop that God! The word 'God' looks like a dead rock: no flow, no movement, no growth. Let your God become a river.

Remember Herman Hesse's Siddhartha: he learned the deepest realms of meditation by living on the shore of a river, seeing the river in different moods, in different seasons. In the summer it was so thin, like a silver line, and in the rains it was so overflooded. And sometimes it was so silent and so musical, and sometimes it looked so angry, in a rage; sometimes it was so compassionate, and sometimes

it was so cruel. Just sitting on the bank of the river, slowly slowly he became aware of the great life of the river, its emotions, its moods....

The first thing my own father taught me -- and the only thing that he ever taught me -- was a love for the small river that flows by the side of my town. He taught me just this -- swimming in the river. That's all that he ever taught me, but I am tremendously grateful to him because that brought so many changes in my life. Exactly like Siddhartha, I fell in love with the river. Whenever I think of my birthplace I don't remember anything except the river. The day my father died I only remembered the first day he brought me to the riverbank to teach me swimming. My whole childhood was spent in a close love affair with the river. It was my daily routine to be with the river for at least five to eight hours. From three o'clock in the morning I would be with the river; the sky would be full of stars and the stars reflecting in the river. And it is a beautiful river; its water is so sweet that people have named it Shakkar -- SHAKKAR means sugar. It is a beautiful phenomenon.

I have seen it in the darkness of the night with the stars, dancing its course towards the ocean. I have seen it with the early rising sun. I have seen it in the full moon. I have seen it with the sunset. I have seen it sitting by its bank alone or with friends, playing on the flute, dancing on its bank, meditating on its bank, rowing a boat in it or swimming across it. In the rains, in the winter, in the summer....

I can understand Herman Hesse's Siddhartha and his experience with the river. It happened with me: so much transpired, because slowly slowly, the whole existence

became a river to me. It lost its solidity; it became liquid, fluid.

And I am immensely grateful to my father. He never taught me mathematics, language, grammar, geography, history. He was never much concerned about my education. He had ten children... and I had seen it happen many times: people would ask, "In what class is your son studying?" -- and he would have to ask somebody because he would not know. He was never concerned with any other education. The only education that he gave to me was a communion with the river. He himself was in deep love with the river. Whenever you are in love with flowing things, moving things, you have a different vision of life. Modern man lives with asphalt roads, cement and concrete buildings. These are nouns, remember, these are not verbs. The skyscrapers don't go on growing; the road remains the same whether it is night or day, whether it is a full-moon night or a night absolutely dark. It doesn't matter to the asphalt road, it does not matter to the cement and concrete buildings. Man has created a world of nouns and he has become encaged in his own world. He has forgotten the world of the trees, the world of the rivers, the world of the mountains and the stars. THERE they don't know of any nouns, they have not heard about nouns; they know only verbs. Everything is a process.

God is not a thing but a process. But words can mislead you. This word 'God' has misled millions of people. It gives you an idea, a very childish idea of course, but once it settles in you, you carry it your whole life. You have an idea of God: some very ancient-looking man with a long white beard, sitting on a golden throne up in the skies,

ruling, ordering, commanding the whole world. And whoever disobeys him has to suffer much -- a very dictatorial father. He has not yet forgiven Adam and Eve because they disobeyed him.

In the Garden of Eden there were two trees: one was known as the tree of knowledge and the other as the tree of life. God had said, "Don't eat from these two trees." But children are children -- if you prevent them from doing something they are bound to do it. The serpent is not needed; that is just a strategy, an ancient strategy of man, to throw the responsibility on somebody else. It was Eve herself who became curious.

They disobeyed God and God became afraid: "Now they have eaten the fruit of the tree of knowledge -- soon they will find the other tree and they will eat the fruit of life, and then they will become as eternal as gods." And he became very jealous, because once they had eaten from the tree of knowledge, they would be able to find the tree of life; it would not be long. Soon they would find it. They had become wise enough, and a wise man is bound to seek and search for immortality. Being afraid that they would become like gods, God threw them out of the Garden of Eden and closed the doors. Now there are naked swords preventing the re-entry of man into paradise.

This is a very childish concept of God, anthropocentric. But millions of people are still living with this idea of God. It is a sheer misunderstanding. Children can be forgiven, but you cannot be forgiven.

Old Lindley sat down at the doctor's desk.

"What is your problem?" asked the physician.

"Well, Doc, after the first, I am very tired. After the second, I feel all in. After the third, my heart begins to pound. After the fourth, I break out in a cold sweat. And after the fifth, I am so exhausted I feel I could die!"
"Incredible!" said the M.D. "How old are you?"
"Seventy-six."
"Well, at seventy-six, don't you think you should stop after the first?"
"But Doctor," exclaimed old Lindley, "how can I stop after the first when I live on the fifth?"

Words can be very deceptive -- and the word 'God' has deceived millions. Buddha is the first to recognize this fallacy. Hence I say we should divide history by Buddha, not by Christ -- before Buddha, after Buddha -- because he brings such a total and new vision to humanity. He brings a new idea of God: the idea of godliness. With Buddha, humanity becomes mature; it drops its childhood concepts.

I COULD NOT FIND HIM....

Of course there was no possibility of finding him. Nobody has ever found God; many have found godliness but nobody has ever found God.

HOW HARD IT IS TO TREAD LIFE AFTER LIFE!

And Buddha says: Without knowing who I am, without knowing the significance of life, without knowing the meaning, the goal and the destiny... HOW HARD IT IS TO

TREAD LIFE AFTER LIFE. It is hard, it is tiring, it is boring, it is a burden.
Socrates says: A life unexamined is not worth living. Buddha would have agreed with him. Yes, a life unexamined is not worth living, because a life unexamined is not a life at all. It is only carrying a load, dragging -- dragging somehow towards your death. Your feet won't have a dance to them and your heart will not have a song in it. You will be utterly fruitless, impotent, futile. And the more intelligent you are, the more sensitive you are, the more clearly you can see the point.
And Buddha was one of the most sensitive men who has ever walked on the earth.

BUT NOW I SEE YOU, O BUILDER!
AND NEVER AGAIN SHALL YOU BUILD MY HOUSE.

This is one of the most important sutras. Meditate over it, ponder over it, because it has been misunderstood also. When Buddha says: BUT NOW I SEE YOU, O BUILDER! many have thought that he means he has seen God. That is a total misunderstanding. He is not talking about God. When he says: BUT NOW I SEE YOU, O BUILDER! AND NEVER AGAIN SHALL YOU BUILD MY HOUSE... he is not talking about God, he is talking about desire. His word is TANHA; tanha means unconscious desire. He says, "It is because of my own unconscious desiring that I have been creating these lives. Nobody else is responsible." He takes the whole responsibility on his own shoulders. This is the beginning

of a really religious man; you are no longer throwing responsibility on others -- fate, God, this and that.
In that sense, Marx is as immature as any other so-called saint, and so is Freud -- because they all agree on one point. Marx says: Man is in suffering because of the economic structure of society. The responsibility is thrown on the economic structure of society. Hegel says: Man is suffering because of a wrong history, a wrong past. This is throwing responsibility on the god named "History." And for Hegel, history was almost God: he used to write History with a capital H -- for him history is the most determining factor. And to Freud, the unconscious is responsible. What can you do? You are utterly helpless.
All these people are saying that you are utterly helpless, you cannot do anything; you have to be the way you are, this is the only way you can be. You are a victim of great forces, against which you cannot win.
Buddha says: You can be victorious, but take the responsibility upon your own shoulders. It is your own desiring mind that has been creating your lives. This wheel of life and death is your own creation. When for the first time you realize this, you are shocked, shaken -- shaken to the very roots. But slowly slowly, you start seeing a great freedom in it. You start rejoicing that, "If I am responsible, then there is a possibility for me to change the whole pattern."
BUT NOW I SEE YOU, O BUILDER! AND NEVER AGAIN SHALL YOU BUILD MY HOUSE. He is saying, "Now I see that it is desiring, constant desiring -- for this, for that, for money, power, prestige, God, paradise, nirvana...." It is desiring, always desiring, projecting

yourself into the future, that is creating your wheel of life and death. And you are crushed between these two rocks: life and death. You have to be free from life and death. That is Buddha's meaning of nirvana: to be free from life and death, to be free from desire. The moment you are free from all desires... remember, I repeat, ALL desires. The so-called religious, spiritual desires are included in it, nothing is excluded. All desires have to be dropped because every desire brings frustration, misery, boredom. If you succeed it brings boredom; if you fail it brings despair. If you are after money there are only two possibilities: either you will fail or you will succeed. If you succeed you will be bored with money.

All rich people are bored with money. In fact, that's how a rich person is known to be really rich -- if he is bored with his money, if he does not know what to do with it. If he is still hankering for more money he is not yet rich enough. If you succeed, you are bored, because the money is there but there is no fulfillment with it. All those illusions that you had carried for so long -- those illusions for which you had suffered so much, struggled so much, staked so much.... Your whole life has gone down the drain because of those dreams that when you have money you will be fulfilled. But when you have it you suddenly see the pointlessness of it: the money is there but you are as poor as ever -- in fact more so, because, in contrast to the money, you can see your poverty more clearly.

There is a story by Leo Tolstoy:

A poor tailor had this habit for thirty years of purchasing one lottery ticket every month, and for thirty years it had

become a routine. Each month he would purchase a lottery ticket. He never won the lottery, he even stopped thinking of ever getting it, but it had become an old ritual: every month, in the first week he would purchase a ticket.

But one day it happened: a big Rolls Royce suddenly stopped in front of the poor tailor's house. A man walked up with a big bag. The poor tailor could not believe his eyes, because never had a Rolls Royce stopped before his house... and this rich-looking man! And the man said, "Rejoice! You have won the lottery -- here are one million rubles."

The man was overjoyed. He locked his shop, threw the key into the well -- because now he would never need this shop, he would never open this shop again. One million rubles is more than enough for ten lives!

But within a year that one million rubles was gone. He purchased the biggest cars, beautiful houses, the costliest prostitutes, the best food, the best clothes. He lived like the czar, utterly oblivious of the fact that the money was running out of his hands. After one year all was finished. And not only was it finished, but he had been a healthy man, young, and in one year he had aged at least ten years and he had become weak and ill -- all those prostitutes and alcohol and too much rich food. He was weak, ill, old, and he had to jump into the well to search for the key!

People had to pull him out -- he was almost drowning -- but he found the key and he opened his shop again. The whole year had been like a long long nightmare. And he said, "Enough is enough! I will never ask for money again."

But just out of old habit he started purchasing one ticket every month again. And after one year the same car

stopped... he said, "My God! do I have to go through all that again?"

If you have money, you will know the misery of it; if you don't have money, you know the misery of not having it. Either way you suffer. Desire brings suffering -- success or no success, desire brings suffering. But you go on desiring in the hope that it may not be so with you.

Remember, life allows no exceptions: its rules are universally valid. Whatsoever is true for me is true for you, whatsoever is true for Buddha is true for you. Truth is the same! You cannot bribe truth, you cannot persuade truth to be a little different for you. Truth is neutral; it is not a respecter of persons. It is like gravitation: it does not care whether you are rich or poor, famous or notorious, known or unknown. If you go against the law of gravitation you will have a few fractures. Gravitation will not consider that you are the president or the prime minister of a country, or a beggar; it makes no distinctions. And the same is true about inner laws.

Buddha discovered one of the most fundamental laws: that desire is always frustrating. Even though you succeed in achieving your goal, you will be frustrated.

It is because of this that America is now the most frustrated country in the world. They have succeeded: they have created affluence, they have created richness -- about which humanity has been dreaming for centuries -- and they are more frustrated than the Indians. And India is poor, starving, yet India is not in such frustration as America is. And the reason is, when you are poor and starving you can hope that tomorrow things will be better, but when you are

rich and you have all that you can imagine, you can't hope. Tomorrow can't be better -- it is already better! Seeing that you have all that you need, what more can happen tomorrow? At the most you will have a little more money -- but if this much money cannot help, a little more is not going to help. You have two cars -- you may have four; you have two houses -- you may have four: the changes are going to be only quantitative, and quantitative changes are not real changes.

The poor person thinks, "There will be qualitative changes when I am rich." He can hope, and through hope he can desire.

Hence I say again and again that before this world can become really religious it has to become very rich. It is not an accident that Buddha was the son of a king. All the twenty-four TIRTHANKARAS of the Jainas were kings, and all the AVATARAS of the Hindus -- Rama and Krishna... were kings. It can't be just coincidence. Why only kings? Why have beggars and poor people not become buddhas? The reason is simple: the poor person can still hope, the rich person has no hope.

When hope disappears, desire is seen in its nudity. Hope keeps on hiding desire in beautiful garments.

BUT NOW I SEE YOU, O BUILDER! AND NEVER AGAIN SHALL YOU BUILD MY HOUSE. Buddha says... this is his first statement after his enlightenment. The moment he became enlightened, the morning he became enlightened, with the last star disappearing, this was his first utterance, tremendously pregnant. He looked at the sky; the sun had not yet risen and the last star had just disappeared. He was as empty as the outer sky. And this

was his first declaration to existence -- not to anyone in particular. He simply said, uttered -- as if talking to himself or thinking aloud: BUT NOW I SEE YOU, O BUILDER! AND NEVER AGAIN SHALL YOU BUILD MY HOUSE.

He says, "I have seen the secret of desire. It is desire that has been creating new bodies, new minds for me, new bodymind mechanisms for me -- and I have seen it. Now it will not be possible for it to create any more trouble for me."

The moment you see the cause of your trouble, the trouble disappears -- and the cause too. Seeing is transformation. To know is to be liberated.

I HAVE SNAPPED THE RAFTERS,
SPLIT THE RIDGEPOLE
AND BEATEN OUT DESIRE.
AND NOW MY MIND IS FREE.

What are the rafters and what does he mean by the ridgepole? These are his metaphors. By rafters he means the past and the memories. The past tries to persist, the past goes on perpetuating itself. Yesterday you were angry, the day before yesterday you were angry, and so on and so forth. Now that anger is waiting in you just for an excuse to explode. The past perpetuates itself. And if you cannot find an excuse you will be angry without any excuse. You will create an excuse, you will invent one -- you will have to, because the anger that you have been going through every day is waiting for its time. It is like tea-time, and your body

starts asking for tea. A little tannin is needed... or a little nicotine.

This is happening to Krishna Prem! Just a few weeks ago Laxmi was after him: "Stop smoking!" He was smoking too much. And finally he stopped; with great will he forced himself and stopped. Since that time he has not been in good shape. He became ill, for weeks he remained ill, weak. Now he has come out of his illness. He had to take many medicines and treatments. Now he gets angry at any slight excuse, or no excuse.

Just the other day he asked me, "Beloved Master, what should I do?"

I said, "Smoke! And don't listen to Laxmi again!"

An old habit... now the body needs a certain quantity of nicotine; if it is not there then uneasiness is created. And there is nothing unspiritual in nicotine, remember; nicotine is as spiritual as anything else.

If you have been doing something for a long time you become habituated, and once you become habituated to a certain thing, it forces you to do it again and again. Buddha calls it "the rafters of desire": the past tries to perpetuate itself.

He says: I HAVE SNAPPED THE RAFTERS. I am finished with the past! I am disconnected from my past, I am no longer continuous with my past. I have SPLIT THE RIDGEPOLE. By "ridgepole" he means the future. Desire has these two dimensions: it comes from the past and it goes to the future, it never stays in the present. The present becomes a death to desire.

Hence all meditations are nothing but efforts to bring you to the present. When you live in the present moment, with

no past hanging around you, with no future projection, you are free from life and death, you are free from body and mind. You are free -- simply free -- you are freedom.
Buddha says: And this is how I have BEATEN OUT DESIRE. AND NOW MY MIND IS FREE.

THERE ARE NO FISH IN THE LAKE.
THE LONG-LEGGED CRANES STAND IN THE WATER.

A beautiful metaphor, very pictorial: THE LONG-LEGGED CRANES STAND IN THE WATER. Very still they stand, very silent, unmoving, because if they move, ripples are created in the water and those ripples make the fish afraid. The cranes stand absolutely still, like yogis, unmoving, as if they are not there. If there are no ripples in the water, the fish can come close to the cranes and they can catch hold of the fish.
Buddha says: Now a revolution has happened.... THERE ARE NO FISH IN THE LAKE. By "fish" he means desires: My consciousness is free of desires.
THE LONG-LEGGED CRANES STAND IN THE WATER. But because I am alive -- I will not be coming back again into the body, but this body has its own momentum, this mind has its own momentum -- it will have to finish its momentum. So the body is there, the mind is there, like long-legged cranes standing in the water, although there are no fish anymore.
Buddha is saying: I am here in the world, but without desire, so the world is not in me. I will not be coming back

again because there is no reason to come back: there is no desire to fulfill. All desires have been known to be futile. The world is nothing but an opportunity to fulfill your unfulfilled desires. You are sent back again and again to the world by the universal law -- AES DHAMMO SANANTANO. This is the universal law. Buddha says again and again that if you desire you will be thrown back into the world. Whatsoever you desire you will become; what you become depends on your desires. If your desires are such that they can be fulfilled only in the life of a dog, then you will become a dog. If your desires are such that they can be fulfilled only in the life of an elephant, you will become an elephant. It depends on your desires: your desires create the mold of your bodymind mechanism. It is our desiring that has created us. If you are a man, it is your desire; if you are a woman, it is your desire. You may have forgotten about it....

I have been experimenting in many many ways. I have looked into many people's past lives, and in the beginning I was very much surprised. The most surprising thing was this -- that if somebody is a man in this life, he was a woman in his past life, and vice versa: if somebody is a woman in this life she was a man in the past life. I was puzzled -- why? Then slowly slowly, it became clear to me that man thinks that women are enjoying more than men, and more so now, after the research of Masters and Johnson -- because women have multiple orgasms! Man has a single orgasm and then he is finished for at least twenty-four hours, and a woman can have multiple orgasms -- many orgasms within seconds.

Now many men must be feeling very much frustrated about being men; they may not say so directly, because of their male egos. But it is going to happen. In the coming twenty-five years this is going to happen more and more, that many men will decide to become women -- now it can be done scientifically too -- and many women will decide to become men. In fact, they are trying in every possible way: they are behaving like men, they want to do everything the way man is doing it; they want to compete with him in politics, in the marketplace -- everywhere. They want all the opportunities, because man is enjoying so much. And man thinks that women are enjoying so much: "I have to fight the whole world and the woman simply rests at home!"
This has been happening in the past also, but not scientifically -- naturally. Everybody thinks the other is enjoying. And this idea of multiple orgasms! And also the idea has come that women have two types of orgasm and man has only one type of orgasm. The woman can have vaginal orgasm and clitoral orgasm. Man is so poor! And the woman's orgasm is more total -- her whole body becomes involved in it -- man's orgasm is local. Poor man!

A pretty coed had been receiving obscene phone calls from the same man for months. She was beginning to enjoy it. One night she picked up the phone and it was him again.
"I am gonna come over there, throw you down on the bed, rip off your clothes, spread your legs, and shove something into you that you will never forget!"
"Come on over!" said the girl.
"What?" answered a surprised voice.

"I am serious! You turn me on!"
Twenty minutes later the phone nut was in her apartment. Within five minutes they had their clothes off and within ten seconds the guy was all finished. To add insult to injury, he rolled over and went to sleep on the poor frustrated girl.
An hour later he got up, dressed and headed for the door. "I will say one thing for you," snapped the coed, "you give great phone!"

Man starts feeling that the woman is enjoying more, and the woman feels the same. It is always so. Even kings think that beggars are more happy: no worry, no anxiety; they can sleep so soundly, so deeply. And it is very difficult for kings to sleep. Beggars don't have food, but they have great appetites; and kings have food but no appetites. Beggars are thinking that kings are enjoying such beautiful palaces, such great food, so many beautiful women, and everything that one can desire. But they don't know that kings can't enjoy food -- their appetites have disappeared long before the food appeared. Yes, they have marble palaces, but they cannot sleep. Their life is a nightmare, constant anxiety, anguish, fear. The king thinks the beggars are in a far better situation: nothing to worry about. Nobody can steal anything from them, nobody can attack them. They don't need bodyguards, they don't need any defense; they can sleep on the road.
Everybody is jealous of everybody else, and that's how it goes on changing. If you are a man, you must have been a woman in your past life; if you are a woman, you must

have been a man. You started desiring the other and then the desire has brought a new mechanism for you.
Buddha says it is desire, not God, which has to be looked into, which has to be examined, which has to be observed.

SAD IS THE MAN WHO IN HIS YOUTH
LIVED LOOSELY AND SQUANDERED HIS FORTUNE....

And Buddha says: Beware! Time is passing fast, life is slipping out of your fingers; soon it will be gone. Before it is gone, do something to get rid of desire.
SAD IS THE MAN WHO IN HIS YOUTH LIVED LOOSELY AND SQUANDERED HIS FORTUNE....
What is fortune for Buddha? -- this opportunity, this great opportunity to be aware of desire and its futility, this great opportunity to get rid of desire. This is the great fortune! And sad is the man who has spent his youth loosely, unconsciously, and squandered his fortune. What to say about old people? Even in old age people are repeating the same stupid games.

Ninety-year-old Parker went to a bordello and was so great in bed that the prostitute said, "Old man, if you can do it again, it's on the house!"
"Okay," said Parker, "but if you don't mind, I'd like to take a fifteen-minute nap."
"Okay."
"And while I'm sleeping I'd like you to hold my ding dong!"

She agreed. When he woke up, Parker gave another great performance. So the girl said, "Look, if you can handle it, I'll give you another one for free!"
He agreed. "Okay, but I gotta take another fifteen-minute nap and while I'm sleeping, you have to hold my knob!"
Parker woke up later and once again performed like a teenager. "Say, Pop," said the hooker, "I can understand why you want to take a fifteen-minute nap, but why did you want me to hold your ding dong?"
"Well," said the old man, "the last place I went to, somebody stole my wallet!"

A ninety-year-old man... but the same stupidities! Young people can be forgiven -- although Buddha is not ready to forgive them -- but they can be forgiven; they don't have much experience of life. But even old people, even on their deathbed, at the moment of death, they are still thinking of stupid things and desires. Somebody is thinking of money, somebody is thinking of sex, somebody is thinking of becoming famous -- even on their deathbed! They are completely unaware that they have wasted a fortune.
SAD IS THE MAN WHO IN HIS YOUTH LIVED LOOSELY AND SQUANDERED HIS FORTUNE.... And almost everybody in the world today IS living loosely. By "living loosely" Buddha means that living unconsciously, we go on wasting opportunities which could become great moments of understanding. I am not saying escape from the world; I am not saying escape from anywhere -- but certainly you have to be there with more awareness.

When a recently bought rooster died after only three weeks on the job, Farmer Foster was determined that its replacement would last much longer. So before putting the new rooster to work, Foster dosed it heavily with vitamins and pep pills. The instant the bird was released, it charged into the hen coop and serviced every one of the hens. Then it flew into the adjoining coop and proceeded to do the same for the geese.
Farmer Foster went back to the house, shaking his head and muttering, "He will never last out the day."
Around sunset, Foster was crossing the yard, and there lay the rooster, legs aloft, flat on its back, with two hungry buzzards slowly circling above.
"Damn it!" groaned Foster. "Now I have got to buy me another new rooster!"
The rooster opened one eye, winked, and pointed at the nearing buzzards, saying, "Shhh!"

Be a little more alert than the rooster!
Man is man only when he becomes aware of what he is doing. Otherwise a few are roosters and a few are bulls and a few are horses -- in the form of men. A few are money-mad, a few are sex maniacs, a few are power-hungry. These are all ill people and they have suffered for many lives, but it has become such a settled pattern with them that they go on moving in circles.

SAD IS A BROKEN BOW,
AND SADLY IS HE SIGHING
AFTER ALL THAT HAS ARISEN AND HAS PASSED AWAY.

The day is not far away when you will see that you are just a broken bow. The day is not far away when you will breathe your last, and then you will sigh and weep and cry deep within yourself, because you will know that whatsoever you have been doing has been all just a dream, writing on water. You have lived with shadows; you have not gained any substance in your life. You have wasted a great opportunity in which you could have become a buddha.

Unless you become a Buddha or a Krishna or a Christ, remember that you are wasting a great treasure bestowed upon you by existence. You have not earned it, you don't deserve it. It is a pure gift, a gift of love. Please don't waste it....

Enough for today.

The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 5

Chapter #4

Chapter title: Morning has broken

14 October 1979 am in Buddha Hall

The first question:

Question 1

BELOVED MASTER,

WHEN I AM DEAD, AM I REALLY DEAD? I WANT TO BE REALLY CONVINCED THAT DEATH IS ETERNAL SLEEP.

Ram Jethmalani, death is the greatest illusion. It has never happened, it can't happen in the very nature of things. Yes,

there is something which creates the illusion: death is a disconnection between the body and the soul but only a disconnection; neither the body dies nor the soul. The body cannot die because it is already dead; it belongs to the world of matter. How can a dead thing die? And the soul cannot die because it belongs to the world of eternity, God -- it is life itself. How can life die?

Both are together in us. This connection becomes disconnected; the soul becomes unplugged from the body -- that's all that death is, what we call death. The body moves back to matter, to the earth; and the soul, if it still has desires, longings, starts seeking another womb, another opportunity to fulfill them. Or if the soul is finished with all desires, with all longings, then there is no longer any possibility of its coming back into a bodily form -- then it moves into eternal consciousness.

Moving into eternal consciousness is a very paradoxical phenomenon: one is not and yet one is. A dewdrop slipping into the ocean is no more, in a sense -- as a dewdrop it is no more; the boundary that made it a dewdrop has disappeared. But in another sense it is more than it has ever been: it has become the very ocean, its boundary has expanded to infinity, its boundary has exploded into the unbounded.

A man like Buddha becomes the universal consciousness, yet -- and this is the paradox -- his individuality is not lost, his consciousness is not lost.

So, Ram, I cannot say that death is eternal sleep -- on the contrary, it is eternal awakening. Poets have been telling you down the ages: Death is eternal sleep -- don't be afraid. They themselves know not, they are simply giving you

consolation. But what can the difference be between real death and eternal sleep? Have you ever thought about it? If sleep is eternal it is death. If it is never going to be broken then where is the difference? A corpse and an eternally asleep man are exactly the same. If the sleep is going to be forever and forever, it is death.

The primitive people are far closer to the truth: they say that sleep is a small death. They are right, because for a few hours you become completely oblivious to the world, to others, to yourself, to your body. You become completely disconnected for a few hours, then you are reconnected again. It is a small death. Sleep is a small death but not vice versa: death is not eternal sleep; if it were then what would the difference be, Ram?

If you simply want to console yourself that, "I will be eternally asleep in death," that's another matter. But the truth is not to console you; truth is as it is. The truth is that death has two possibilities. If you die with longing, desiring, then it brings you back into another body, because without a body you cannot make any effort to fulfill your desires. Without the body you cannot eat food, you cannot make love; without the body you cannot become the prime minister of a country -- without the body it is impossible to do anything. The body is the vehicle for doing things; gaining, journeying, reaching, arriving. Without the body you simply are; it is a state of being. With the body you are always becoming: becoming this, becoming that, richer, more famous, more successful. Without the body all becoming ceases. Becoming is another name for desiring, so if a person dies with a deep, deep desire to become

something he will be born again into another body. That is one alternative.

The second is: if you have understood the futility of desire, the utter stupidity of desire, if you have seen it through and through -- that no desire can ever be fulfilled, that it promises and it promises greatly but it never delivers the goods, that all desires are deceptive, that it is because of our unintelligence that we go on being victims of desires; if you have seen it through and through and you die with no projection in the mind, with no seed of desire, then all seeds are burned. It is because of this that Patanjali has called the ultimate state of samadhi, NIRBEEJ samadhi, seedless samadhi -- if you can die with all the seeds burned, there will be no sprout anymore, there will be no other births.

Then where do you go? You don't fall asleep. In fact to attain to a state of seedless samadhi one has to be absolutely awake, one has to be a buddha, because the seeds of desire are burned only in the fire of awakening. So if you die without any desire, you die in utter awareness, you see death happening. And remember again, by "death" I mean you see the disconnection happening -- slowly slowly, the soul is becoming separate from the body. Slowly slowly, it is becoming uprooted from the body, it is becoming freer from the prison. And one moment comes when you are totally free from the prison, outside the prison cell called the bodymind mechanism.

Then you remain eternally awake. Then you remain in the universe, diffused in the ocean of life, but eternally awake. It is not a state of sleep.

You ask me, "When I am dead, am I really dead?" Ram Jethmalani, the real YOU will not be dead, but Ram Jethmalani is going to be dead, because Ram Jethmalani is nothing but the name of the combination of soul and body; it is the name of the identity. We feel identified with our bodies; we think we are our bodies, our minds. Remember, mind is only a part of the body, the subtle part, the invisible part. If we are identified with the bodymind mechanism, then certainly this identification is going to die.

Ram Jethmalani is bound to die, but there is something in Ram Jethmalani which is not going to die. You have to become aware of it. And the only way to become aware of it is to be more meditative, to be more of a witness. Start watching your body, start watching your mind; don't get involved, remain aloof, distant, cool. Just as one sits on the bank of a river and watches the river flow by. You don't say, "I am the river." So it is with the body, watch it. Become more and more of a witness. And as witnessing grows and becomes integrated, you will be able to see Ram Jethmalani disappearing even before death.

In meditation the ego dies, the ego disappears. Once the ego has disappeared, once you have seen yourself as an egoless entity, then there is no death for you.

We can say it in another way: it is the ego that creates the illusion of death. And ego itself is false, hence death too is false. We cling to the false, that's why we have to suffer from death.

Sannyas means to become disidentified from the bodymind mechanism -- becoming a witness, a seer, a watcher on the hill. And as you become a seer, a watcher, the hill rises higher and higher, and the dark, dark valley is left behind.

You go on seeing the valley for the time being; then, slowly slowly, it becomes so distant you can't see it, you can't hear any noise from the valley, and a moment comes at the ultimate peak of the hill when the valley no longer exists for you. Then although alive, in a sense you are dead.
Ashtavakra, one of the greatest seers of this country, says: The sannyasin is one who is dead even while he is alive. But the person who is dead while he is alive will be alive when he is dead.
You also ask me, "I want to be really convinced that death is eternal sleep."
Ram, convictions can't help much, because conviction means somebody else silencing your doubts, repressing your doubts, somebody else becoming an authority for you. Maybe logically he is more argumentative, maybe he has a great rational mind and he can convince you that there is no death, and you may be silenced and your doubts may be silenced. But even the doubts that have been silenced will come back again, sooner or later, because they have not disappeared -- they have only been repressed by logical arguments.
Convictions don't help much; doubts persist as an undercurrent. One is a convinced Christian, another is a convinced Hindu. And I have seen all kinds of people -- they are all full of doubts, all of them -- Christians, Hindus, Mohammedans. In fact the more full of doubt a person is, the more stubborn he is, the more he tries to believe, because those doubts are painful. He says, "I strongly believe in the Gita, in the Koran, in the Bible. I am a staunch Catholic."

Why do you need to be a staunch Catholic? For what? You must be suffering from great doubts. If you don't have any doubts you don't have any beliefs either. Doubts are the diseases and beliefs are the medicines, but all beliefs are allopathic medicines -- they repress, they are all poisons. All beliefs are poisonous. Yes, for the time being they can give you a feeling that now there is no problem, but soon the doubts will assert themselves; they will wait for the right time. They will explode with great urgency one day. They will erupt like a volcano; they will take revenge. Because you have repressed them they have gathered too much energy. One day, in some weak moment, when you are off guard, they will take revenge. Your so-called saints are all suffering from great doubts.

No, I cannot give you any conviction; I don't trust convictions, beliefs. But, Ram, I can invite you to come along with me, I can help you to see. Why be convinced? There is no need.

I have seen and I can help you to see, and only your own seeing is going to be of any value. I have realized: I can help you to realize. I have traveled the path: I can take your hand in my hand, I can take you, slowly slowly, to the highest peak of meditative experience. Your own experience will be a real transformation; then doubts can never come back again. And when YOU have known, you will be surprised that all the poets who have been telling you that death is sleep, deep sleep, eternal sleep, have been telling you lies -- consoling lies, beautiful lies, helpful lies, but lies ARE lies, and the help can only be momentary.

It is like when you are too worried, too tense and you take to alcohol. Yes, for a few hours you will forget all your

worries and all your tensions, but the alcohol cannot take your worries away forever; it cannot solve them. And while you are drowned in alcohol those worries are growing, becoming stronger; you are giving them time to grow. And when you are back the next morning with a hangover and a headache added to the worries, you will be surprised; they are bigger than when you had left them.

Then it becomes a pattern of life: become again and again intoxicated so you can forget -- but again and again you have to face your life. This is not an intelligent way to live. I am against all intoxicants, against all drugs. They don't help; they only help you to postpone problems. I would like to really solve your problems. I have solved mine, and the problems are the same, more or less. I can bring you closer to me so you can feel my heart and you can see through my eyes and you can feel what has happened. And that feeling, that taste, will become a magnetic pull on you.

It is not a conviction, it is not a belief -- it creates trust. And once trust is created the journey has started. I know, Ram, you need great help. I have looked into your eyes -- just once you have been here and just once I have looked into your eyes -- they look very sad. You must be carrying great anguish inside yourself.

On the outside you are a successful man, the topmost criminal advocate in this country. On the outside you are successful in every way -- a member of the parliament, president of the lawyers association of India -- but deep down I have seen, just a passing glimpse, that you are sitting on a volcano. I have seen great anguish in your eyes, great tears just waiting to flow from your eyes. You are not in any way blissful.

I can make you blissful -- why ask for convictions? -- I can give you the real experience. My whole effort here is not to give beliefs to people but experiences, not to help them superficially but really to transform them. I am absolutely available to you. And you cannot escape me for long.
Ram is also my advocate and he enjoys telling people that "I am God's advocate." But to be my advocate is to be in danger; sooner or later you will be trapped. Maybe that's why I have chosen you as my advocate, so that you can come closer to me. My ways are devious.
A great love has arisen in you for me. Now, that love is the first flower of the spring; much more is on the way.
But remember, my whole approach is that of existential experience. I don't want you to be believers, I would like you to experience on your own; I don't want to convince you. What I am saying is my experience: there is no death. I am not saying to you, "Believe that there is no death." I am simply expressing, sharing my experience that there is no death. It is a challenge! It is not an effort to convince you, it is a challenge to come and explore. You are welcome. Think of me as your home!

The second question:
Question 2
BELOVED MASTER,
I HAVE FELT A DEEP SADNESS ALL DAY LONG STEMMING FROM YOUR REMARKS TODAY ABOUT PSYCHOANALYSIS AND RECALLING YOUR JOKES OVER THE YEARS ABOUT PSYCHIATRISTS. IN MY OWN LIFE I HAVE BEEN BLESSED WITH ENCOUNTERING A FEW RARE AND

WISE PSYCHIATRISTS, PSYCHOLOGISTS -- ONE OF WHOM LED ME TO YOU.
THESE PEOPLE PROVIDED -- AND CONTINUE TO PROVIDE -- AN OASIS FOR ME IN AN OTHERWISE BARREN DESERT IN THE WEST. IT IS NOT SO MUCH THEIR PROFESSION AS THE LEVEL OF THEIR BEING THAT ATTRACTS ME.
WHY DO YOU HIT THIS PROFESSION SO HARD? AND HOW CAN I TRUST MYSELF AND MY EXPERIENCE WHEN IT CONFLICTS WITH WHAT YOU SAY? I FEEL CAUGHT IN A PARADOX.

Prem Sarjana, I hit people only when I love them, I don't waste my hits on unnecessary people, on unworthy people. Psychoanalysts, psychiatrists, psychologists, are my targets. I am throwing my net to catch hold of as many as possible.

It is said of Jesus:
One day, early in the morning, he came to the lake; two brothers, both fishermen, were throwing their net into the lake to catch fish.
Jesus puts his hand on one of the brothers; he looks back, looks into those eyes of Jesus which are far deeper than the lake, far more silent than the lake and far more beautiful.... He understands only the lake; his whole life he has been working on the lake, fishing. Looking into the eyes of Jesus, for the first time he becomes aware that this is possible, that eyes can be so beautiful and can have such depth and such clarity and such blueness and such vastness. He is immensely attracted -- he is a simple fisherman -- and Jesus says to him, "Enough is enough, you have been

catching fish your whole life, now come and follow me: I will teach you the art of how to catch men."
And the fisherman followed Jesus, became one of his apostles.

I am interested, immensely interested, in catching all kinds of psychologists, psychoanalysts, psychiatrists, for the simple reason that they have the greatest potential. They can become the right soil for the new man to arrive; they are free of all religious nonsense, they are free from all political stupidity. They are the freest men in a way. Now there is only one thing left with them, a thin barrier: they have made psychoanalysis their religion, they have created their own trinity -- Freud, Adler, Jung. They have created their own Bible, their own theology, now they are caught in it... it happens.
When you have lived for centuries in prisons, even if you are allowed freedom you will soon enter into another prison because that has become your habit. You cannot live without chains. They have broken all the chains but they have now created new chains of their own making, and when you make your own chains, handmade, homemade, you are more attached to them.
Who bothers about what Buddha said? Twenty-five centuries have passed. Who cares what Jesus said or did not say? In fact they have receded so far that nobody is really obsessed with them, except a few people -- who are not contemporaries, who are still living twenty centuries back. But when you create your own chains and your own prisons... and psychoanalysis is the latest religion -- it is very much easier to fall a victim to psychoanalysis, to

Sigmund Freud than to Jesus Christ; it is easier to believe in Marx than in Mohammed, than in Mahavira, than in Manu, than in Moses, because he is so close to us, he speaks such a contemporary language. And that's what has happened to the communists. The Kremlin has become their Kaaba, their Kashi, their Kailash; they also have their own trinity -- Marx, Engels, Lenin; they have their own Bible -- DAS KAPITAL. They have their own apostles -- Stalin, Mao, Castro, Tito. And the same is happening to psychoanalysis, it has become a new religion.

I hit psychoanalysts, Sarjana, because I love them. I am really interested in them. I would like them to come and experience me, and to come and to know what is happening here. And many have heard the call; out of all the professions, psychoanalysts, psychiatrists, psychologists, have received me the most deeply, the most profoundly. Hundreds of them have come and become sannyasins. And certainly I go on joking about them; those jokes are also my love affair. That's how I show my love, my interest.

You say, "I have felt a deep sadness all day long stemming from your remarks today about psychoanalysis and recalling your jokes over the years about psychiatrists." You seem to have made a religion out of psychoanalysis yourself, that's why you feel sad; otherwise you would have enjoyed the jokes, you would have loved them. They are so true.

Psychiatrists are crazy people, I mean beautiful people. Whenever I say that somebody is crazy, I am appreciating them. You have to learn my language. Whenever I say that somebody is crazy I mean that somebody is valuable. To be

normal is not a very great thing; to be normal is to be average. That is a condemnation, that somebody is just normal; that means he has nothing in him, he is just hollow. Don't feel sad, I am not against psychoanalysis -- although I would like psychoanalysts to go beyond it. It has to be a stepping-stone. And whenever I see somebody clinging to a stepping-stone I hit him hard to show him that there is something beyond.

And you say, "In my own life I have been blessed with encountering a few rare and wise psychiatrists, psychologists -- one of whom led me to you."

You may have -- there are a few people who are really intelligent, knowledgeable. But you don't understand the meaning of the word 'wisdom'. It is impossible to find a wise psychoanalyst; if he were wise he would have already become a sannyasin, he would not be a psychoanalyst any longer. And they can be of great help; and particularly in the West where masters don't exist, a psychoanalyst is the only possibility of gaining any help, a pure substitute for a master -- because the master means one who is enlightened, one who has arrived, one who no longer has any problems to solve, any desires to be fulfilled -- one who is already fulfilled.

It is very difficult to find a master in the West. The next best is the psychiatrist, the psychoanalyst. But remember, he is only the next best. And when I say it is difficult to find masters in the West I mean that the Western tradition has fallen into the hands of the priests. For two thousand years the priests have not allowed masters to survive, to exist; or even if, in spite of them, a person became enlightened, he had to go into hiding. He could not declare

his enlightenment, he could not share his enlightenment, or he had to share it in such a way that the priests didn't become aware of what he was doing.

So two things Western enlightened people have been doing: one was pretending to be part of the church, using the language of the church and pouring their enlightenment into it, because that was one of the ways not to get into conflict with the church and the state; that's what was done by Meister Eckhart, Saint Francis, Jacob Bohme and others. They remained part of the church. It was just a device to survive and to share something. And they used the language of the church which is very unfitting. They could not be so free as Zen masters or Sufi masters; they could not express themselves totally; they had to force their experience into Christian jargon, which was dull, dead. Or those who were not ready to compromise had to go into hiding, they had to go underground; that's how alchemy was born. Alchemists were not chemists; alchemists were not really trying to transform base metals into gold, that was just a device to hide behind.

The alchemists were real masters but they pretended to be alchemists, and if you had seen them from the outside you would have seen them concerned with base metals and gold and silver. And many experiments were going on, but deep inside the real experiment was going on. Transforming unconsciousness into consciousness -- that is the real transformation of base metal into gold. Gold represents consciousness, enlightenment.

So this happened in the West. The priests were so powerful and the priests were in such a conspiracy with the state that either they burned people like Joan of Arc, who was a

mystic -- they killed many mystics -- or forced mystics to go underground, or forced them to speak the language of the church.

Hence in the West masters almost disappeared, and now from the East, particularly from India, there are many many so-called masters roaming all over the West -- Mahesh Yogi, Muktananda, etcetera, etcetera. I call them "etceteranandas." These are all pseudo people, because a master waits for the disciple to come to him; there is no need for the master to go anywhere. If he has real magnetism he will attract people from the farthest corners of the world. If you don't have any magnetism in you then you will have to go and sell whatsoever you can to foolish people. So now the whole West is full of these pseudo masters.

It is better, Sarjana, to be with a psychiatrist than to be with a Muktananda, because the psychiatrist is at least moving in the right direction. He has not arrived yet but he is moving in the right direction. You can find a few very intelligent people in that profession. But wisdom is totally different: wisdom means enlightenment, wisdom means one who has known himself.

But I can understand your difficulty: being in the desert of the West, an oasis becomes of tremendous importance, and that's why you become very sad if I hit psychoanalysts. But without hitting them it is impossible to wake them up. I can understand your difficulty. But now that you are here, part of a buddhafield, you should get rid of your psychoanalysts and psychiatrists. Say goodbye to them; thank them for all that they have done for you, but say goodbye to them. In

the West you were helpless and that was the only possibility of getting any help.

"It was deep in the woods back yonder," began old Herbie, the guide. "I was plodding along minding my own business when suddenly a huge bear sneaked up behind me. He pinned my arms to my sides and started to squeeze the breath out of me. My gun fell out of my hands. First thing you know, the bear had stooped down, picked up the gun, and was pressing it against my back."
"What did you do?" gasped the tenderfoot.
Old Herbie sighed, "What could I do? I married his daughter!"

In the West what else could you do? Helpless.... But now that you are here don't feel sad if I hit psychoanalysts. You say, "It is not so much their profession as the level of their being that attracts me."
You don't know what you are saying. What level of being are you talking about? I have seen hundreds of psychoanalysts -- the commune is full of them, we have more psychiatrists than psychiatric patients. What level of being? There are not many levels of being in the first place. There are only two planes: either you are enlightened, or you are unenlightened. Do you think there are many many planes so that one man is ten percent enlightened, another is twenty percent enlightened, another is thirty percent enlightened? No, either it is one hundred percent or it is zero -- zero percent or one hundred percent.

You must have been attracted -- that much I can understand -- but your attraction is more because of you than because of the level of the person to whom you became attracted.
The West is suffering from many mental illnesses; it is better to suffer from mental illnesses than to suffer from physical ones, it is at least something higher. It is better to be rich and frustrated than to be poor and starving. I have known both poverty and richness, and to be frank with you I must say, to be rich is better, because the rich person suffers from rich illnesses; the poor person suffers from poor illnesses. The poor person is concerned with the body, the rich person is concerned with the mind.
And the psychiatrist, the psychoanalyst, can provide you with many consolations, many adjustments. And, certainly, when you are disturbed anybody who looks undisturbed, who looks very wise in his advice, who goes on analyzing your dreams, looks as if he has a different level of being. It is not so.
All that psychoanalysis is doing is helping people to become adjusted. The Western modern mind has become very maladjusted -- it is a good sign, it is the sign of a crisis, an identity crisis. All the old values have become invalid, new values are needed. The past has become irrelevant; we have succeeded so much in the West that we cannot live with the values which were created when people were poor, remember it.
A poor society needs different values, a rich society needs different values. When a poor society succeeds in becoming rich it becomes maladjusted, because it goes on teaching the old values which are no longer relevant, and it lives in the new society which is rich.

So people's minds are in a mess. What has been told to them by the priest, by the school, by the college and the university, belongs to the past. And the society has moved from there. It is as if you are taught the mechanism of a bullock cart and you have a car; you will be maladjusted, because you know the mechanism of a bullock cart and you have a Mercedes Benz. You are at a loss; your knowledge is irrelevant, but you cling to your knowledge because that is all that you know. That's what is happening.

People were told for centuries to be ambitious, to have all kinds of riches, to succeed in the world. Now it has all happened! Now to tell people to be rich, to be successful, is utterly futile. They will laugh at you, they will say, "What nonsense are you talking about!"

Hence the hippies. In the East they cannot happen; old values are still relevant -- people know about bullock carts and people have bullock carts. They fit perfectly well. But Western technology, Western science, Western affluence, has gone far ahead of the Western mind and attitudes. So everybody is at a loss. A person's knowledge does not fit with the situation he lives in. He cannot drop the knowledge because by dropping the knowledge he becomes almost ignorant. And there is no other knowledge available.

The function of the psychiatrist is to help these maladjusted people to become adjusted again. This is not very revolutionary work; it is antirevolutionary, it is reactionary. That's why I hit psychoanalysis. Psychoanalysis has to herald the new age! And on the contrary, what it is doing is helping people to become adjusted to the old, rotten society, which is dying. Psychoanalysis has to help people

towards the new man who is soon to arrive on the horizon. That's my effort here.
My work is multidimensional. It is not only religious, it is not only educational, it is not only psychological, it is not only artistic -- it has all the dimensions; because the new man will be a multidimensional man. And psychoanalysis is helping the old, rotten society to survive better than it would survive without the help of psychoanalysis.

Priests, rabbis, and ministers often face anxieties, fears, and frustrations. This was the case with Father Flannagan. The demands of his parish overwhelmed him. He feared lest he might face a complete mental breakdown. So he consulted a psychiatrist. The doctor encouraged him to lay aside his ecclesiastical vestments, then don civilian clothes, red tie, striped shirt, overalls, go out to a tavern and mingle with common people who frequent such places. There, incognito, he might readily overcome his frustrations. He accepted the prescription, changed his garments , and made his first trip to the tavern.
As he sat at a table a go-go girl came tripping up to him to take his order.
Said she, "Have I not seen you before? Your face looks familiar."
A bit embarrassed he answered, "No, indeed, you have never seen me before. This is the first time I have ever been in this tavern."
Finding the treatment encouraging, he returned to the tavern a second time. The same go-go girl rushed over to him to take his order. This time she said, "I am sure that I have seen you some place."

More embarrassed, but still convinced that he was unrecognized, he exclaimed, "Of course you have never seen me before. This is only the second time I have ever come to this tavern."
Some time later he visited the tavern for a third time. Immediately the little go-go girl ran to him with a big smile saying, "Now I know who you are! You are Father Flannagan from the church on Dublin Street!"
The shock of this recognition almost floored him, but the little girl tapped him on the shoulder with these sympathetic assurances: "Don't fret, Father Flannagan! I am Sister Elizabeth from Saint Theresa Convent. I go to the same psychiatrist!"

The old ideas about life, the old morality, the old ideas of sin and repentance, all have become irrelevant. The old priesthood is absolutely maladjusted, and the people who live according to old religious ideas are feeling out of place. And the new people are also feeling out of place, hence the gap between the generations -- it has never been so big as it is today.
Parents can't understand children, children can't understand parents. They speak different languages, there is no communication; a China Wall has come between parents and children.
All the old cherished values, cherished for centuries and centuries, look stupid. Things that we thought were spiritual are no longer spiritual. The world needs a new spirituality and a new kind of religiousness.
I hit psychiatrists, psychoanalysts, more than any other profession for the simple reason that they are the ones who

can understand what I am doing here. And if they understand rightly they will serve the future and not the past. They will help you to become more harmonious with yourself rather than become adjusted to an ill society which is just on its deathbed.

That is where my work differs: I don't help you to become adjusted to society. This society is bound to die, it is doomed to die, and the sooner it happens, the better, because it has become ugly. To go on carrying this rotten corpse does not allow people to live rightly. They have to take care of the corpse which stinks, and there are so many corpses in your house that there is no space for you to live. We have to get rid of the past. Up to now neither Freudian nor Adlerian nor Jungian psychology has been of any help; it has become part of the establishment. As priests have been doing in the past, psychoanalysts are now doing the same: helping people to compromise with society, helping people to be normal. Normality is not health! Health is very rebellious, and psychoanalysis is not yet courageous enough to be rebellious. Hence I hit it -- because I know the potential; it can become rebellious.

Once psychoanalysis becomes rebellious it will help the new man to arrive sooner, it will help the first real revolution in the world. Up to now all the revolutions were very tiny, pseudo, superficial, because the real revolution can happen only in the psyche of man, not in the social structure or the economic structure. A real revolution has nothing to do with politics; it has something to do with the spirituality of man.

We have to create a new spirituality, a new vision.

You say, Sarjana, "In my own life I have been blessed with encountering a few rare and wise psychiatrists, psychologists -- one of whom led me to you."

But where is he? Now it is your duty to lead him to me. Pay him in the same coin! What is he doing there? He should be here! He must have read, he must have heard about me, but that is not the way to know me. The only way to know me is to be a sannyasin, is to be part of my energy field, to vibrate with me, to pulsate with me, to synchronize with me. Now this is your duty, you owe this to him. Help him to come here; he may be afraid to come himself.

Just the other day I received a letter from Hari Chetana in Germany saying that on the radio a very famous psychologist was asked by a woman, "It is now six years since my son went to Poona and there seems to be no possibility that he will ever come back. What do you say about it?"

And the famous doctor said, "I have heard much about Poona, I have read also. You need not be worried -- your son is in the right place."

But hearing about me and reading about me while I am alive here.... And the distance between Berlin and Poona is nothing. Within hours you can be here -- he has never come here.

These people know only one way of becoming acquainted with anything -- and that is reading, studying. These people are knowledgeable people, but not wise.

We are helpless. We cannot do anything about Buddha -- we have to read him because he is no longer present. But how many times, reading Buddha and his beautiful sutras, has not the idea arisen in millions of hearts, "How fortunate

it would have been if we had been alive in the time of Buddha." Or reading the beautiful words of Jesus has not the idea occurred to you that, "How tremendously blessed were those people who followed Jesus while he was alive, walked with him, talked with him, dined with him, wined with him"? Reading about Krishna have you not heard the distant, distant call of his flute? Have you not felt a little sad that now there is no possibility of encountering this beautiful man?

But when buddhas are alive you don't use that opportunity. You may have been alive when Jesus was there -- he may have passed through your village and you may not have gone to see him. You may have been alive while Buddha walked on the earth and you may not have ever encountered him. You may have been alive while Krishna was playing on his flute and a few courageous people were dancing around him; you may have passed and you may have thought, "These people are crazy and this man has hypnotized them with his music" -- and you would have thought yourself very sane.

But now you cry and weep and you feel sad.

Sarjana, help your psychiatrists, your psychoanalysts to come here. Tell them a buddha is alive, a christ is back on the earth -- tell them!

And this is not only a message for Sarjana, this is for all of you. Jesus says: Go on the rooftops and shout so that people can hear. I say to you also: shout from the rooftops; help as many people as you can to come here, because right now the water is available, the water is flowing. It can quench the thirst of millions, but they will have to come to

the river and they will have to bow down to the river; only then can they receive the gift.
Don't feel sad, feel happy that you are here. And I am going to hit again and again, so you have to become accustomed to my ways. I hit people only when I see great potential in them.

The third question:
Question 3
BELOVED MASTER,
I AM OBSESSED WITH FOOD. I EAT TOO MUCH AND HAVE GAINED ENORMOUS WEIGHT. CAN YOU HELP ME TO REDUCE MY WEIGHT?

Sangito, this is strange, coming to me from California just to reduce your weight. In California there are far more facilities available to reduce weight. I know it because I had to send Mulla Nasruddin to California. The problem was the same.

When Mulla Nasruddin reached California, he was directed by our sannyasins there to this ultimate weight-losing program. It took four days and was guaranteed to take off fifty pounds or your money would be refunded.
He entered the building and was told to enter the first door to his left and to undress there. He did so and then from a second door in the room entered a beautiful blonde woman, naked but for a sign around her neck. It read, "If you catch me, you can make love to me!"
Nasruddin felt the passion rise within him. The room was fairly small, but the lady was agile, and it took him twenty

minutes to catch her. After his love-making, Nasruddin showered and left, eagerly awaiting the next day.
On the second day, he was directed to another room, a bit larger than the first. There a beautiful redhead, naked except for the sign, greeted him. The chase lasted for almost forty minutes.
On the third day, it was another, larger room, and a beautiful brunette! After almost an hour, he caught her too. Throughout the three days, Nasruddin had kept an account of his weight loss -- twenty-eight pounds to date.
On the fourth day, he envisioned perhaps a bevy of beauties. He was directed to the top floor. He climbed the stairs, removed his clothes and waited. There was a click behind him as the door was locked, and out of his left eye he caught sight of a huge gorilla coming his way with a sign around its neck which read, "If I catch you I'm going to make love to you!"

Sangito, you need not come from California to Poona! But one thing is certain: people become obsessed with food only when they lose the capacity to love. It is an indication that you have forgotten the language of love. If you are in love you never become obsessed with food. Obsession with food is a symptom that you don't know how to love. How it happens has to be understood.
The first acquaintance of the child with the world is the mother's breast. That is his first introduction to the world, his entry into the world -- his first relationship is with the breast of the mother. And the breast becomes the symbol for him of two things: food and love.

Whenever the mother is loving, the breast is available; and whenever the mother is unloving, the breast is not available. Food and love become associated; a deep conditioned reflex happens. It becomes so unconsciously rooted that you repeat it your whole life. If the child knows that the mother loves him he will not drink too much, because he KNOWS, he is secure; whenever he needs the mother her breast will be available.

If the child is insecure and feels that next time the mother may not be available, he will start drinking too much, eating too much.

Now, you can see the point: whenever love is there, there is security and a kind of fulfillment, and the child never becomes obsessed with food. If love is not there, there is insecurity, fear, and a kind of emptiness, and the child stuffs that emptiness with food.

In the West, weight is becoming more and more of a problem for the simple reason that mothers are not ready to give their breasts to their children. Of course the breast loses its shape; and the fear that the breasts will lose their shape and make the woman look old has gripped the mind of women in the West so deeply that they are afraid to give their breasts to their children. And they are creating an obsession about food in the child unknowingly, unconsciously. The child will become obsessed with food, he will eat too much. Eating will become his substitute for love.

Sangito, you will have to learn love. There is no other way to reduce your weight. All other programs can help you a little bit, but sooner or later you will gain weight again because the basic root cause remains the same. You can

diet, you can run, swim, exercise, but how long can you diet? Sooner or later you will be fed up with dieting and your mind will become more and more obsessed with eating. Now you will eat in your fantasy, in your dreams, and your mind will convince you that this is not the right way to live. You can't eat this, you can't eat that, and somehow if you ask the doctors, all the good things have to be avoided.

A child was talking to his mother, "You say God is very wise. I don't believe it."
The mother said, "But why don't you believe it?"
He said, "If he was wise, he would have put more vitamins in ice cream. He puts vitamins in things which are uneatable, and things which are really worth eating are dangerous."

How long will you avoid ice cream? The temptation will be such that it will be unavoidable. So you can lose weight for a few days and then you will eat too much, you will take revenge. And you may gain more weight than you had lost by dieting. This is the pattern of millions of people, particularly in the West.
In the East people are starving. You can see a few fat people in Bombay, in Delhi, in Calcutta, but that's all. If you go to the real India, eighty percent of the people in India are starving. There is no question of gaining more weight, they don't have enough weight. They are suffering from malnutrition. Yes, sometimes you will find villagers with big bellies and thin bodies, because they are eating food which is not nourishing, unbalanced, and they eat only

when it is available. So when it is available they eat too much.
There are millions of people in India who eat only once a day because they can't afford to eat twice. So to keep their bodies together for twenty-four hours they eat anything, whatsoever is available; sometimes they have to eat the roots of trees.
So the problem is not in the East, the problem is in the West where enough food is available and people have completely forgotten that food grows on trees. Children know that food grows in the fridges. You go to the fridge any time and food is available.

I have heard about a woman who must have been suffering like Sangito. She went to her psychiatrist and asked him his advice -- what to do? He pondered over the problem and gave her a picture, a picture of a naked woman, such an ugly fat woman, disgusting, nauseating, sickening -- just to see it was enough to become afraid of food. And he told the woman, "Stick it inside your fridge so that whenever you open it you will see this picture -- this will remind you of what is going to happen to you."
So she sticks in the picture of the naked woman. The psychiatrist has also given her another picture of a beautiful young woman with a very proportionate body, a world beauty, and has told her, "Stick this in too, so you can compare. If you don't eat too much you will be like this woman, if you eat too much you will be like that one."
Immediately, from the next day, the woman starts losing weight. But a miracle happens: her husband starts gaining

weight. The woman is puzzled. She says, "What is the matter?"
He says, "Since you have put that beautiful naked woman inside the fridge, I go again and again to see the picture. And when I see the picture I see the food too, and the flavor and the smell... and I say, 'Why not take a cake or some ice cream or something?' I am eating too much because of your pictures."

In the West the child grows with the idea that food is somehow miraculously produced by the fridges and it is always available, twenty-four hours a day; any time he can go and eat. And mothers have taken their breasts away and mothers are not available much either. The husbands go to work and the mothers go to so many committees -- they belong to the liberation movement, and consciousness-raising committees -- and they have so many charity shows going on and they have to sell tickets and collect the charity funds... they are not available. The father is gone, the mother is gone; the child is left with the fridge and with no love.
Sangito, just understand the root cause of it: love is missing somewhere in your life. I will not take your obsession with food as a real problem, it is a symptom. Love is the real problem -- love more. And if you love more, you will be loved more. And it is not yet too late; you can find a woman. And all women are mothers, and all men are always like children. So any woman will do, because she will function like a mother. And each man needs a mother his whole life, he needs mothering, and each woman needs children. Even the husband is only the oldest child, that's

all. And if you cannot find one, you can come to me -- I always have many applications with me; women searching for men, men searching for women. And I fix anybody with anybody! I don't believe in astrology, I believe only in accidents.

Mulla Nasruddin awoke one morning and looked at the clock. It was five minutes to five. Unable to go back to sleep, he went to the front door to get his newspaper. On the front page he saw the date: May 5th.
"Oh, fifth day, fifth month, five minutes before five," he thought. "Today will be my lucky day!"
He decided to go to the horse races, so he got dressed and went to the corner to wait for the bus. Soon it came -- it had the number five, and Nasruddin noticed when he boarded that there were three other passengers, the driver and himself -- five in all.

He arrived at the track and waited for the fifth race. He bet five hundred rupees on number five to win -- his horse came in fifth!

Enough for today.
The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 5
Chapter #5
Chapter title: Love knows nothing of duty
15 October 1979 am in Buddha Hall

LOVE YOURSELF AND WATCH --

TODAY, TOMORROW, ALWAYS.

FIRST ESTABLISH YOURSELF IN THE WAY,
THEN TEACH,
AND SO DEFEAT SORROW.

TO STRAIGHTEN THE CROOKED
YOU MUST FIRST DO A HARDER THING --
STRAIGHTEN YOURSELF.

YOU ARE YOUR ONLY MASTER.
WHO ELSE?
SUBDUE YOURSELF,
AND DISCOVER YOUR MASTER.

WILLFULLY YOU HAVE FED
YOUR OWN MISCHIEF.
SOON IT WILL CRUSH YOU
AS THE DIAMOND CRUSHES STONE.

BY YOUR OWN FOLLY
YOU WILL BE BROUGHT AS LOW
AS YOUR WORST ENEMY WISHES.
SO THE CREEPER CHOKES THE TREE.

HOW HARD IT IS TO SERVE YOURSELF,
HOW EASY TO LOSE YOURSELF
IN MISCHIEF AND FOLLY.

THE KATTHAKA REED DIES WHEN IT BEARS
FRUIT.

SO THE FOOL,
SCORNING THE TEACHINGS OF THE AWAKENED,
SPURNING THOSE WHO FOLLOW THE LAW,
PERISHES WHEN HIS FOLLY FLOWERS.

We begin with one of the most profound sutras of Gautama the Buddha:

LOVE YOURSELF....

Just the opposite has been taught to you by all the traditions of the world, all the civilizations, all the cultures, all the churches. They say: Love others, don't love yourself. And there is a certain cunning strategy behind their teaching. Love is the nourishment for the soul. Just as food is to the body, so love is to the soul. Without food the body is weak, without love the soul is weak. And no state, no church, no vested interest, has ever wanted people to have strong souls, because a person with spiritual energy is bound to be rebellious.
Love makes you rebellious, revolutionary. Love gives you wings to soar high. Love gives you insight into things, so that nobody can deceive you, exploit you, oppress you. And the priests and the politicians survive only on your blood -- they survive only on exploitation. They are parasites, all the priests and all the politicians.
To make you spiritually weak they have found a sure method, one hundred percent guaranteed, and that is to teach you not to love yourself -- because if a man cannot love himself he cannot love anybody else either. The teaching is very tricky. They say: Love others -- because

they know if you cannot love yourself you cannot love at all. But they go on saying:Love others, love humanity, love God, love nature, love your wife, your husband, your children, your parents, but don't love yourself -- because to love oneself is selfish according to them.

And they condemn self-love as they condemn nothing else -- and they have made their teaching look very logical. They say: If you love yourself you will become an egoist, if you love yourself you will become narcissistic. It is not true. A man who loves himself finds that there is no ego in him. It is by loving others without loving yourself, trying to love others, that the ego arises.

The missionaries, the social reformers, the social servants, have the greatest egos in the world -- naturally, because they think themselves to be superior human beings. They are not ordinary -- ordinary people love themselves -- they love others, they love great ideals, they love God. And all their love is false, because all their love is without any roots.

A man who loves himself takes the first step towards real love.

It is like throwing a pebble into a silent lake: the first circular ripples will arise around the pebble, very close to the pebble, naturally -- where else can they arise? And then they will go on spreading; they will reach the farthest shore. If you stop those ripples arising close to the pebble, there will be no other ripples at all. Then you cannot hope to create ripples reaching to the farthest shores; it is impossible.

And the priests and the politicians became aware of the phenomenon: stop people loving themselves and you have

destroyed their capacity to love. Now whatsoever they think is love will be only pseudo. It may be duty, but not love -- and duty is a four-letter dirty word. Parents are fulfilling their duties towards their children, and then in return children will fulfill their duties towards their parents. The wife is dutiful towards her husband and the husband is dutiful towards his wife. Where is love?

Love knows nothing of duty. Duty is a burden, a formality. Love is a joy, a sharing; love is informal. The lover never feels that he has done enough; the lover always feels that more was possible. The lover never feels, "I have obliged the other." On the contrary, he feels, "Because my love has been received, I am obliged. The other has obliged me by receiving my gift, by not rejecting it." The man of duty thinks, "I am higher, spiritual, extraordinary. Look how I serve people!"

These servants of the people are the most pseudo people in the world, and the most mischievous too. If we can get rid of the public servants, humanity will be unburdened, will feel very light, will be able to dance again, sing again. But for centuries your roots have been cut, poisoned. You have been made afraid of ever being in love with yourself, which is the first step of love and the first experience. A man who loves himself respects himself, and a man who loves himself and respects himself respects others too, because he knows, "Just as I am, so are others. Just as I enjoy love, respect, dignity, so do others." He becomes aware that we are not different; as far as the fundamentals are concerned, we are one. We are under the same law: AES DHAMMO SANANTANO.

Buddha says: We live under the same eternal law. In the details we may be a little bit different from each other -- which brings variety, which is beautiful -- but in the foundations we are part of one nature.

The man who loves himself enjoys the love so much, becomes so blissful, that the love starts overflowing, it starts reaching others. It HAS to reach! If you live love, you have to share it. You cannot go on loving yourself forever, because one thing will become absolutely clear to you: that if loving one person, yourself, is so tremendously ecstatic and beautiful, how much more ecstasy is waiting for you if you start sharing your love with many many people!

Slowly the ripples start reaching farther and farther. You love other people, then you start loving animals, birds, trees, rocks. You can fill the whole universe with your love. A single person is enough to fill the whole universe with love, just as a single pebble can fill the whole lake with ripples -- a small pebble.

Only a Buddha can say: LOVE YOURSELF.... No priest, no politician, can agree with it, because this is destroying their whole edifice, their whole structure of exploitation. If a man is not allowed to love himself, his spirit, his soul, becomes weaker and weaker every day. His body may grow but he has no inner growth, because he has no inner nourishment. He remains a body almost without a soul or with only a potentiality, a possibility, of a soul. The soul remains a seed, and it will remain a seed if you cannot find the right soil of love for it. And you will not find it if you follow the stupid idea: "Don't love yourself."

I also teach my sannyasins to love themselves first; it has nothing to do with ego. In fact, love is such a light that the darkness of the ego cannot exist in it at all. If you love others, if your love is focused on others, you will live in darkness.

Turn your light towards yourself first, become a light unto yourself first. Let the light dispel your inner darkness, your inner weakness. Let love make you a tremendous power, a spiritual force. And once your soul is powerful you know you are not going to die, you are immortal, you are eternal. Love gives you the first insight into eternity; love is the only experience that transcends time. That's why lovers are not afraid of death: love knows no death. A single moment of love is more than a whole eternity. But love has to begin from the very beginning. Love has to start with this first step: LOVE YOURSELF....

Don't condemn yourself. You have been condemned so much, and you have accepted all that condemnation. Now you go on doing harm to yourself. Nobody thinks himself worthy enough, nobody thinks himself a beautiful creation of God; nobody thinks that he is needed at all.

These are poisonous ideas, but you have been poisoned. You have been poisoned with your mother's milk -- and this has been your whole past. Humanity has lived under a dark dark cloud of self-condemnation. If you condemn yourself, how can you grow? How can you ever become mature? And if you condemn yourself, how can you worship existence? If you cannot worship existence in you, you will become incapable of worshipping existence in others; it will be impossible. You can become part of the

whole only if you have great respect for the God that resides within you.

You are a host, God is your guest. By loving yourself you will know this: that God has chosen you to be a vehicle. In choosing you to be a vehicle he has already respected you, loved you. In creating you he has shown his love for you. He has not made you accidentally; he has made you with a certain destiny, with a certain potential, with a certain glory that you have to attain. Yes, God has created man in his own image.

Man has to become a god. Unless man becomes a god there is going to be no fulfillment, no contentment. But how can you become a god? Your priests say that you are a sinner. Your priests say that you are doomed, that you are bound to go to hell. And they make you very much afraid of loving yourself.

This is their trick: to cut the very root of love. And they are very cunning people, the most cunning profession in the world is that of the priest; then he says: Love others. Now it is going to be plastic, synthetic, a pretension, a performance.

They say: Now love humanity, your mother country, your motherland, life, existence, God. Big words, but utterly meaningless. Have you ever come across humanity? You always come across human beings -- and you have condemned the first human being that you came across, that is you. You have not respected yourself, not loved yourself. Now your whole life will be wasted in condemning others. That's why people are such great fault-finders. They find fault with themselves -- how can they avoid finding the same faults in others? In fact, they will find them and they

will magnify them, they will make them as big as possible. That seems to be the only saving device; somehow, to save face, you have to do it. That's why there is so much criticism and such a lack of love.

I say this is one of the most profound sutras of Buddha, and only an awakened person can give you such an insight.

He says: LOVE YOURSELF.... This can become the foundation of a radical transformation. Don't be afraid of loving yourself. Love totally, and you will be surprised: the day you can get rid of all self-condemnation, self-disrespect, the day you can get rid of the idea of original sin, the day you can think of yourself as worthy and loved by God, will be a day of great blessing. From that day onwards you will start seeing people in their true light, and you will have compassion. And it will not be a cultivated compassion; it will be a natural, spontaneous flow.

And a person who loves himself can easily become meditative, because meditation means being with yourself. If you hate yourself -- as you do, as you have been told to do, and you have been following it religiously -- if you hate yourself, how can you be with yourself? And meditation is nothing but enjoying your beautiful aloneness, celebrating yourself; that's what meditation is all about.

Meditation is not a relationship; the other is not needed at all, one is enough unto oneself. One is bathed in one's own glory, bathed in one's own light. One is simply joyous because one is alive, because one is.

The greatest miracle in the world is that you are, that I am. To BE is the greatest miracle, and meditation opens the doors of this great miracle. But only a man who loves himself can meditate; otherwise you are always escaping

from yourself, avoiding yourself. Who wants to look at an ugly face and who wants to penetrate into an ugly being? Who wants to go deep into one's own mud, into one's own darkness? Who wants to enter into the hell that you think you are? You want to keep this whole thing covered up with beautiful flowers and you want always to escape from yourself.

Hence people are seeking company continuously. They can't be with themselves; they want to be with others. People are seeking any type of company; if they can avoid the company of themselves anything will do. They will sit in a movie house for three hours seeing something utterly stupid. They will read a detective novel for hours, wasting their time. They will read the same newspaper again and again just to keep themselves engaged. They will play cards and chess just to kill time -- as if they have too much time! We don't have too much time; we don't have time enough to grow, to be, to rejoice. But this is one of the basic problems created by a wrong upbringing: you avoid yourself.

People are sitting before their TV's glued to their chairs, for four, five, even six hours. The average American is watching TV five hours per day, and this disease is going to spread all over the world. And what are you seeing and what are you getting? Burning your eyes... because TV is the first thing in the world in which you have to look at the very source of the light. Ordinarily you never look at the light itself -- you look at lighted objects. You don't look at the sun; you look at the rose -- the sun is shining on the rose. You look at the green trees, you look at people's faces. You don't look at the electric bulb itself; you look at

the painting on the wall. You will not be able to see the painting if the light is not there, but you don't look directly at the source of light because that burns the very delicate mechanism of your eye.

Now in TV you are looking directly at the source of the light. A movie is far better than TV, because at least you are not looking directly at the source of light. TV is creating so many diseases, now they are suspecting that even cancer may be one of those diseases caused by TV. And a few more new diseases are bound to be discovered soon, because the generation that is looking at TV for five, six hours per day is growing up.

But this has always been so; even if the TV were not there, there are other things. The problem is the same: how to avoid oneself, because one feels so ugly. And who has made you so ugly? -- your so-called religious people, your popes, your SHANKARACHARYAS. They are responsible for distorting your faces and they have succeeded. They have made everybody ugly.

Each child is born beautiful, and then we start distorting his beauty, crippling him in many ways, paralyzing him in many ways, distorting his proportion, making him unbalanced. Sooner or later he becomes so disgusted with himself that he is ready to be with anybody. He may go to a prostitute just to avoid himself.

LOVE YOURSELF..., says Buddha. And this can transform the whole world. It can destroy the whole ugly past. It can herald a new age, it can be the beginning of a new humanity.

Hence my insistence on love -- but love begins with you yourself, then it can go on spreading. It goes on spreading of its own accord; you need not do anything to spread it. LOVE YOURSELF..., says Buddha. And then immediately he adds: AND WATCH.... That is meditation, that is Buddha's name for meditation. But the first requirement is to love yourself, and then watch. If you don't love yourself and start watching, you may feel like committing suicide. Many Buddhists feel like committing suicide because they don't pay attention to the first part of the sutra, they immediately jump to the second: watch yourself. In fact, I have never come across a single commentary on THE DHAMMAPADA, on these sutras of the Buddha, which has paid any attention to the first part: LOVE YOURSELF. Socrates says: Know thyself, Buddha says: Love thyself. And Buddha is far more true, because unless you love yourself you will never know yourself -- knowing comes only later on, love prepares the ground. Love is the possibility of knowing oneself, love is the right way to know oneself.

I was staying once with a Buddhist monk, Jagdish Kashyap; he is now dead. He was a good man. We were talking about THE DHAMMAPADA and we came across this sutra, and he started talking about watching, as if he had not read the first part at all. No traditional Buddhist ever pays any attention to the first part; he simply bypasses it.
I said to Bhikshu Jagdish Kashyap, "Wait! You are overlooking something very essential. Watching is the

second step and you are making it the first step, and it cannot be the first step."
Then he read the sutra again and he said with mystified eyes, "I have been reading THE DHAMMAPADA my whole life and I must have read this sutra millions of times -- it is my everyday morning prayer to go through THE DHAMMAPADA, I can repeat it simply from memory, but I have never thought that 'Love yourself' is the first part of meditation and watching is the second part."

And this is the case with millions of Buddhists all over the world, and this is the case with neo-Buddhists also -- because in the West Buddhism is now spreading.
The time for Buddha has come in the West. Now the West is ready to understand Buddha, and the same mistake is being made there too. Nobody thinks that "Love yourself" has to be the foundation of knowing yourself, of watching yourself... because unless you love yourself you cannot face yourself, you will avoid. Your watching may itself be a way of avoiding yourself.
First:

LOVE YOURSELF AND WATCH --
TODAY, TOMORROW, ALWAYS.

Create loving energy around yourself. Love your body, love your mind. Love your whole mechanism, your whole organism. By "love" is meant: accept it as it is, don't try to repress. We repress only when we hate something, we repress only when we are against something. Don't repress, because if you repress, how are you going to watch? And

we cannot look eye-to-eye at the enemy; we can look only in the eyes of our beloved. If you are not a lover of yourself you will not be able to look into your own eyes, into your own face, into your own reality.
Watching is meditation, Buddha's name for meditation. 'Watch' is Buddha's watchword. He says: Be aware, be alert, don't be unconscious. Don't behave in a sleepy way. Don't go on functioning like a machine, like a robot. That's how people are functioning.

Mike had just moved into his apartment and decided he should get acquainted with his across-the-hall neighbor. When the door was opened he was delightfully surprised to see a beautiful young blonde bulging out of a skimpy see-through negligee.
Mike looked her squarely in the eye and ad-libbed: "Hi! I am your new sugar across the hall -- can I borrow a cup of neighbor?"

People ARE living unconsciously: they are not aware of what they are saying, what they are doing -- they are not watchful. People go on guessing, not seeing; they don't have any insight, they can't have. Insight arises only through great watchfulness: then you can see even with closed eyes. Right now you can't see even with open eyes. You guess, you infer, you impose, you project.

Grace lay on the psychiatrist's couch.
"Close your eyes and relax," said the shrink, "and I will try an experiment."

He took a leather key case from his pocket, flipped it open and shook the keys. "What did that sound remind you of?" he asked.
"Sex," she whispered.
Then he closed his key case and touched it to the girl's upturned palm. Her body stiffened.
"And that?" asked the psychiatrist.
"Sex," Grace murmured nervously.
"Now open your eyes," instructed the doctor, "and tell me why what I did was sexually evocative to you."
Hesitantly, her eyelids flickered open. Grace saw the key case in the psychiatrist's hand and blushed scarlet.
"Well -- er -- to begin with," she stammered, "I thought that first sound was your zipper opening...."

Your mind is constantly projecting -- projecting itself. Your mind is constantly interfering with reality, giving it a color, shape and form which is not its own. Your mind never allows you to see that which is; it allows you to see only that which it WANTS to see.
Just twenty years ago, scientists used to think that our eyes, ears, nose and our other senses, AND the mind, were nothing but openings to reality, bridges to reality. But within twenty years -- the last twenty years -- the whole understanding has changed. Now they say our senses and the mind are not really openings to reality but guards against it. Only two percent of reality ever gets through these guards into you; ninety-eight percent of reality is kept outside. And the two percent that reaches you and your being is no longer the same; it has to pass through so many

barriers, it has to conform to so many mind things, that by the time it reaches you it is no longer itself.

Meditation means putting the mind aside so that it no longer interferes with reality and you can see things as they are. Why does the mind interfere at all? -- because the mind is created by society. It is society's agent within you; it is not in your service, remember! It is your mind but it is not in your service; it is in a conspiracy against you. It has been conditioned by society; society has implanted many things in it. It is YOUR mind, but it no longer functions as a servant to you; it functions as a servant to society.

If you are a Christian then it functions as an agent of the Christian church, if you are a Hindu then your mind is Hindu, if you are a Buddhist your mind is Buddhist. And reality is neither Christian nor Hindu nor Buddhist; reality is simply as it is. And you have to put these minds aside: the communist mind, the fascist mind, the Catholic mind, the Protestant mind....

There are three thousand religions on the earth -- big religions and small religions and very small sects and sects within sects -- three thousand in all. So there exist three thousand minds, types of mind -- and reality is one, and God is one, and truth is one!

Meditation means: put the mind aside and watch. The first step -- LOVE YOURSELF -- will help you tremendously. By loving yourself you will have destroyed much that society has implanted within you. You will have become freer from the society and its conditioning.

And the second step is: watch -- just watch. Buddha does not say what has to be watched -- everything! Walking, watch your walking. Eating, watch your eating. Taking a

shower, watch the water, the cold water falling on you, the touch of the water, the coldness, the shiver that goes through your spine -- watch everything, TODAY, TOMORROW, ALWAYS.

A moment finally comes when you can watch even your sleep. That is the ultimate in watching. The body goes to sleep and there is still a watcher awake, silently watching the body fast asleep. That is the ultimate in watching. Right now just the opposite is the case: your BODY is awake but you are asleep. Then YOU will be awake and your body will be asleep. The body needs rest but your consciousness needs no sleep. Your consciousness IS consciousness; it is alertness, that is its very nature.

The body tires because the body lives under the law of gravitation; it is gravitation that makes you tired. That's why running fast you will be tired soon, going upstairs you will be tired soon, because the gravitation pulls you downwards. In fact, to stand is tiring, to sit is tiring. When you lie down flat, horizontal, only then is there a little rest for the body, because now you are in tune with the law of gravitation. When you are standing, vertical, you are against the law; the blood is going towards the head, against the law, the heart has to pump hard.

So when you have a heart attack the doctors suggest a long rest period: just lie down horizontal -- Snoopy-style! That will keep you in tune with gravitation, otherwise gravitation is tiring. But consciousness does not function under the law of gravitation; hence it never gets tired. Gravitation has no power over consciousness; it is not a rock, it has no weight. It functions under a totally different law: the law of grace, or, as it is known in the East, the law

of levitation. Gravitation means pulling downwards, levitation means pulling upwards. The body is continuously being pulled downwards. That's why finally it will have to lie down in the grave; that will be the real rest for it -- dust unto dust. The body has returned back to its source, the turmoil has ceased, now there is no conflict. The atoms of your body will have real rest only in the grave.
The soul soars higher and higher. As you become more watchful you start having wings -- then the whole sky is yours. Man is a meeting of the earth and the sky, of body and soul.

FIRST ESTABLISH YOURSELF IN THE WAY,
THEN TEACH,
AND SO DEFEAT SORROW.

Each sutra is pregnant with great meaning. First Buddha says: LOVE YOURSELF AND WATCH.... And immediately he reminds his disciples: FIRST ESTABLISH YOURSELF IN THE WAY....
He says: Mind you, don't start teaching what I am telling you. The mind plays so many games, and the ultimate game is the game of becoming a teacher. It is difficult, arduous, to transform yourself; it is very easy to teach others. It is difficult to be a disciple, it is very easy to be a teacher -- because the disciple has to surrender and the teacher can keep all his ego. In fact, he can have more ego because so many people are surrendering to him. Unless he has become established in the way -- that means he has attained to love and to watchfulness -- unless he has come to that

clarity of consciousness which makes one a buddha, he should not teach.
FIRST ESTABLISH YOURSELF IN THE WAY, THEN TEACH, AND SO DEFEAT SORROW. Otherwise this happens: listening to a buddha, his beautiful teachings, you become so full of the teachings that a great desire arises to teach others. You forget completely that first you have to practice before you can preach. That's how it is happening all over the world.

Once I was taken to a Christian college, one of the biggest in India, where they create missionaries, ministers, priests, etcetera. I was a little puzzled: how can you create priests, ministers, missionaries in a college? That is impossible. The principal was very much interested in me; he invited me. He said, "Come and see!"
It was a six-year course, and I looked around the college, a big campus -- seven hundred people were getting ready to become priests, preachers, teachers -- I looked around, went into many classes, and what I saw was really hilarious. It was so ridiculous.
In one class the teacher was telling the students, "When you give this sermon, this is how you have to stand, and when you come to this point, this is how you have to raise your hand, these are the gestures you make, this is how you have to close you eyes -- as if you have gone into a deep deep meditation...." As if -- don't forget the "as if." They were learning like actors.
In Poona there is a film institute where they prepare actors; that I can understand -- acting can be taught. Even there I have never heard that film institutes have created great

actors, but one can understand that acting can be taught, even though great actors have not been created by film institutes. Even there it fails.

Actors are also born like poets, because acting is poetry, it is art; you have to have an inborn spirit. Not everybody can be an actor, because one has to get so much involved in the act, so deeply involved, that one forgets that one is separate. One has to lose one's identity in the acting, one has to become one's part; one has to forget everything about oneself. This is no ordinary feat. One can think that acting can be taught -- but how can you teach people to become masters?

Taking leave of the principal I told him one story:

"I have heard -- it must have happened in some college like yours -- the teacher was telling the students, 'When you talk about paradise, heaven, smile a heavenly smile, your eyes full of joy and light, and look upwards towards heaven. And for a moment become silent and just let people see how joyous, full of light and joy you are.'

"A student raised his hand and he said, 'That's right, but when we are talking about hell, what to do?'

"The teacher said, 'Then just as you are will do -- just stand as you are. You need not do anything else, just be yourself, that's all, and that will show them what hell is.'"

Teaching people to become masters is such an absurdity. Jesus did not learn in any college. It is fortunate that such colleges did not exist in those days; otherwise they might have destroyed Jesus. Buddha never went to any religious institution to learn. Religion has to be lived, because that is the only way to learn it.

Buddha says: AND SO DEFEAT SORROW.
Love, watch, become an enlightened person -- then teaching will be simple, then it will start flowing from you. You will be teaching by your walk, by your sitting, by your silence, by your talking. You will be continuously teaching in every possible way.
To live with a master is to be constantly showered by his teaching. Whatsoever he is doing, his way of doing has a totally different fragrance: it is IN the world but not OF the world.

TO STRAIGHTEN THE CROOKED
YOU MUST FIRST DO A HARDER THING --
STRAIGHTEN YOURSELF.

It is easy to look at people's faults. One loves to see people's faults, because that helps and strengthens your ego: "I am far superior." It is very difficult to see one's own faults; only a man who loves himself can see them.
Don't listen to others, what they say about you. See yourself, who you are, where you are, what your faults are. And the miracle is: seeing a fault through your own awareness dissolves it. You need not make any effort to dissolve it; the very awareness is enough. It starts melting like ice in the hot sun. But it is very difficult to see one's own faults, because you never look at yourself; you are constantly extroverted, looking at others.

The shapely new stenographer gave a piece of paper to the company auditor, saying, "Here is that report you wanted, Mr. Berry."

"My name is Mr. Perry!" he corrected. "You must have been talking to the head bookkeeper who can't pronounce his P's right. Did he say anything about me?"
"Only that when it comes to meaningless details, you are a regular brick!"

It is certainly difficult, because you have to turn your whole consciousness towards yourself. And we have become so extroverted, we have been MADE so extrovert, that introversion seems to be almost impossible. We are paralyzed; we can look only at others. Even if we want to look at ourselves we have to look in a mirror. Then the image in the mirror becomes the other.
One has to learn to look at oneself with closed eyes, to watch silently. And don't carry any a priori prejudices. Many people have told you, "These are your faults." Don't carry those ideas within you, otherwise you will find them -- because thought is very inventive. Put aside all that has been told about you. Remember only one thing: unless you know it on your own authority, it has no value, no meaning. So go without any prejudice -- for or against. Just go in total openness and see. And if you love and if you know how to watch, you will come across the most mysterious phenomenon: seeing a fault is dissolving it. That is Buddha's great secret: knowing that you are doing something wrong is enough; you can't do it anymore. Socrates says: Knowledge is virtue. He can be understood only in the light of Buddha. He was misunderstood very much in Greece, because Greece has produced great philosophers but not great buddhas. There are only four names from Greece which can be counted among the

buddhas: Socrates, Pythagoras, Heraclitus, Plotinus. And there are thousands of names of great philosophers. The Greek tragedy is that there are so many philosophers and so few buddhas.
Socrates was saying something immensely valuable, but it was out of context. There was no atmosphere in which it could be understood. He was speaking the truth: knowledge is virtue. If you KNOW something is wrong it disappears; if you know something is right you start behaving accordingly.
That's what Jesus means when he says: Truth liberates. It is enough to know the truth, and liberation happens of its own accord. It is not that first you have to know and then you have to practice. Knowing is enough: it transforms your conscience, and once conscience is transformed, your character follows suit like a shadow.

YOU ARE YOUR ONLY MASTER.
WHO ELSE?
SUBDUE YOURSELF,
AND DISCOVER YOUR MASTER.

Buddha says the outer master is nothing but a reflection of the inner. To be with an outer master is for a certain purpose -- so that the inner master starts getting synchronized with the outer. The outer is just a provocation, a challenge, but the real function of the master is to help you discover your own master.
The real master never makes dependents of his followers and disciples; he helps them to be independent, to be free. He never gives them a certain pattern of life; he only gives

them hints of how to attain light of their own. He helps them to be themselves; he does not impose his personality on his disciples.

This is the criterion by which to judge whether the master is real or pseudo. If somebody is trying to impose his personality on you, his ideas on you, his character on you, his morality on you, his principles on you, beware! Avoid such a man as quickly as possible. He is dangerous, he is destructive. He may look very loving to you, but his love is poisonous. He may be very sweet, but his sweetness is nothing but sugarcoated poison.

The real master is one who helps you to be yourself, who helps you to be free -- even free of himself.

The Zen people say: If you meet the Buddha on the way, kill him! And they worship Buddha, and still they say: If you meet the Buddha on the way, kill him! They are simply saying what Buddha himself has said. Buddha insisted his whole life: Don't follow -- understand. Imbibe my spirit, but don't follow my character. You will have your own character, which is going to be unique, because there has never been another individual who is like you and no other individual will ever be who can be like you. You are unique.

Don't become imitators. But that's what happens: people become parrots. They repeat what their masters say, they imitate how their masters live.

Reid was very fond of his male parrot. The parrot had become despondent and after all sorts of experiments to snap him out of it, Reid decided that his feathered friend needed some sex.

Reid found a beautiful female parrot in a pet shop and paid fifty dollars to have his bird serviced.
The female was delivered to Reid's house and placed in the male parrot's cage. Instantly the male let out a terrifying scream and began tearing the female's feathers out.
"What are you doing?" screeched the female.
"For fifty bucks, baby," shouted the male, "I want you nude!"

He may be simply imitating his master! Don't be a parrot, don't imitate. Be authentic to yourself, be true to yourself. YOU ARE YOUR ONLY MASTER. WHO ELSE? SUBDUE YOURSELF. When Buddha says, SUBDUE YOURSELF, he does not mean repress yourself. The translation is not exactly what he means. And there is a difficulty in translating him, because Buddha uses the word 'self' in the sense of ego. He is not a believer in the self. He says any sense of self is nothing but a subtle form of ego. And when he says, "Subdue yourself," he simply means: look deeply into the idea of your ego -- and it will be gone, it will disappear. It is a false phenomenon. The idea that "I am separate from existence," is a false idea, totally false. It needs only a right perception and it will be dissolved. And the moment ego disappears, you can discover your own master.
When the ego is not there, who is there? -- a pure consciousness, a pure awareness, with no center to it, with no content either. There are no thoughts and no center, just a pure consciousness -- a consciousness without any center and without any circumference. That consciousness is nirvana, enlightenment; you have come to your own

master. From then onward you need not ask anybody. Even if you want to ask you cannot: all questions have evaporated, all problems have evaporated.
This state of no-problem, no-question, is the state of bliss, of peace, of truth, of freedom.

WILLFULLY YOU HAVE FED
YOUR OWN MISCHIEF.
SOON IT WILL CRUSH YOU
AS THE DIAMOND CRUSHES STONE.

And remember: whatsoever you have been doing, nobody else is responsible for it. WILLFULLY YOU HAVE FED YOUR OWN MISCHIEF. It is your own will, it is out of your own choice, that you have been doing things which are finally destructive to you. In the beginning they may not appear so; in the end you will come to know that you have killed yourself, poisoned yourself, slowly slowly. And because it was such a slow process, you could not become aware. To become aware of slow processes, great watchfulness is needed.

I have heard about an experiment:
A scientist threw a frog into boiling water. Naturally the frog immediately jumped out of the water -- instantly, he didn't lose a single moment; it was a question of life and death. He really jumped high, as he had never jumped before.
Then the scientist put the frog into another bucket of water of the same temperature as the frog's body. The frog was very happy, was resting at the bottom. And then the

scientist started heating the water so slowly that it took twenty-four hours for the water to come to the boiling-point. The frog never jumped out of it. He could not become aware -- the process was so slow, the increase in heat was so slow that it needed a buddha's awareness. You can't expect it from a frog -- you can't expect it from people!

The frog died. The water was boiling, the frog was boiling, but he wouldn't jump out of it. Twenty-four hours was enough; he became accustomed to the slow increase. It was warming up so slowly that he could never discriminate that the water was being heated up.

That's what is happening in your life: you go on doing mischief, you go on doing wrong things, in the hope that by wrong means you can reach the right end. This is one of the great fallacies, a universal fallacy, that means and ends are not joined together, that wrong means can help you to reach a right end. The fallacy is so prevalent that nobody thinks of it as a fallacy.

It is impossible to reach the right end by wrong means. Wrong means are bound to lead you to wrong ends, but then it is too late. By the time you reach, it is too late -- the process cannot be reversed. The whole time has been wasted -- and you may have become accustomed meanwhile to wrong means. You may go on perpetuating those wrong means your whole life. Others may say that this is wrong and you may even agree with them intellectually, but intellectual agreement never brings any change. Unless you existentially feel, "Something is wrong

and I am poisoning myself," you will not be able to snap out of it.

And we are so clever at rationalizations that we go on doing mischief, thinking that it is not mischief, convincing ourselves that this is not mischief. And we are so skillful with words, with logic, with arguments, that we can prove to others, "This is not mischief, I am doing something great."

Joseph Stalin killed millions of people in Russia, and with a very clean conscience; he was never disturbed that he was killing millions of people. In fact, no other person has killed so many people. But he was working for the great idea of equality, communism, a classless society. Those ideas are great, but they are simply IDEAS and just for ideas, abstract ideas, abstractions, he was killing real people.

And the people who were killed were not rich people, they were poor people -- poor people who were very much attached to their small pieces of land; they did not want the land to become collective. They were killed. And the beauty is -- or the irony -- that Stalin was thinking he was killing them for their own sake, because "Unless the land belongs to the state, unless a dictatorship of the proletariat is ushered in, the poor people cannot be helped." And it was the poor people who were too attached to their small things!

In Russia there were not many rich people. It was almost like India; very few rich people, and ninety-eight percent poor people. But poor people have their own attachments -- more so because they don't have much -- a small piece of

land, an old cow, a bullock cart, a few hens. And they are very much afraid because this is all they have.

There is a story told:
A communist was asking a farmer, "Do you believe in communism or not?"
He said, "Yes, I believe in communism!"
The communist leader asked, "If you had two cars, would you give one to somebody who had none?"
He said, "Yes, absolutely yes!"
"And if you had two houses, would you be willing to give one house to somebody who had none?"
He said, "Absolutely!"
And then the communist leader asked, "If you had two cows, would you give one to the person who had none?"
He said, "No, absolutely no!"
The communist leader said, "But this seems to be absurd -- up to now you are saying, 'Yes, yes, yes!' Why suddenly no?"
He said, "I don't have two cars, I don't have two houses -- but I have two cows!"
When you don't have, what is the problem? You can give everything when you don't have it. You can give the moon, you can give the sun to anybody who wants them, but when it comes to real problems then it is difficult.
Poor people were killed, but Joseph Stalin slept well. He was never disturbed because "I am killing so many people." And the communist ideology was also a good rationalization for him, because communism believes there is no soul: consciousness is only a by-product of matter, an epiphenomenon. So when you kill a person you are not

killing anybody -- there is nobody inside; a man is just matter.
This was a great help for the murderer, Joseph Stalin. If there is nobody inside, you are not committing any crime, and when YOU die YOU will die: there is not going to be any afterlife and there is not going to be any Judgment Day. People can create philosophies, rationalizations, arguments, for doing all kinds of mischief. And people are ready to believe anything that helps them to continue as they are.

Holding a butterfly in his palm, Basil walked into a cocktail lounge.
"See this butterfly?" he shouted. "If somebody will tell me how much this butterfly weighs, I will bestow all my charm on him."
"Shut up, you bum," shouted a man at the bar. "It weighs a hundred pounds."
"Ah, sweetheart, you win!"

If you want to do something, then anything can be accepted if it helps your desire, your wishes.

Lars came home early one afternoon and found his wife lying naked on the bed breathing heavily.
"June, what is the matter?" he asked.
"I think I am having a heart attack," she gasped.
Quickly, Lars rushed downstairs to phone a doctor when his son came rushing in and exclaimed, "Daddy! There is a naked man in the front closet!"
Lars opened the closet door and found his best friend cowering there.

"For God's sake, Emil!" screamed Lars. "June is having a heart attack and here you are sneaking around scaring the children!"

When you want to believe in anything, you can invent all kinds of ideas. Watch how you defend your mischief, how you defend your wrongs, your faults.

BY YOUR OWN FOLLY
YOU WILL BE BROUGHT AS LOW
AS YOUR WORST ENEMY WISHES.
SO THE CREEPER CHOKES THE TREE.

When the creeper starts moving up a tree, the tree feels very good; it is very ego-fulfilling that the creeper needs the tree. Whenever you are needed you feel good. The tree knows, "I am strong and the creeper has to depend on me." The tree wants the creepers, more and more creepers, to go round and round the tree, to have its support. It may think it is doing a great public service, or it may think that it is a great lover and the creepers are beloveds. Creepers are female and the trees are all male chauvinists! But sooner or later the creepers are going to suffocate the tree, to choke the tree -- but then it will be too late.
Beware, be watchful of every step: TODAY, TOMORROW, ALWAYS. Don't lose a single moment in unawareness, because in unawareness you are bound to do some mischief -- and all mischief is going to rebound on you, sooner or later.

Morgan, aged eighty-six, was talking to his doctor. "About four weeks ago," he said, "I picked up an eighteen-year-old girl, took her to a motel, and we made love all night. Three weeks ago, I met a twenty-year-old, double-parked in front of her house, and we did it for three hours. Just last week, I grabbed a seventeen-year-old, took her to the park and we have been making love for six straight days."
"My goodness!" gasped the doctor. "Picking up all these strange girls, I hope you are using some precautions."
"Oh, sure," said the old man. "I give them a phony name and address."

Eighty-six years old, remember! And what precautions is he taking? He is giving a phony name and a phony address. If you have persisted in your follies your whole life, even dying you will die full of your follies. Hence, don't postpone till tomorrow -- one never knows whether tomorrow will come or not. Start being watchful from this very moment.

HOW HARD IT IS TO SERVE YOURSELF,
HOW EASY TO LOSE YOURSELF
IN MISCHIEF AND FOLLY.

HOW HARD IT IS TO SERVE YOURSELF.... What does Buddha mean by it? He means how hard it is to be aware -- because that is the only true service to yourself. Unless you love yourself immensely you will not go on that arduous journey of being watchful. You can be watchful only if you love yourself so tremendously that you don't want to

commit any folly, any mischief, that you don't want to bring any misery on yourself.
Be selfish -- because if you are selfish you will be altruistic. First get rooted into your own being, and then you will be of help to others. But you have been told that if you are selfish that is bad. "Be unselfish, be altruistic! Help others, serve others, and forget yourself!"

A mother was telling her small boy, "It is our duty to serve others. God has made you to serve others."
The boy thought for a moment and then said, "I can understand that -- that God has made me to serve others -- but why has God made others? To serve me? But this seems to be ridiculous! He makes me to serve others, makes others to serve me? Why can't I serve myself and they serve themselves? It will be more simple, less complicated."

You have been told to serve others -- and you serve them, but what service can you do for them? In the name of service you do all kinds of wrong things to people. You are bound to do wrong things because you are not alert enough....

THE KATTHAKA REED DIES WHEN IT BEARS FRUIT.

There is a certain reed, the KATTHAKA reed, in India, which dies when it bears fruit.

SO THE FOOL,

SCORNING THE TEACHINGS OF THE AWAKENED,
SPURNING THOSE WHO FOLLOW THE LAW,
PERISHES WHEN HIS FOLLY FLOWERS.

It takes a little time for the seed to grow and become a sprout, and the sprout to grow and become a tree. And the tree also takes time, the right season, to grow flowers, and then fruits come. It takes time. When you sow the seeds you don't see the flowers or the fruits.

Be watchful when you are sowing your seeds, because once sown you will have to suffer the consequences. Whatsoever you sow you will have to reap. It is just that the time gap creates illusions in people's minds. They think they can escape, that they can sow wrong seeds and reap the right crops. That is impossible -- that is against the eternal law.

And these are the people -- "the fools" Buddha calls them -- who scorn the teachings of the awakened, who laugh and ridicule the buddhas, because the buddhas seem to be enemies to them. They know that if buddhas are right then their whole life is wrong, and that is too much for them to accept. They know that if buddhas are right then they are utterly stupid, utterly idiotic, and that is too much for their egos to accept, too humiliating. Hence it is better to crucify a Jesus, poison a Socrates, stone a Buddha, than to listen to them.

SCORNING THE TEACHINGS OF THE AWAKENED, SPURNING THOSE WHO FOLLOW THE LAW.... And those who listen to the buddhas and follow the law, the ultimate law of life -- the law of love and the law of meditation -- those who follow, they are being laughed at. People ridicule them. People think that they are mad,

insane. People try in every possible way to pull them away from the right path, because their very presence hurts them. When a single person starts meditating, all the nonmeditators are against him. He is doing something which raises questions about their life-style, and if by meditation he becomes more peaceful and more blissful, then of course they become more and more suspicious of their life-style, more and more doubtful -- and nobody wants to live in doubt. And it is easier to kill the person, to destroy the person, than to destroy your doubts. It is easier to remove the buddha, to murder the buddha, than to become conscious.

Christians have never been able to explain why Jesus was crucified, and they have found all kinds of wrong interpretations. They think he was being crucified for the sins of humanity. Utterly stupid! If you commit a sin, YOU will suffer. Why Jesus Christ? Why this poor man? What has he done? Christians say Jesus was crucified because Adam and Eve committed the original sin. Why not crucify Adam and Eve? What has this poor carpenter's son done? He is utterly innocent, he has not committed any sin.

And then they say -- and they have to find new, and more, explanations, because no explanation satisfies -- he has chosen to be crucified himself, as a sacrifice to save humanity. But humanity is not saved yet, two thousand years have passed. So one thing is certain: his sacrifice was futile.

But all these explanations are wrong. The real thing is that a man who is enlightened is bound to be crucified, killed, murdered, by those who have invested deeply in unconsciousness.

Buddha reminds you that you can scorn the teachings of the awakened and spurn those who follow the law, but remember: THE KATTHAKA REED DIES WHEN IT BEARS FRUIT. SO THE FOOL... PERISHES WHEN HIS FOLLY FLOWERS. It will not be too long. Soon you will see the fruits of your own actions and then you will cry and weep, but then it will be too late.
Beware! And do two simple things -- in fact simple, but they look arduous, because we have been brought up with absolutely wrong conditionings. The first is: LOVE YOURSELF. And the second is: WATCH -- TODAY, TOMORROW, ALWAYS.
Enough for today.
The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 5
Chapter #6
Chapter title: Christ: the last Christian
16 October 1979 am in Buddha Hall

The first question:
Question 1
BELOVED MASTER,
I LOOK INTO YOUR EYES AND THERE IS NO ONE THERE. WHERE ARE YOU?

Anand Bhavo, the dewdrop has disappeared into the ocean... now forget the dewdrop and look at the ocean. If you go on searching for the dewdrop, you will miss the ocean; you will remain preoccupied with the dewdrop, you will not be able to see the vastness that has happened. The dewdrop disappearing into the ocean in a sense is no more,

but in another sense it is for the first time -- now it has become the ocean.

Looking into my eyes, don't try to search for a person; you will not find any person there. The person has disappeared; now there is a presence. Presence is infinite; a person has a definition -- a boundary, a certain name, form, a label. Presence is simply presence. The flower is no more, it has become the fragrance. You can hold the flower in your hand, but you cannot hold fragrance in your hand. To experience fragrance hands are not needed at all. That's how you should come close to me: you should be more sensitive towards the presence, synchronize with my presence.

And the only way to synchronize with my presence is for you also to dissolve your person and become a presence. Only two presences can meet and mingle and merge. If you are a person then there is no possibility of melting and merging with me. You remain a rock and I am a river -- how are you going to melt and merge with me?

You also become a presence -- that's my whole teaching, my whole message. Let the person die, let the flower disappear, because the person is nothing but a mask. The presence is your essence. The presence is what is meant by godliness. There is no God, only godliness; but because we are persons we imagine God also as a person.

Our attitude towards ourselves is bound to reflect in our other attitudes too; our attitude towards existence is bound to be part of our attitude towards ourselves.

You are still searching in my eyes for a person -- certainly there is none. Hence you can become afraid, scared, because you will see emptiness, nothingness.

There are three stages of being with me. One stage is that of a student who thinks about me as a person. He never looks into my eyes, he never tries to penetrate my being, he remains concerned with the superficial, the formal, my body, my words. He remains an outsider, curious, desirous to know more about me, longing for more and more knowledge, information. But there is an infinite distance between me and him. He will gather a little information about the mysteries of life and will leave. He will become more knowledgeable, more egoistic; in fact he will leave more sick than he had come, more burdened than he had come -- burdened by knowledge.

He will not have any taste of my wisdom. He can't understand wisdom; he understands only knowledge, he understands only that which can be expressed through words, theories, logic. He will be unable to see the beyond. He has to be pitied. He comes and goes empty-handed. He comes to the river and goes back home thirsty. He thinks he has gained much, but all that he has gathered are crumbs fallen from the table while he could have been my guest -- he remained a beggar.

The second stage is that of a disciple -- who comes a little bit closer, becomes aware of something mysterious, starts feeling, moves from the world of thinking to the world of feeling, slips from the head to the heart. He will be able to hear not only the words but the poetry hidden behind them. He will be able to hear not only the words, but the silence contained in those words.

Of course he will see the superficial too, but he will be able to understand that that's not all -- something more is there. He will not be exactly conscious of it, but an unconscious

intuitive feeling is bound to be there. If he lingers here a little longer then that feeling will become more solid, more substantial. First it will be only a shadow, a glimpse, a vision that happens once in a while and then is lost, as when clouds disappear and for a moment you see the sun, and again there are clouds and the sun is no more.

The student never sees the sun, he only sees the clouds. The disciple, once in a while, is touched by the beyond, moved by the beyond. The student lives in the head, the disciple lives in the heart. But just to remain a disciple is not enough either -- better than being a student, far better, far superior, but not enough. One step more -- and that is the step of being a devotee.

A devotee is one who neither thinks about the master, nor feels about the master, but starts synchronizing with his being; neither from the head nor from the heart, but from the very core of his existence. He starts pulsating, he starts living in the same rhythm, he breathes the way the master breathes. His heart dances with the beat of the master's heart. He loses himself, he is no longer an outsider.

The student is absolutely an outsider, the devotee absolutely an insider, and the disciple is in between. The disciple is in the middle, on the way. If he is courageous he will become a devotee, if he is a coward he will fall back and become a student. The student is at ease, because he is not aware at all of the real; the devotee is at ease because he is in tune with the real. The greatest difficulty is that of the disciple; he is in between, pulled apart in two directions. He will have to decide sooner or later either to be a student or to be a devotee; one cannot prolong the state

of being a disciple for long, because it is a state of anguish, it is a state of tension.

The student is relaxed because he is unconscious, the devotee is relaxed because he is conscious, but the disciple is vague -- vaguely conscious, vaguely unconscious, the disciple lives in the world of twilight, neither day nor night, neither here nor there, in a kind of limbo.

Anand Bhavo, you are in the state of being a disciple. Yes, glimpses have started showering on you -- now be courageous, move a little closer. Don't only look into my eyes, but be my eyes. Don't be a spectator, become a participant, get involved, committed. Don't look at me as somebody separate from you. The time has come: become inseparable, so attuned that you don't have any identity of your own. I don't have any identity of my own. And when you also lose your identity we are two zeros coming closer and closer and closer, and in a sudden flash of thunder the two zeros are no more two, they have become one.

That orgasmic experience of oneness is the first experience of godliness. The first experience of godliness happens in being utterly one with the master.

The master is only a device, remember, he is only a window to the divine. Come closer and closer to the window and the window disappears and the frame of the window disappears and the whole sky opens up with all its stars.

And then you will be able to see me in the eyes of my sannyasins and in the song of the birds and in the green and red and gold of the trees and in the stars and in the rivers -- you will be able to see me everywhere.

Ramakrishna was dying, one of the greatest modern masters. He was suffering from cancer of the throat. It had become impossible for him to eat anything, even to drink water was impossible. For the last three days of his life he could not eat or drink anything.

Vivekananda fell at his feet and said, "If you ask God, just for the asking -- the miracle is bound to happen. Why don't you ask him to take this cancer away? At least you can say, 'Allow me to eat and drink.'"

Ramakrishna said, "If you say so, I will do it. I never thought of it. Your idea is good. I will try."

He closed his eyes. Tears started flowing from his closed eyes, his face became full of light. All the anguish of the cancer, all the pain -- intolerable was the pain -- suddenly disappeared. He opened his eyes. Vivekananda was very happy, the other disciples were very happy, that something had happened, something miraculous. But they were not aware of what it was, they thought God had taken the cancer away, or at least had allowed Ramakrishna to eat and drink. But that was not the real miracle.

Ramakrishna opened his eyes, he was ecstatic; for a few moments he could not utter a single word. Then he said, "Vivekananda, you are a fool! You suggest such stupid things to me, and you know that I am a simple man, a villager, so I accept. I said to God, 'I can't eat, can't drink -- why can't you allow me at least to eat and drink?'

"And he said, 'Ramakrishna, have you gone crazy? Now you can eat from the mouths of your disciples, now you can drink from others' throats -- why do you cling to your own throat?' And that released me from my body. That's why I

cried in joy. Yes, that's true! -- all throats are mine. I can eat, I can drink from others' throats."

When he was dying, his wife Sharda asked him, "What am I to do when you die?" because death was so imminent and so certain. In India when the husband dies, the wife has to drop all her ornaments. In Bengal particularly, the wife has never to use any colored clothes, she can only use white, no ornaments. Sharda asked, "What am I to do? Should I wear white and no ornaments when you are gone?"

Ramakrishna said, "But I am not going anywhere! I will be here! You will be able to see me in the eyes of those who love me. You will be able to feel me in the wind, in the rain, in the sun. A bird on the wing and suddenly you will remember me, and I am there! A beautiful sunset and you will remember me and I am there! You are not going to become a widow; you are married to me forever and forever. This marriage is not of time, it is of eternity."

He is talking about the marriage between a devotee and a master. Sharda was a devotee, not only his wife -- that was secondary. And that's how it happened. Ramakrishna died, Sharda never even wept; she continued her way of life as if Ramakrishna was still alive.

Every night she would prepare the bed for Ramakrishna, as she used to prepare it before. She would put up the mosquito net and she would tell Ramakrishna, "Now you go to sleep, it is already too late." She would prepare the food that he used to like, she would bring the THALI, would sit by his side and tell Ramakrishna, "Look what I have prepared for you."

People used to think that she had gone mad. No, she was not mad. People were mad. She had understood the point.

When she was dying, her last words were... she told all the disciples that had started loving her as their master, in the absence of Ramakrishna -- they started crying and weeping -- she said, "Wait, what are you doing? Have you forgotten what Ramakrishna told me? That he was not going anywhere? I am not going anywhere either. Feel blissful, feel happy that I am also getting free of the body. Rejoice because now I can melt into Ramakrishna, into his universality."
This is the state of the devotee. But to be a disciple is no mean achievement. It is a necessary step towards being a devotee.

Anand Bhavo, one step more -- then you will not say, "I am looking into your eyes," you will say, "I am looking through your eyes." Then you become my eyes, then you are not standing outside, you stand inside me and you start looking at existence as I look at it. And then a great transformation, a great transcendence, a great revelation....

The second question:
Question 2
BELOVED MASTER,
YOU TALK SO OFTEN OF WONDER AND OF LOVE. HOW IS BEING IN A STATE OF AWE AND CHILDLIKE INNOCENCE RELATED TO BEING IN A STATE OF LOVE?

Anand Nur, wonder and awe are the greatest spiritual qualities. Wonder means you function from a state of not knowing. The knowledgeable person never feels wonder;

he is incapable of feeling wonder because he thinks he already knows. He knows all the stupid answers, he may know the whole ENCYCLOPAEDIA BRITANNICA; hence every question is already answered in his mind.
When a question is such that there is no answer to it, that it is unanswerable; not only today, but forever; not that it is unknown, but it is unknowable -- when one encounters the unknowable, unanswerable, one experiences wonder. One is in a state of awe, as if the heart stops beating, as if you don't breathe for a moment.
The experience of wonder is such that everything stops. The whole world stops; time stops, mind stops, the ego stops. For a moment you are again a child, wondering about the butterflies and the flowers and the trees and the pebbles on the shore, and the seashells -- wondering about each and everything, you are a child again.
And when you can wonder and can feel the immense beauty of existence which can only be felt in awe, when suddenly you are possessed by existence, overwhelmed, you can dance, you can celebrate that moment, you can say "Aha!" and you don't know anything else to say, no word, just an exclamation point...!
The knowledgeable person lives with a question mark and the man of awe and wonder lives with an exclamation mark. Everything is so tremendously deep and profound that it is impossible to know it. Knowledge is impossible. When this is experienced then your whole energy takes a jump, a quantum leap, from the mind to the heart, from knowing to feeling. When there is no possibility of knowing, your energy does not move in that direction anymore.

When you have realized that there is no possibility of knowing, that the mystery is going to remain a mystery, that it cannot be demystified, your energy starts moving in a new direction -- the direction of the heart. That's why I say love is related to wonder and awe, to childlike innocence. When you are not obsessed with knowledge you become loving. Knowledgeable people are not loving, heady people are not loving; even if they love, they only think that they love. Their love also comes via their heads. And passing through the head, love loses all its beauty, it becomes ugly. The heady people are calculating; arithmetic is their way.

Love is jumping into a dangerously alive existence with no calculation. The head says, "Think before you jump," and the heart says, "Jump before you think." Their ways are diametrically opposite.

The knowledgeable person becomes less and less loving. He may talk about love, he may write treatises about love, he may be conferred Ph.D.s, D.Litt.s for his theses on love, but he knows nothing of love. He has not experienced it! It is a subject that he has been studying, it is not an affair that he is living.

You ask me, Nur, "Beloved Master, you talk so often of wonder and of love...."

Yes, I always talk about wonder and love together, because they are two sides of the same coin. And you will have to learn to start from wonder because the society has already made you knowledgeable. The school, the college, the university -- the society has created a great mechanism to make you knowledgeable. And the more you are stuffed with knowledge, the less and less your love energy flows.

There are so many blocks created by knowledge, so many rocks in the path of love, and there exists no institution in the world where you are helped to be loving, where your love is nourished.

That's my idea of a real university, that's what I want to create here. Of course it will remain unrecognized by the government, it will be unrecognized by other universities. And I can understand -- if they recognize it, that will be a surprise to me. Their not recognizing it is really recognizing it -- recognizing that it is a totally different kind of institution, where people are not made knowledgeable but loving.

Humanity has lived with knowledge for centuries, and has lived in a very ugly way. D.H. Lawrence once proposed that if for one hundred years all the universities and colleges and schools were closed, humanity would be benefited immensely.

I agree with him totally. These two persons, Friedrich Nietzsche and D.H. Lawrence, are beautiful people. It was unfortunate that they were born in the West; hence they were not aware of Lao Tzu, of Chuang Tzu, of Buddha, of Bodhidharma, of Rinzai, of Basho, of Kabir, of Meera. It is unfortunate that they knew only the Jewish and the Christian tradition. And they were very much offended by the whole Jewish and Christian approach towards life. It is very superficial.

Friedrich Nietzsche used to sign himself, "Anti-Christ, Friedrich Nietzsche." First he would write "Anti-Christ." He was not really anti-Christ -- anti-Christian of course, because in one of his saner moments he said that the first

and the last Christian was crucified -- he was Jesus Christ, the first and the last.

But in his name something absolutely false is existing, and the day Christ was denied by the Jews they became false. Since that ugly day they have not lived truly. How can you live beautifully if you reject your own climaxes? What Moses had started, a beautiful phenomenon, came to a climax in Jesus Christ, and the Jews rejected Jesus Christ. That very day they rejected their own flowering, their own fragrance. Since that day they have not been living rightly. And the people who followed Jesus have created something absolutely against Jesus. If he comes back he will be nauseated, disgusted, seeing the Vatican and the pope and all that goes on in the name of Christ. My own feeling is... somebody was asking me, "Jesus promised to come back again -- will he come back?"

I told him, "If he comes back this time, you will not need to crucify him -- he will commit suicide himself! Just seeing the Christians will be enough -- enough to commit suicide. Hence my feeling is that he is not going to come. Once is enough, twice will be too much."

But these two men, Nietzsche and Lawrence, were immensely misunderstood in the West. They also provided reasons for being misunderstood; they were helpless, they were groping in the dark. Of course their direction was right; had they been in the East they would have become buddhas. They had the potential -- great potential, great insight. I agree with them on many points.

D.H. Lawrence was very much against your so-called education -- it is not education, it is mis-education. Real education can only be based on love, not on knowledge.

Real education cannot be utilitarian, real education cannot be of the marketplace. Not that real education will not give you knowledge; first, real education will prepare your heart, your love, and then whatever knowledge is needed to pass through life will be given to you, but that will be secondary. And it will never be overpowering; it will not be more valuable than love.

And whenever there is a possibility of any conflict between love and knowledge, real education will help you to be ready to drop your knowledge and move with your love; it will give you courage, it will give you adventure. It will give you space to live, accepting all risks, insecurities; it will help you to be ready to sacrifice yourself if love demands it. It will put love not only above knowledge but even above life, because life is meaningless without love. Love without life is still meaningful; even if your body dies it makes no difference to your love energy. It continues, it is eternal, it is not a time phenomenon.

To have a loving heart, you need a little less calculating head. To be capable of loving you need to be capable of wondering. That's why, Nur, I always say that awe and childlike innocence are deeply related with the energy called love. In fact they are different names for the same thing.

The third question:

Question 3

BELOVED MASTER,

YOU SPOKE TODAY ABOUT NOT DOING WRONG. WHAT IS RIGHT AND WHAT IS WRONG?

Prem Murti, hitherto right and wrong have been decided by all the religions as if they were fixed entities; do this, don't do that, this is sin, that is virtue. That is not a right approach to reality, because what is right today may be wrong tomorrow, what was wrong yesterday may be right today.
Life is a flux, it is constant movement, it is change. Except change, everything else changes. So I cannot give you fixed ideas about what is right and what is wrong. I cannot do that harm to you. All the old religions have done that; maybe it was needed because humanity was in a very immature state. But now man has come of age. Small children have to be told don't do this....

A small boy was asked by the teacher in school -- it was his first day -- "What is your name?"
He said, "Don't Johnny."
The teacher was puzzled, he said, "Don't Johnny? Never heard such a name before."
He said, "This is my name, because whatever I do my mother says, 'Don't Johnny!' This MUST be my name."

He had been told so many times, "Don't, Johnny! Don't, Johnny!" that he thinks it is his name.
But it can be forgiven as far as children are concerned because you cannot go into deep explanations; you cannot explain to them the reasons, the motives. You have to give them simple instructions, clear-cut; otherwise they will not be able to follow.
Humanity was also in such a state for centuries, but now all those commandments look very stupid. They were relevant

one day, they are no longer relevant; they are corpses we are carrying. They don't work anymore, they don't help anybody -- they hinder everybody.
So don't ask me, Prem Murti, what is right and what is wrong -- it depends. All I can say to you, all I would like you to be aware of is: any act done in awareness is right and any act done in unawareness is wrong. The act does not matter as far as I am concerned, my approach is concerned, my philosophy of life is concerned; the act does not matter, what matters is your consciousness. Are you acting unconsciously or consciously?
So the real question is something within you, not what you do but who you are. I change the whole emphasis from the objective to the subjective, from the outer to the inner. If you are doing it consciously you are right -- and that has always been the approach of the enlightened ones.

A great master, Nagarjuna, was asked by a great thief.... The thief was well known over the whole kingdom and he was so clever, so intelligent that he had never been caught. Everybody knew -- he had even stolen from the king's treasury, many times -- but they were unable to catch him. He was very elusive, a master artist.
He asked Nagarjuna, "Can you help me? Can I get rid of my stealing? Can I also become as silent and blissful as you are?" It happened in a certain context.
Nagarjuna was the greatest alchemist that the East has given birth to. He used to live naked, with just a begging bowl, a wooden begging bowl, but kings worshipped him, queens worshipped him. He came to the capital and the queen touched his feet and said, "I feel very much offended

by your wooden bowl. You are a master of masters; hundreds of kings and queens are your followers. I have prepared a golden bowl for you, studded with beautiful diamonds, emeralds. Please don't reject it -- it will wound me very much, it will hurt me very much. For three years great artists have been working on it, now it is ready."
She was afraid that Nagarjuna might say, "I cannot touch gold, I have renounced the world." But Nagarjuna did not say anything like that; he said, "Okay! You can keep my begging bowl, give me the golden one."
Even the queen was a little shocked. She was thinking that Nagarjuna would say, "I cannot accept it." She wanted him to accept it, but still, deep in her unconscious somewhere was the old Indian tradition that the awakened one has to live in poverty, in discomfort, as if discomfort and poverty have something spiritual in them. There is nothing spiritual in them.
Nagarjuna said okay. He didn't even look at the golden bowl. He went away. The thief saw Nagarjuna moving outside the capital, because he was staying in a ruined temple on the other bank of the river. The thief said, "Such a precious thing I have never seen -- so many diamonds, so many emeralds, so much gold. I have seen many beautiful things in my life but never such a thing, and how did this naked man get hold of it, and how is he going to protect it? Anybody will be able to take it away from him, so why not me?"
The thief followed Nagarjuna. Nagarjuna heard his footsteps, he knew somebody was coming behind him. Nagarjuna reached the temple. The temple was an absolute ruin, no roof, no doors; just a few walls were left. He went

inside a room without a roof, without a door, without windows.

The thief said, "How is he going to protect such a precious thing? It is only a question of hours." He sat outside the window, hiding behind a wall.

Nagarjuna threw the bowl outside the window. The thief was very much puzzled. The bowl fell just near his feet. He was puzzled: "What has this man done?" He could not believe his eyes, he was also shocked. He stood up -- even though he was a thief, he was a master thief and he had some dignity. He thanked Nagarjuna. He said, "Sir, I have to show my gratitude. But you are a rare man -- throwing out such a precious thing as if it is nothing. Can I come inside and touch your feet?"

Nagarjuna said, "Come in! In fact I have thrown the bowl out so that you could come in."

The thief could not understand what he was saying; he came in, he looked at Nagarjuna -- his silence, his peace, his bliss -- he was overwhelmed. He said, "I feel jealous of you. I have never come across a man like you. Compared to you, all others are subhuman beings. How integrated you are! How gone beyond the world! Is there any possibility for me too one day to attain such integration, such individuality, such compassion and such nonattachment to things?"

Nagarjuna said, "It is possible. It is everybody's potential."

But the thief said, "Wait! Let me tell you one thing. I have been many times to many saints and they all know me and they say, 'First you stop stealing, then anything else is possible. Without stopping stealing you cannot grow spiritually.' So please don't make that condition because

that I cannot do. It is impossible. I have tried and I have failed many times. It seems that is my nature -- I have to go on stealing, so don't mention that. Let me tell you first so you don't make it a condition."

Nagarjuna said, "That simply shows you have never seen a saint before. Those must have all been ex-thieves; otherwise why should they be worried about your stealing? Go on stealing and do everything as skillfully as possible. It is good to be a master of any art."

The thief was shocked even more: "What kind of man is this?" And he said, "Then what do you suggest? What is right, what is wrong?"

He said, "I don't say anything is right or anything is wrong. Do one thing: if you want to steal, steal -- but steal consciously. Go tonight, enter into the house very alert, open the doors, the locks, but very consciously. And then if you can steal, steal, but remain conscious. And report to me after seven days."

After seven days the thief came, bowed down, touched Nagarjuna's feet and said, "Now initiate me into sannyas."

Nagarjuna said, "Why? What about your stealing?"

He said, "You are a cunning fellow! I tried my best: if I am conscious, I cannot steal; if I steal I am unconscious. I can steal only when I am unconscious. When I am conscious the whole thing seems so stupid, so meaningless. What am I doing? For what? Tomorrow I may die. And why do I go on accumulating wealth? I have more than I need; even for generations it is enough. It looks so meaningless that I stop immediately. For seven days I have entered into houses and come out empty-handed. And to be conscious is so beautiful. I have tasted it for the first time, and it is just a

small taste -- now I can conceive how much you must be enjoying, how much you must be celebrating. Now I know that you are the real king -- naked, but you are the real king. Now I know that you have real gold and we are playing with false gold."
The thief became a disciple of Nagarjuna and attained to buddhahood.

I cannot say to you what is right or wrong. I can say only one thing to you: be conscious -- that is right. Don't be unconscious because that is wrong. And then whatsoever you do in consciousness is right.
But people are living in unconsciousness. And let me tell you: in unconsciousness you may think you are doing something right, but it can't be right. Out of unconsciousness, virtue cannot flower; it may appear virtuous but it can't be. Deep down it will still be something wrong. If you are unconscious and you give money to a poor man, watch: your ego is strengthened. This is sin. You are unconscious and you go on serving poor people, ill people; you open a hospital or a school -- but whatsoever you do gives you a very subtle ego, a pious ego. And a pious ego means pious poison -- but poison is poison! And pure pious poison is far more dangerous because it is unadulterated; it is pure poison. Hence ordinary people suffer from a very gross ego, it is adulterated.

I have heard:
Mulla Nasruddin wanted to commit suicide. He went to the druggist, purchased a big quantity of poison, drank it, and waited in his bed the whole night: "Now I am going to die,

now I am going to die." He opened his eyes again and looked at the clock: "Twelve... two... four... six.... And the children are getting ready, and the wife is preparing the breakfast -- and I have not died yet? Or have I died and become just a ghost? What is the matter?" He pinched himself and he felt the pain; he said, "No, I am still in my body."

He ran to the druggist; he said, "What kind of poison have you given me? Such a quantity should have killed at least ten people, and I drank it all and I'm still alive."

The druggist said, "What can I do -- in India you cannot find anything pure. Everything is adulterated, from milk to poison. What can I do?"

The ordinary ego is adulterated with many other things. But the religious ego, the ego of a saint, of a mahatma, of a sage, is unadulterated -- it is pure poison. Just a drop of it is enough.

So if you do good things unconsciously, they are going to create more ego in you. And only on the surface will they appear good; they will be harmful to the people to whom you are being good. Never be a do-gooder, avoid it. More mischief has been done by your public servants, missionaries, social reformers, than by anybody else.

The most fundamental thing is to be conscious and then act, and then whatsoever you do is going to be right. But people are unconscious.

"No, I will not go to the movies with you!" said Jackie. "I know your kind! As soon as we are seated, you will start

fiddling with my blouse buttons with one hand and tugging at my skirt with the other, getting ready to take liberties!"
"No, I would not," protested Patrick. "The people sitting behind us could see what I was up to."
"Yes, that's true," said Jackie, "so maybe we had better get there early and find seats in the last row."

What you want to do, and what you say, and what you really do, are totally different things. You may be doing something which you never wanted to do, you may not be doing something which you always wanted to do. You live a schizophrenic life, divided into the unconscious and the conscious. And out of this schizophrenia whatsoever happens is wrong.

Biff was the strong, silent type. He walked into the school cafeteria, ordered coffee, and winked at the waitress, a sensuous blue-eyed senior. She smiled.
"Want to go riding?" he asked.
"Sure, I will be ready in five minutes."
So they got in the car and he drove out on the highway. He took off down a road, then he drove down a lane. The lane came to a dead end and he stopped the car and cut the motor off.
Turning to her, he uttered his first speech, "Well, how about it?"
The waitress nodded.
"Okay," she said, "you have out-talked me!"

Just watch what you are doing, why you are doing it, what you are saying, why you are saying it. Just go on watching

your acts, your thoughts, and slowly slowly, a great consciousness arises in you. And then you can see all the games that you have been playing with others, and not only with others but with yourself too.

The patient, whose history card a doctor was filling out, said she was a spinster. So, when he came to the space for listing number of children, he automatically put down "none."
"But, Doctor," she said, "I have a thirteen-year-old daughter!"
"I thought you told me you were an old maid?"
"I am," she replied. "But I am not a stubborn old maid."

Whatsoever the conscious goes on pretending, the unconscious is the real source of your acts, and unless the unconscious disappears totally from your being, you can't do right. Only one tenth of your being is conscious, nine tenths are unconscious. The unconscious is almost a continent underneath a shallow layer of water you call consciousness. The unconscious motivates you. The conscious only finds rationalizations for doing what the unconscious wants to do. The conscious is at the service of the unconscious; this is a wrong situation. Let the unconscious be at the service of the conscious -- and you become a sannyasin.
That is what sannyas is all about: making consciousness more and more the center of your being, and transforming more and more chunks of unconsciousness into consciousness, bringing more and more light into the inner darkness.

A day comes when you are full of light; your whole being is conscious. Not even a corner of your being has any darkness about it -- all is known and experienced through and through. You are well acquainted with yourself, totally acquainted with yourself; then whatsoever you do, Prem Murti, is right. Right is the flowering of consciousness, and wrong the flowering of unconsciousness.

The fourth question:
Question 4
BELOVED MASTER,
WHY ARE THE INDIANS UNABLE TO SEE WHAT IS HAPPENING HERE?

Sandesh, they have a long past, a very long past, longer than any other country, longer than any other race. And the longer the past, the more prejudiced you are. The American is the least prejudiced in the world because he does not have a long past, only three hundred years old. It is nothing compared to the past of India.
Ten thousand years are absolutely certain historically, but India existed before that. In fact those who have gone deep into research, they say Indian culture has existed for at least ninety thousand years or more. Such a long past makes a country very old, utterly old. Its mind becomes settled and stagnant, it cannot accept anything new, it is very difficult. What is easy for the American is very difficult for the Indian. The Indian thinks he knows already; he is so well informed, at least about spirituality, that he does not feel that he has to come to me. He never comes here, but without coming here he goes on expressing his opinions

about me. It is natural in an ancient, old, dead culture. And it is a very repressive past that India has gone through; it does not allow freedom.

Freedom has never been the goal of Indian culture but obedience: obedience to the society, obedience to religion, obedience to the scriptures. And India has this idea that all that was beautiful has already happened, the golden age has already happened. Now man is not evolving, progressing -- but declining. This is something to be understood.

In the West the idea is that man is evolving higher and higher, evolution is happening, there is great progress happening. The golden age is in the future for the West. For the East, particularly for India, the golden age has already passed thousands of years ago; we are on a decline. We are not moving towards the peak, we are moving towards the valley. More and more darkness will surround us, more and more death; man will become more and more ugly.

Hence when I speak of a new humanity the West can understand me; the Indian mind simply feels at a loss -- what am I talking about? "A new humanity, a golden age in the future? It has already passed, it is history. We are not going to attain any golden age in the future; there is only death, man is doomed."

India has accepted this idea that the future is nothing but death, the future holds no hope. And I bring a new hope to you. I give you a new promise, I herald a new humanity. Hence it falls on deaf ears; it is so much against their conditioning, they cannot bridge the gap, and it is a very very repressive conditioning.

India has repressed all that is natural; it has gone into its unconscious, it is there boiling within. And I am talking about expressing, and India believes in repression. India believes in repression -- sex, love, body, all that is natural. And I believe in expression, creativity. I am speaking a non-Indian language.

Hence this strange phenomenon that I am living in India but I am not part of India at all. This small community of my sannyasins is a world community -- it is not an Indian ashram, it is a world commune. This small commune represents the whole of humanity, not of the past but of the future.

So I am bound to be misunderstood, misinterpreted, condemned, hindered in every possible way . There are twenty-five cases against me in the courts. The government goes on inventing any kind of case against me -- a man who never leaves his room.... What crimes can I commit? Twenty-five cases against a man who never leaves his room! Just think -- if I were moving outside, they would have invented at least one thousand cases against me.

They have to be forgiven for the simple reason that they cannot understand; in their own minds they are doing something very right. They think of me as a destructive force, and in a way they are right: I am here to destroy the whole conditioning whether it is Indian or German or Jewish, whether it is Christian or Mohammedan or Buddhist.

My work consists of destroying the conditioning and making man free of all conditioning. This happens every day -- not only to Indians, to others too.

A new sannyasin, Jacob, has written a letter to me. He is a Jew, so he is very much offended by the Jewish jokes. Now you cannot even understand humor, you become serious even about that, so what to say about serious matters? He has become a sannyasin but deep down the Jew is there, ready to be offended. I am going to offend EVERYBODY. I offend Germans as much as I can, I offend Jews, I offend Indians, I offend Mohammedans.... I will offend everybody, because that's my whole work -- to clean you of all the shit that you have been carrying all along. And it hurts because you think it is something very valuable that you are carrying.

Now the Indian mind is the most sexual in the world, the most sexual because the most repressed. The Indian goes on seeing things which are not there; he projects or he invents or he tries hard to find something.

The woman phoned down to the hotel manager. "I'm up here in room 5110," she shouted angrily, "and I want you to know there is a man walking around in the room across the way with not one stitch of clothes on and his shades are up."

"I will send the house detective up right away, madam," said the manager.

The detective entered the woman's room, peered across the way, and said, "You're right, madam, the man hasn't any clothes on, but his window sill covers him from the waist down no matter where he is in his room."

"Indeed?" yelped the lady. "Stand on the bed! Stand on the bed!"

The lady must have been Indian. But Indians are everywhere; they are not only in India, they are not confined to India, remember. Wherever repressive people are, there are Indians. They can be in England, they can be in Italy, they can be in Spain, they can be anywhere. The Indian mind represents the repressive mind.

The woman was calling collect.
"Would you repeat the name, please?" said the telephone operator.
"Yes, Alice. A-L-I-C-E. A as in 'adultery', L as in 'lust', I as in 'incest', C as in 'copulation', E as in 'erotic'...."

Now, what to say about this woman? She must be carrying a monster within herself.
And that is the situation in India: everybody has repressed so much, there is so much pus inside the soul, that when they hear or read about me they feel hurt. The hurt comes because they are carrying wounds within themselves. And it always hurts if you go to the surgeon: he has to squeeze the pus out of your wounds, only then can the wounds heal. And I am a surgeon, my compassion does not allow me to leave you as you are. Whatsoever the cost to me, whatsoever the risk to me, I am determined to expose your wounds to you -- because once you know your wounds, once your wounds are exposed, brought to the surface, they immediately start healing. And India carries great wounds: it is not only physically poor today, it is spiritually poor too. And when I say this it hurts the most, because that is the only shelter for the Indian ego that, "We are spiritual

people." And my own experience is that there is no spirituality left.
Yes, once in a while a buddha has happened in India -- and more buddhas have happened in India than anywhere else, it is true -- but the Indian masses, the crowd, is not spiritual, not at all. In fact because of this phenomenon of the buddhas, the Indian masses have become hypocrites. They have heard great teachings -- they cannot follow those teachings, because to follow them needs great effort. They cannot follow but they can pretend; that is cheap and easy. So Indians have become pseudo.

Larson took Charlotte for a drive way out in the country and parked the car in a desolate stretch.
"If you try to molest me," said Charlotte, "I will scream!"
"What good would that do?" asked Larson. "There isn't a soul around for miles."
"I know," said Charlotte, "but I want to satisfy my conscience before I start having a good time."

Indians also want to have a good time, but first they want to satisfy their conscience, so they are screaming at me. But slowly slowly, the sensitive, the intelligent Indians are coming closer to me. It takes time, but the most sensitive people are bound to become part of my buddhafield.
And Indians suffer from an inferiority complex because for one thousand years they have been slaves.

Rabindranath was never praised in India -- condemned, criticized as much as possible because he was a very life-affirmative person. He even had the courage to criticize

Buddha in his own way. He was against the whole negative tradition of India.

In one of his poems he says:

After twelve years Buddha comes back home -- he has become enlightened. He has thousands of followers; naturally he remembers his wife, his child, his old father, and he wants to help them. He wants to share what he has attained, so he comes back to his palace. Yashodhara, his wife, whom he had deserted twelve years before, is naturally very angry.

For twelve years she has been accumulating anger, but an Indian wife, even if she is angry, cannot show her anger to her husband, at least not in those days. But in a very vicarious way... she asks one question of Buddha. It is not an historical thing, it is a poem by Rabindranath Tagore, his own invention but it shows his attitude and approach.

Yashodhara asks Buddha, "Just one question I have to ask you: for twelve years I have waited to ask you this question. You have become enlightened: was it impossible to become enlightened living in the world, in the house with me? Just one question I want to ask you: was it absolutely necessary to escape from the world, was it not possible here in the house? Am I more powerful than your consciousness? Was the temptation more than the search for truth?"

And Rabindranath says Buddha bows down his head and stands silently, says nothing. But that says everything -- now Buddha knows it could have happened in the house too. There was no need to desert the wife and the child and the old father and the family and the people; there was no need. Now he knows! Now he knows that enlightenment

has nothing to do with the mountains and the forests; it can happen anywhere.
Rabindranath in another of his poems says, "I don't want NOT to be born again. I pray to God: Give me your world again and again and again! It is so beautiful, it is such a gift -- I am grateful!"
Now these are very anti-Indian attitudes, the whole hankering of India has been how to get rid of life; it is life-negative. Rabindranath is very life-affirmative; he loves life and loves it tremendously. He was condemned very much. But when he got the Nobel Prize, then the whole country was just full of praise. But he refused to go to the gatherings, to the meetings, which were arranged to praise him. He said, "This is not praise for me -- you are praising the Nobel Prize. You can take the certificate and the medal and garland it and do whatsoever you want -- I am not going to come!"
He got the Nobel Prize for the book GITANJALI -- offering of songs -- which he had written twenty years before. In India nobody praised it because it is very life-affirmative, but once the Nobel Prize was given for GITANJALI, GITANJALI was the greatest thing that had happened to India. Then the same people started praising it.

India suffers from a great inferiority complex; for one thousand years it has been a slave. So don't be worried, I know how things are going to happen.
First, more and more intelligent, sensitive, alert Western people are bound to come to me. Once they are here, more and more, in thousands, Indians are going to follow suit --

that is because of an historical accident one thousand years old.
Whatsoever is done by the West, India becomes suspicious that it must be right. First it reacts: "How can it be right?" because it goes against its tradition. Then, slowly slowly, it HAS to compromise. So I am not worried about it, not at all. Let the seekers come from every nook and corner of the earth and sooner or later you will find India also coming closer and closer to me.
But they are always late in everything. They have been missing the train for five thousand years -- that has become their habit. They can't be pioneers, they have forgotten how to be pioneers. They can only be followers.
And this work is pioneer work, something immensely new is being tried here. India WILL listen to it, at least I hope so. But you need not be worried about it.

The last question:
Question 5
BELOVED MASTER,
FOR SOME YEARS I HAVE BEEN PRACTICING STANDING ON MY HEAD. IT IS SOMETIMES GOOD TO SEE THE WORLD UPSIDE-DOWN! NOW, HOWEVER, A SWAMI IN THE CENTERING GROUP HAS TOLD ME THAT YOU HAVE SAID IT IS NOT GOOD TO STAND ON ONE'S HEAD. NOW I'M WONDERING WHY THIS MAY BE SO. WHAT IS WRONG WITH STANDING ON MY HEAD?
PLEASE EXPLAIN THIS TO ME.

Anand Vibhu, nothing is wrong with standing on your head -- you will just become more stupid AND more respectable, more unintelligent and more holy. There are advantages and there are disadvantages. If you want to be intelligent, then please stand on your feet. If God had intended that man should stand on his head, he would have made you in a different way.
I also tried it once in my childhood, but I looked so silly standing on my head -- and, moreover, I fell asleep and because of sleeping, I fell down and had my neck strained for at least two weeks -- so I decided that this couldn't be what God wants me to do.
But, Vibhu, if you have been trying it long enough, now it cannot do any more harm. And some time it may come in handy too.

I have heard:
Sigmund Freud died and was sent to hell -- where else? When he arrived the Devil greeted him -- obviously. "Welcome," said the Devil. "Here you will have one of three irrevocable choices about where you will spend eternity. Come on!"
The first room was filled with people who were carrying large stones up a steep hill only to see them fall back to the bottom -- to where they had to return and start the whole process again.
Freud was then shown the second room. It was filled with typewriters. Thousands of people were clattering away, each with a Devil's assistant behind him. Whenever a mistake was made, the assistant would slap the person on the back.

Freud was becoming extremely apprehensive.
The final room was filled with human feces, up to the necks of the thousands of people there. Each person had a cup of coffee which he or she was sipping, just above the dung.
"Well," said the Devil, "which room do you choose?"
Freud thought for a second, realizing that in the third room, at least there was no physical work, and he enjoyed coffee too.
"Okay, I will take the third room."
He waded into the feces and waited for someone to bring him his cup. Just as he heard the large door slam behind him he heard an assistant shout, "Alright, everybody! Coffee break is over! Everyone back standing on their heads!"

Enough for today.
The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 5
Chapter #7
Chapter title: You are the source
17 October 1979 am in Buddha Hall

MISCHIEF IS YOURS.
SORROW IS YOURS.
BUT VIRTUE ALSO IS YOURS.
AND PURITY.

YOU ARE THE SOURCE
OF ALL PURITY AND ALL IMPURITY.

NO ONE PURIFIES ANOTHER.

NEVER NEGLECT YOUR WORK
FOR ANOTHER'S,
HOWEVER GREAT HIS NEED.

YOUR WORK IS TO DISCOVER YOUR WORK
AND THEN WITH ALL YOUR HEART
TO GIVE YOURSELF TO IT.

Man can either be in hell or in heaven -- it is his choice. Hell and heaven are not geographical; they are not places outside you but spaces within you -- and both alternatives exist in each individual. Man is like a ladder: you can go up, you can go down; it is the same ladder. Just change the direction and you start moving upwards. It is the same energy that becomes hell and that becomes heaven. Just a deep understanding is needed of your energies, of your possibilities, of your potential.

Heaven or hell are not when you die: they are possibilities right now. In this very moment one can be in hell or heaven -- and you may be in hell and your neighbor may be in heaven. And one moment you will be in hell and another moment you will be in heaven. Just observe closely: the climate goes on changing around you. Sometimes it is very cloudy and everything looks dark and dismal, and sometimes it is so sunny, and so beautiful, so joyous.

But the mistake, the greatest mistake a man can commit, is to think that the climate is created by outside forces. It is not created by outside forces; it is your inner decision, your inner will. It is your choice. It happens on the outside, but it

arises from the deepest core of your being. It needs very alert watchfulness to see this point. Once you have seen it you need not live in hell at all. Why should you choose hell once this is understood -- that it is your choice?

But for centuries man has been trying to find excuses, rationalizations, pseudo causes, outside himself, for a certain reason: it feels very bad that you are the creator of all your miseries. First the miseries are there, and second, the very idea that "I am the creator of all these miseries" hurts even more than the miseries themselves. To avoid this hurt, to avoid this wound, to avoid this great responsibility, man has been finding a thousand and one ways.

In the past we created the idea of God: that HE determines, that everything is preordained, predetermined, that a child is born absolutely determined. God determines what he is going to be; he is not free, he has no freedom. If there is no freedom, there can be no responsibility; if there is freedom, then there is responsibility. They come together, they are inseparable. Man was ready to gain his freedom, but he was very much afraid to accept the responsibility. Even at the cost of losing freedom he wanted to be absolutely without responsibility. At least he could say, "It is not my will that I am suffering. What can I do? I am helpless! God has preordained it." Or fate, KISMET....

And the religions which don't believe in God and don't believe in fate either, they had to find some other explanations, but it is the same thing. They have found the theory of reincarnation, the theory of karma: your past lives determine your present life. Again you are helpless! Now nothing can be done about your past lives; there is no possibility of changing them. You cannot undo them, so

one has to simply accept whatsoever is the case. If you are miserable, you are miserable -- accept it.

It is because of this acceptance that the East has remained poor, starved, ill. If you accept that whatsoever is happening is happening because of your past karmas, then it has to happen; there is no way to avoid it. Even utterly stupid ideas arose out of it, and they look very logical if you accept the basic premise.

In India there is a Jaina sect, Terapanth; Acharya Tulsi is its head. This Jaina sect says that if somebody falls in a well, don't help him to get out. You will be surprised -- how can one say this? You are standing there, the man is crying, shouting for help, but this sect says, "Don't help him, because he is suffering for his past karma. Don't interfere. If you interfere and pull him out he will have to fall in again, so you will not have really been a help. On the contrary, you will have delayed the process which would have been completed by now. And by interfering in his life and his karma YOU are creating a certain karma for yourself, because to interfere in somebody's life, to disturb his process, his growth, is a sin."

Hence the followers of this sect don't help anybody in any way. To help is a sin, to serve is a sin. It looks very absurd, but if you accept their premise then it is not absurd. The premise accepted, it appears the logical conclusion of it.

Absurd philosophies have arisen, just for one single reason: how to avoid responsibility? Throw it on somebody else's shoulders! It may be God, fate, the theory of karma, or, if you are not religious, if you are a materialistic person, then you can throw it on history, as Hegel did -- history is responsible. It is again the same game -- just the name

changes, the label changes. It is no longer the past, now it is called history -- not individual karma but the karma of society is decisive; the individual is helpless. In fact, according to Hegel the individual is a fiction; only the society exists and history is the determining factor.

And millions and millions of years have passed! How can you fight with it? What can you do about it? You are utterly helpless! All that can be done is: accept it, be part of it. Whatsoever is the case -- misery or bliss -- you are not responsible. How can you be responsible for the whole history -- from the very beginning, if there was any beginning?

Karl Marx says it is not history but the economic structure of the society. Sigmund Freud says it is not the economic structure of the society but the unconscious structure of your psyche -- unconscious! You cannot do anything about it, it is beyond you. You are conscious and it is unconscious; there is no bridge. You are utterly unaware of it. The enemy goes on functioning from such dark corners inside you and there is no possibility of bringing any light to it. At the most we can analyze, understand the situation, and be adjusted to it.

All these philosophies, psychologies, sociologies, are inventions of man to avoid one single phenomenon: the phenomenon of responsibility.

A real religious person is born the moment you accept your responsibility for yourself, the moment you say, "Whatsoever I am is my choice -- not of the past but of the present. It is my choice of this moment, and if I want to change it I am absolutely free to change it. Nobody can hinder me -- no social force, no state, no history, no

economics, no unconscious, can hinder me. If I am determined to change it, I can change it."

Yes, in the beginning the responsibility looks like a heavy, heavy weight; it feels good to throw the responsibility on somebody else. At least you can enjoy this much, that "I am not responsible." You can enjoy that you are just a victim, helpless. In the beginning to accept responsibility for yourself totally, unconditionally, IS heavy. It creates despair, anguish, anxiety, but only in the beginning. Once it is accepted, slowly slowly you become aware of the great potential and the great freedom that it brings.

If I am responsible for my misery, that also means, automatically, that I am responsible for my bliss. If I am responsible for my misery, I can stop it immediately. Let me repeat the word 'immediately' -- not even for a single moment does one have to wait. It is not a question of changing your past lives, it is not a question of changing the whole society, it is not a question of bringing the dictatorship of the proletariat, and it is not a question of going into years and years of psychoanalysis. It is a simple question of accepting the responsibility that "Whosoever I am, I have created my climate, my being."

Man is born only as a potential. He can become a thorn for himself and for others, he can also become a flower for himself and for others. And remember, whatsoever you are for others you are for yourself too, and whatsoever you are for yourself you are for others too. If you are a flower to yourself, your fragrance is bound to be released; it will reach others. If you are a thorn to yourself, how can you be a flower to others?

This is one of the greatest contributions of Gautama the Buddha to the world: he makes the individual absolutely, categorically, irrevocably responsible. Very courageous people accepted it, only rare individuals accepted it. Cowards always want to escape from responsibility.

The people who followed Buddha became disciples and devotees. The people for whom Buddha became the master were a rare kind of people: really courageous, ready to risk all, ready to accept the anguish of being reborn... because this is a rebirth! Dropping all these philosophies which make somebody else, XYZ, responsible for your being -- it is a rebirth. Accepting the whole responsibility of your being, whatsoever you are -- good, bad, sinner, saint -- means you have taken a great quantum leap. But soon the responsibility turns into freedom. Such a great liberation happens through it!

The same type of people are gathering around me again. I am not here for cowards. Cowards have many other places in the world, many people to help them -- to help them to remain cowards forever. I exist here only for the courageous, the adventurous: people who are ready to risk and risk all, people who are ready to get involved, committed, people who are ready to stake everything for liberation, for transformation, for attaining the ultimate truth.

The sutras of today are very pregnant, small statements. That's exactly what a sutra means. A sutra means an essential statement, with no elaboration, with no explanation, with no decoration -- just the bare, naked core of it. It was needed in those days, because people had to remember these sutras. Hence they had to be very

condensed, they had to be telegraphic, so people could remember for centuries, because they would go from one generation to another just as part of people's memories. Books were not in existence, printing had not come into existence. People had to remember; hence the device of the sutra. A sutra means a maxim, just the very essential core, but if you remember it you can always decode it.
And that's what I am doing here: decoding these sutras for you.

A man had three daughters. One day a friend came to see him and during the conversation asked what the daughters' names were.
The father said that the eldest was called S.C., the middle one, M.C., and the youngest, D.C.
"What does all that mean?" the friend asked.
The father replied, "The eldest, S.C., was born out of 'sheer curiosity'; the middle one, M.C., by 'mutual consent'; and the youngest, D.C., by 'damn carelessness'."

Just watch your life -- more or less it is damn carelessness, it is D.C.! Whatsoever you are, you are accidentally, like driftwood. You have not chosen to be whatsoever you are; you have not taken a conscious decision about it, you have not willed it so. You have just been at the mercy of the winds. Just look at your whole life, how things have been happening to you. Just accidents!
A woman meets you and you fall in love, because she has a beautiful nose. Now the nose is determining your life! Or she has blond hair or a beautiful shape. Just watch what is determining your behavior, your future! Now, the color of

her hair or the way the woman walks or the way she sings or the color of her eyes -- are these the things that can determine your love? -- because your love is going to change your life! But that's how things happen.
Since the invention of the car things have changed, because the area of accidents has become very big. Otherwise people used to fall in love in their own neighborhood; now the range is bigger. Now young people have their own cars: within hours they can reach hundreds of miles away. In the past, people used to fall in love within the neighborhood -- somebody living next door or somebody living in the same house. The car has changed the whole pattern of people's lives, their love affairs!
Now, what kind of humanity is this which is determined by such superficial things? But that's how it is, and it is better to see it as it is.
People have become more intelligent -- if not intelligent, at least more intellectual, more educated, more cultured, more sophisticated -- but their basic style of life is still the same: unconscious, accidental. People don't live out of their essence, they simply depend on accidental circumstances. And not only the little people, but the people you think are geniuses, even they behave in very stupid ways.

The twentieth-century physicist, Niels Bohr, made great contributions to the world when he detailed the structure and function of atoms, and laid the groundwork for the theory of quantum mechanics. He was a scientist's scientist. One day an American colleague visited Bohr in his Danish homeland. The American found a good luck charm above the desk -- an up-ended horseshoe hanging on the wall.

"Surely you don't believe the horseshoe will bring you good luck, do you, Professor Bohr?" asked the astonished visitor. "After all, we are level-headed scientists!"
"I believe no such thing, my good friend, not at all. I am scarcely likely to believe in such foolish nonsense," the Scandinavian reassured him. "However, I am told that a horseshoe will bring you good luck whether you believe in it or not."

Now, a man like Niels Bohr, one of the geniuses of this century, still behaving in the same way, the same unconscious way as the common people have always been behaving! It seems education makes no difference, science makes no difference, civilization makes no difference. Man goes on living and repeating the old patterns.
And the greatest and the oldest pattern is: not to accept responsibility for yourself. And avoiding responsibility is avoiding the birth of your soul. And you can always find excuses to avoid that birth... because every birth is going to be painful, and the greater the birth, the greater the pain. People shirk their responsibility, they shrink away from their responsibility. Whenever a point comes to respond spontaneously, they are at a loss. They search in their memories, in their past, how to react. And remember: reaction is not response. Reaction means you are repeating an old pattern. You are not aware of the present situation, you are not responding to it. You are responding to some other situation which is no longer there.
Life goes on changing and your patterns become fixed, because mind is a machine. The mind cannot change by itself. Unless you become very conscious and start using

your mind consciously, the mind goes on giving you ready-made formulas. They may have been effective in some other situations, but they are not relevant forever -- because life is never the same even for two consecutive moments. A responsible person is one who is alert, watchful, and never acts out of his past but acts out of his present awareness. Otherwise you will always be out-of-date. That's how people are -- always out-of-date. They go on giving answers to questions which are not being asked. They go on doing things which are a sheer wastage of time and energy -- because the situation does not demand them. Now man has become scientifically very capable, but psychologically he is not mature enough. And the technology and all its powers in the hands of immature people is very dangerous. Hiroshima and Nagasaki are going to be repeated again and again. It is like giving a small child a naked sword to play with: either he is going to harm himself or somebody else. It is bound to happen; the harm is almost inevitable.

And that's what has happened to the modern world. Scientifically we have a great technology which can change the whole face of the earth and finally the whole face of the universe, but psychologically we are immature. Psychologically we are centuries behind -- there is a gap of centuries between our science and our minds!

Ponder over Niels Bohr's reaction again. He says, "I have been told that it is going to be a blessing whether you believe in it or not." He is living a superstitious life!

Yes, it is okay for a primitive man, but for Niels Bohr, one of the most sophisticated minds, who has contributed greatly to modern knowledge, who is in the same category

as Albert Einstein, Eddington, Edison, and others... a man of great intellect, functioning like a small child, a primitive man, functioning very childishly!
And let me remind you again: just as there is a great difference between reaction and response, so there is a great difference between being childlike and being childish. Don't be childish. Yes, childlike innocence is beautiful, but childish superstitiousness is ugly.
And remember what kind of excuses you go on finding for your life, because if you go on finding excuses for the way your life is, it is going to remain the way it is. It will never be changed, because nobody else can do it for you.

The streetwalker tried to peddle her wares to a man on Park Avenue.
"I won't for three reasons," he replied. "I promised my wife, and I also promised my mother, that I would not fool around with strange women."
"What's your third excuse?" asked the prostitute.
"I just had a piece!" he said.

Just look at your irrational reasons -- stupid, if you are a little more observant; otherwise they look alright.
Buddha says:

MISCHIEF IS YOURS.

The first thing to note: Buddha does not call it sin, he calls it mischief -- mistake, error, but not sin. In fact, in Buddha's vision there is nothing like sin. To call something a sin is to condemn it, and not only is it condemning the act, it is

condemning the person too. The word 'sin' is very loaded. Buddha uses the word 'mischief' -- the change is great. If you call it a sin, then you have to be punished for it. Then you are a sinner, then you will have to suffer sometime in the future.

The future was created by the priests, for a certain reason. In life we see many sinners flourishing: they are famous, they are powerful, they are rich. In fact, to be a president or to be a prime minister of a country, you have to be very immoral. You have to commit all kinds of immoral things, only then can you reach the highest post. It is not easy to reach there: you have to compete, by wrong means or right means.

In politics there is nothing wrong or right: everything is right which gives you results. Use all kinds of ladders to reach the highest post, and once you have reached, nobody is going to remember what you have done on the way. Once you are in power, people simply forget all about what you have done to them. Not only that -- you can rewrite the whole history! That's what Joseph Stalin did, Adolf Hitler did.

Joseph Stalin wrote the whole history of the Russian Revolution again: all the names that he was against were dropped. Trotsky, who was a far more prominent figure in the revolution than Stalin, was totally dropped; he was even removed from pictures. Stalin was in power for a long period: he changed the whole history, he made a new history -- invented!

Once he died, the same was done to him by Khrushchev -- he changed the history again. Even Stalin's body which was

preserved like Lenin's was removed from its place, because his body was lying next to Lenin's. HE had only changed pictures and words! Khrushchev removed Stalin's body. People spat on his dead body. It was removed to a far corner, a place where nobody would ever go.

I have heard that somebody had suggested, "Why don't you send it to Israel?"

Khrushchev said, "I am afraid, because it is said that once a man was resurrected there after three days. I can send his body anywhere, but not to Israel. Who knows -- if he comes back...? Just the idea!" ... Because for thirty years Khrushchev was just wagging his tail before Stalin. For thirty years he was just like a dog, not more than that! After Stalin's death, when he became powerful, he took revenge.

Somebody asked him at a conference, "If you are so much against Stalin, why didn't you assert it when he was alive? For thirty years you were with him -- there is not even a single case on record that you argued with him or said anything against him or even discussed anything. You were always a yes-sayer. How do you explain it, your thirty years' association with Stalin? If he was wrong, then you were wrong!" Somebody shouted this from the back of the conference hall.

Khrushchev stood silent for a single moment, then he said, "Just please stand up and say who you are!" Nobody stood up, and he said, "Now do you see? This is my answer! You cannot stand and say your name before me; that was the same situation with me in those days. I can kill you -- he could have killed me!"

And the same was done to Khrushchev.

That's how it has been going on. In power politics you don't think of right or wrong means. In politics there is nothing right, nothing wrong: whatsoever succeeds is right and whatsoever fails is wrong. And the situation is the same in the marketplace. If you succeed in accumulating money, you are right.

The priests became aware of the problem. The problem was: sinners succeed in life -- then how to explain it? If sinners are to be punished, what kind of punishment is this? In fact, the saints seem to be punished and the sinners seem to be rewarded. How to explain this? The future life was the only way to escape the problem.

The priests invented this idea that hell and heaven are after life. In this life the sinner can succeed, but in the next he will have to suffer, after death he will have to suffer. And the saint may suffer in this life, but after death he will be rewarded: he will be taken to paradise. Now, nobody knows anything about the next life, whether it is or is not. Nobody has ever come back from there; nobody has ever reported what it is like, what is happening there. But it was a good device; it helped priests to console people.

Buddha never uses the word 'sin', because it is condemnatory. He has such a deep respect for humanity! No other master has ever shown such respect for humanity as Buddha. And it is difficult to show respect for humanity, really difficult, because humanity behaves in such stupid ways. Only an enlightened master can still show respect for humanity, in spite of all that humanity goes on doing.

Buddha uses the word 'mischief'; it does not condemn you. It simply says that you have chosen a wrong way. And he says: MISCHIEF IS YOURS. It is not predetermined by

God, by fate, or by anybody else -- it is YOURS. And the sorrow that follows mischief -- or, more accurately, the sorrow that simultaneously happens with mischief, is also yours. There is no god who punishes you, there is no need, because if there is a god -- again an invention of the priests -- if there is a god as a judge... judges can be bribed.

And the priests have been telling people, "Pray to God, praise the Lord, and you will be forgiven." What is praise? It is a kind of bribery!

Hence, in a country like India where people have been praising God for centuries, bribery is very simple. Nobody thinks it is wrong -- it is something religious! If even God can be bribed, what about the poor policeman! If even God can be bribed and persuaded to do things in your favor, what about the poor magistrate? And if God is not wrong, why should the magistrate be thought wrong?

In the East, bribery is not thought wrong; it is a Western concept that bribery is wrong. In the East it is just a simple thing, it has always been done. The priests are nothing but agents between you and God: they take bribes from you, and on your behalf they plead with God. Of course, in things like bribery, agents were needed because to give a bribe directly you will feel afraid. The person may not feel right; he may be offended, his sense of dignity may be offended. He may feel hurt, thinking, "What do you think of me? That you can purchase me?" Or, even if he wants to take it, he may say no, he may deny it. He may say, "I never take any bribes." His sense of pious ego may take possession of his being. An agent is needed, a go-between who knows both the parties so you need not encounter the person directly. Everywhere agents are needed.

Priests have been agents between man and God. "You commit sin? Don't be worried," priests say. "Just give the right amount of bribes and you will be forgiven. And God is very compassionate." If you don't bribe, then of course you have to suffer.
Buddha removed God completely. He removed God because he wanted to remove the priest. Unless God is removed the priest cannot be removed; he is just a shadow of God, a by-product. God is his invention! Hence the whole priesthood of India was against Buddha, because he was destroying their very trade, he was revealing their very trade secret, he was cutting their very roots.
And India has the longest, the oldest priesthood in the world: the brahmins. For ten thousand years they have been exploiting people. They have lived on exploitation, they have not done anything else. They have not toiled, they have not worked. Their whole function has been just to act as a go-between.
Buddha was really cutting the very roots of the priesthood, the whole establishment that goes with it, and the exploitation in the name of religion. He says:

MISCHIEF IS YOURS.
SORROW IS YOURS.

There is no God to give you punishment, each act of mischief intrinsically brings sorrow to you. If you put your hand in the fire you will be burned. Not that a judge is needed to declare that now you have to be punished by the decree of God or the decree of the judge; you have to be punished because you have put your hand in the fire. There

is no need for anybody to declare any judgment. The moment you put your hand in the fire you are burned -- immediately, instantly! In Buddha's vision, the action brings its own result; no judge is needed.

"How did this accident happen?" asked the doctor.
"Well," explained the patient, "I was making love to my girl on the living-room rug when, all of a sudden, the chandelier came crashing down on us."
"Fortunately you have only sustained some minor lacerations on your buttocks," the doctor said. "I think you are a very lucky man."
"You said it, Doc," explained the man. "A minute sooner and it could have fractured my skull!"

It all depends on you! MISCHIEF IS YOURS. SORROW IS YOURS.

BUT VIRTUE ALSO IS YOURS.
AND PURITY.

So don't be sad. In fact, feel joyous. Buddha is giving you total freedom... you can choose. If you are in love with sorrow, that's your choice. Then don't complain. You have chosen it yourself; enjoy it if you want to enjoy it. It is all up to you.

The bride returned from her honeymoon and was relating her experience to her best friend. "And how was the first night?" her friend asked in anticipation.

"Oh, it was horrible!" said the bride. "All night -- up and down, in and out, up and down, in and out. Never get a room next to the elevator!"

Your whole life is your choice: you can be in hell, you can be in heaven. And heaven and hell are not far away from each other. In fact, there is not even a fence between the two, there is no division; they merge and melt into each other. You can easily move from one space to the other. And people have tried all kinds of things, but nothing succeeds. People have tried alcohol and drugs and people have tried prayers, religious rituals -- nothing works. Maybe for a moment, or for a few hours, mescaline or LSD can take you away from your present misery, but in fact they don't take you away -- they simply make you unaware of it.

Only one thing has been successful and that is becoming more conscious, accepting that it is your responsibility; if you are in misery, then looking at it and finding out how you have chosen it and why you have chosen it. And seeing that it is your choice is enough: if you still want the advantages that come with it....

Yes, there are a few advantages; that's why people choose misery. Nobody wants misery, but there are a few advantages that come with misery. Everybody wants bliss, but there are a few disadvantages -- at least they look like disadvantages from your standpoint. That's why people want bliss but don't choose it, people don't want misery but choose it.

Misery gives you a sense of the ego. Misery separates you from existence, defines you. Bliss is a merger, a melting.

Your definitions disappear, your ego is found no more. So those who want to feel "I am," they have to choose misery, there is no other way. The 'I' feeds on misery; you may not like misery but you like the ego, and that is the subtle motive for choosing misery. You like bliss, but you don't want to melt.

It happens many times: people come to me and they say.... And the same was happening with Buddha: many times he was asked the same question -- and maybe it is the same people who asked him and now they are asking me! He was asked many times, "You say bliss will be there when we have disappeared. But if we are not there, what is the point of attaining bliss? If I am not there to enjoy it, what is the point?"

The same people come to me and ask, "If I disappear, then I don't see the point. Even if there is bliss, if I am not, who is going to experience it?" And logically it appears that their argument is valid -- but only logically, not existentially.

Bliss is not an experience. It is not that there is bliss and you are experiencing it. When you disappear YOU are bliss; there is no need for anybody to experience it -- you become it. You vacate... and bliss starts arising in you. You are blocking it, you are the only barrier.

You have to look deeply into it; only then will Buddha's sutra be clear to you.

MISCHIEF IS YOURS. SORROW IS YOURS. BUT VIRTUE ALSO IS YOURS. AND PURITY. And what does he mean by purity? Is not virtue purity? No; hence he has to mention it separately. Purity means a state which is beyond both good and bad, misery and bliss -- beyond both.

There is a transcendent state; it is peace. Buddha calls it nirvana: cessation of all states, good and bad both, day and night both. One simply IS: that is purity. No experience, nothing is happening, no content, a pure subjectivity, an eternal silence: that is purity.
MISCHIEF IS YOURS. SORROW IS YOURS. Virtue is yours, bliss is yours, and beyond all is purity, buddhahood, awakening, transcendence. That is also yours.

YOU ARE THE SOURCE
OF ALL PURITY AND ALL IMPURITY.

This is his continuous insistence, that: YOU ARE THE SOURCE.... He wants you to be reminded again and again that: YOU ARE THE SOURCE.... You come into the world as a pure potential, a multidimensional potential. You can become anything. You can be a sinner, you can be a saint. You can be Adolf Hitler, Joseph Stalin, or you can be a Buddha or a Jesus. You bring all kinds of potential with you; you can choose whatsoever you want to be. You are not born ready-made; you come only as an infinite possibility, opportunity.
An occasion to grow, that's what life is -- a space to grow. But you can grow in many ways, diametrically opposite ways. Adolf Hitler can become Gautama the Buddha; Gautam Siddhartha could have become Adolf Hitler. Adolf Hitler is not born as Adolf Hitler.
We are born tabula rasa, a clean slate; nothing is written on it. It is later on that we start writing. Then one becomes the Bhagavadgita, the Bible, the Talmud, the Upanishads, and another becomes a book of pornography. And it is the same

clean paper on which pornography is printed and on which the Bhagavadgita is printed, and it is the same ink that is used for both and it is the same press too. But vast differences! How vast is the difference between Adolf Hitler and Gautam Buddha! And both came with the same opportunity, but the choice was different.
Remind yourself again and again that: YOU ARE THE SOURCE OF ALL PURITY AND ALL IMPURITY. Once this is accepted, a great authenticity arises in you.

Frederick II of Prussia, also known as Frederick the Great, instituted social reforms and improvements throughout his country. One day he unexpectedly visited a prison to inspect the facilities. The head jailer was dismayed to be asked to show the king through the jail itself to see the conditions personally.
As Frederick proceeded through the jail, the convicted men came running up to him, pleading innocence and begging for pardons. The king listened to all, and walked on. He became surrounded by men claiming they were not guilty. One man, however, stayed in his corner. The king was surprised. "You there!" he called. "Why are you here?"
"Robbery, Your Majesty," stated the prisoner.
"And are you guilty?" asked Frederick.
"Entirely guilty, Your Majesty. I richly deserve my punishment."
The king parted the throng with his walking-stick and pointed it at the jailer. "Warden," he said, "release this guilty wretch at once. I will not have him here in jail where by example he will corrupt all the splendid, innocent people who occupy it."

The moment you take responsibility totally, it is a great redemption, it is freedom. You are suddenly out of the jail -- just by taking the responsibility. It is difficult to accept, very difficult, hard to accept, that "I am responsible"; it hurts the ego. But there is no other way.

NO ONE PURIFIES ANOTHER.

This is the way Buddha drops the whole priesthood. If nobody can purify you, if nobody can purify another, then the whole function of the priesthood disappears.
The greatest priesthood in the world now is the Catholic priesthood. And do you see the reason why? -- because for twenty centuries they have been claiming that salvation is through Jesus. That is the basic root of the Catholic priesthood; it depends on it. If somehow it can be proved that Jesus cannot be the salvation of anybody else, then the whole Catholic church will become irrelevant.
The church is relevant, the pope is relevant, only because of the claim in the name of Jesus that "Jesus purifies," that "Jesus saves." And the pope represents Jesus: he is the representative of Jesus on earth, of God on earth. God is invisible; Jesus is no longer on the earth, but he has left his representatives and they have direct connections -- they can dial at any moment. They can recommend you or they can put your name on the blacklist.
Buddha says: NO ONE PURIFIES ANOTHER. You have done mischief to yourself -- now only you can undo it. Why bring somebody else into it? If Jesus has not been the cause

of your mischiefs, how can he be the cause of saving you from those mischiefs?
Buddha says: buddhas can only point the way -- but you have to walk. They can't walk for you; nobody can carry you to paradise. You are men, you are not sheep! But the Christian idea is that Jesus is the shepherd and you are the sheep. And the Christian idea is that the more lost you are, the better are the chances that Jesus will carry you on his shoulders to the ultimate home.
This is all invention! Jesus can only save himself, and by saving himself he can show you the path to saving yourself, but he cannot save you.
This is where Buddha stands out from all other religions. He was really very very aware not to give any chance to any kind of priesthood to arise behind him -- because priests are the greatest enemies of religion. And the priests are not bridges between you and God; on the contrary, they are the walls.

An elderly Jewish gentleman climbed into a railway carriage and soon struck up a conversation with the other passenger in the compartment, who explained that he was a Catholic country priest.
"And after being a country priest, vot you become in your church?" asked the Jew.
"Well, it is just possible I could be moved into a town parish."
"And after zat?"
"Oh, no! I will never be placed higher than that."
"But if you are very good in your job vot you can become?" persisted the Jew.

"Well, I could become a monsignor."
"And after zat?"
"If I was very, very lucky I could become a bishop."
"And zen?"
"Archbishop."
"And after zat?"
"Well, a cardinal in Rome."
"So vot next?"
"From the cardinals the pope is elected."
"Oh, the pope. Vot after him?"
"What! There is no higher than the pope. He is God's priest on earth!"
"So vot about Jesus Christ?"
"No, that's blasphemy! No one can become Christ!"
"Oh!" said the Jew, "'cos vun of our fellows made it."

It is not blasphemy -- everyone can become a christ, because christ is a state of consciousness; it has nothing to do with Jesus. Christ is equivalent to buddha. Buddha has nothing to do with Gautam Siddhartha -- anybody can become a buddha. Whosoever becomes awakened is a buddha and whosoever is awakened, is crowned by the glory of awakening, is christ. Christ means the crowned one. One who has come home and is crowned with the glory of becoming one with God is a christ.
YOU can be a christ.
There have been many christs before Jesus Christ and there will be many more. In fact, ultimately, each individual has to reach to the state of christhood. It is not blasphemy -- but the priest has to call it a blasphemy. He cannot allow you to become a christ, because if you become a christ, the priest

is not needed anymore. Even the idea that you can become the christ means you have gone far away from the clutches of the priesthood. The very idea is dangerous to the priesthood; that's why it is blasphemy.
But Buddha says: NO ONE PURIFIES ANOTHER.

NEVER NEGLECT YOUR WORK....

Hence, don't depend on anybody else saving you -- only your own work on yourself can.
NEVER NEGLECT YOUR WORK.... It is arduous to transform yourself from wrong patterns to right patterns, and from right patterns to transcendence. It is a great, arduous pilgrimage, it is an uphill task. Don't go on believing and deceiving yourself that somebody is going to come: the messiah will come and will deliver you from your sins and from your bondage. This is just a hope, a wish-fulfillment. And people have been waiting for the messiah and the messiah never comes.
Not that there have not been messiahs -- there have been: a Buddha, a Krishna, a Zarathustra, a Jesus, a Mohammed, a Moses. These are all christs, all buddhas! But nobody can purify you -- unless you take the decision, unless you become committed to transforming yourself.
Don't wait for any shortcut -- you can't cheat existence. Nobody can carry you on his shoulders; you have to go to the ultimate peak on your own. NEVER NEGLECT YOUR WORK....

FOR ANOTHER'S,
HOWEVER GREAT HIS NEED.

And Buddha says: There are needy people all around. There are ill people, there are poor people, there are paralyzed people and blind and deaf and lame. If you start serving all these people you will forget the real work. That's what has happened to the Christian missionary. He runs the school, the hospital, he serves the poor people, and of course he is very much respected for that, but he is neglecting the real work.

Buddha is not saying don't serve anybody; he is saying don't serve at the cost of your work. If you can serve people without disturbing your real work on yourself, it's okay; by the side you can do it. But in fact it is not possible -- you don't have that much energy. First you have to pour your whole energy, total energy, into self-growth.

Once you have become a grown-up, mature, alert, aware, then you can serve people and only then -- because then you will have something to share: love, compassion. Then you will have something to really help them: understanding, wisdom. Right now what can you do? Right now you yourself are in such a mess that if you serve somebody you are bound to create more mess for him. And that's what the missionaries have been doing to the world -- they create more mischief, more mess. They think they are doing great work, holy work -- it is not possible! Unless you are holy your work cannot be holy. Actions are not decided by actions themselves but by the source from where they arise.

Buddha says: NEVER NEGLECT YOUR WORK....

Buddha is saying exactly what I say to you. I say to you: First be selfish, utterly selfish. That is one of the criticisms

of my work: people criticize me because I am making people selfish. I am telling them to meditate, to grow, and forget all about the world. And the world is in trouble: there are poor people and there are miserable people, and great public servants are needed. And I am teaching people just to sit silently and meditate, or dance and rejoice.
But that's what Buddha was saying. That's what the awakened people have always been saying to the world. First become enlightened, be full of light, then do whatsoever happens through that light. If service comes easy to you, good. If you want to teach people, good. If you want to help the ill, the old, good. But right now you yourself are blind, you yourself are in a dark night of the soul. What can you do with your service? What are you going to give to people? You don't have anything -- you are empty, hollow.
NEVER NEGLECT YOUR WORK FOR ANOTHER'S, HOWEVER GREAT HIS NEED. Listen to Buddha's words: However great his need, never neglect your own work. There is something very fundamental involved in it: you can help others only if you have helped yourself first.

Once I was sitting on the bank of a river and a man started drowning. He shouted for help. I ran, but by the time I reached close to the river to jump, another man who was closer, just near the bank, had already jumped. So I stopped myself; there was no need. But then the other man started drowning -- I had to save both!
I asked the second man, "Why did you jump if you don't know how to swim?"

He said, "I completely forgot! The moment I heard him shout, 'Save me!' -- I completely forgot that I don't know how to swim. I simply jumped, it was a mechanical response."
This is not the way to help! I said, "If I had not been here, you both would have drowned! There was every possibility of the other person reaching the shore alone, without you.... Because you don't know how to swim and you would have caught hold of the other person and you both would have depended on each other, there is more possibility that you both would have drowned. And you created unnecessary trouble for me -- first I had to save you, because you were closer to the bank, and that man had to wait a little longer."

But this is happening in life every day: you start helping others without ever becoming aware that you yourself are in need.
Be altruistic only when your own self is fulfilled.
Selfishness and unselfishness are not opposite to each other. A really selfish person is bound to become unselfish one day, because the really selfish person is one who comes to discover his inner self. A really selfish person cannot be interested in money, cannot be interested in power, cannot be interested in prestige. If he is really selfish, his first interest will be: "Who am I?" The people who are interested in money and power and prestige don't know real selfishness.
I also teach you real, authentic selfishness, because my own observation is: out of it arises altruistic love. They are not opposite. When one is fulfilled, one starts overflowing with compassion.

YOUR WORK IS TO DISCOVER YOUR WORK....

And the first thing is -- the first step of your work is -- to discover your work.

AND THEN WITH ALL YOUR HEART
TO GIVE YOURSELF TO IT.

What does Buddha mean when he says: YOUR WORK IS TO DISCOVER YOUR WORK...? A very mysterious statement, but only apparently so; otherwise simple, logical.

There are two kinds of people in the world. Just as biologically there are males and females, so spiritually there are also males and females. The biological male may not be spiritually a male, remember. There is no inevitability of them coinciding; sometimes they coincide, sometimes not. A biological female is not necessarily a spiritual female.

A man may find that deep within himself he is more feminine than masculine: more soft, more vulnerable, more receptive, more like a womb: less aggressive, less active. A woman may find deep down that she is not receptive, she is aggressive.

Just as there are males and females biologically and spiritually, so the spiritual path can be divided into two: the male path and the female path, the yin and the yang. This is the basic division. The whole of nature is divided into two: the negative and the positive, matter and mind, the earth and the sky. The whole of nature depends on this dialectic,

on this duality -- and we are part of it right now. When you become enlightened you will go beyond it -- then there is no dialectic, then there is no duality, then you attain to one -- but before you attain to one you will have to find out what work is going to suit you.

I call these two types of work: love and meditation. Love is the feminine way and meditation is the masculine way. Meditation means the capacity to be absolutely alone, and love means the capacity to be absolutely together. Love means rejoicing relatedness; meditation means rejoicing solitude, aloneness. Both do the same work, because on both the paths the ego disappears. If you are really in love you have to drop your ego; otherwise love will not be possible. If you want to go deep into meditation you will have to leave the ego behind; otherwise you will not be alone. The ego will be there and the duality will remain: the being and the ego, consciousness and mind.

You will have to drop the mind if you want to go into meditation, and you will have to drop the mind if you want to go into love.

So the basic mechanism is the same, but the directions are different. The meditator goes inwards; he is introvert, he seeks interiority. And the lover goes outwards; he is extrovert, he seeks the being of the other. In love, the other becomes the mirror in which you find your face, your original face. In meditation, you need not have any mirror; you simply go into yourself and you find yourself, your reflection is not needed. These are the two basic types of work.

Buddha says: YOUR WORK IS TO DISCOVER YOUR WORK. The first thing is to discover exactly what type of

person you are. Mahavira, Buddha, Lao Tzu, these are meditation types, meditative people. But Jesus, Chaitanya, Kabir, these are love types; they need a dialogue with existence. In meditation there is no prayer because there is no other; in prayer there is a dialogue of I and thou. Whether God exists or not is irrelevant. Patanjali has said God is only a device for the love type, the person who cannot find himself without creating a mirror; then God is just the greatest mirror you can create. Whether God exists or not is not the point at all. Patanjali says it is a device: a device for prayer. The real thing is prayer, not God, remember it: the real thing is prayer, not God. The real thing is love, not the beloved.

If you can love, if you can pray, it doesn't matter whether God exists or not, whether your prayer is heard or not. Praying itself is transforming; heard, not heard, is beside the point. In deep prayer you dissolve your ego. But for prayer you need an excuse: whom to pray to? You need an excuse; hence God, the hypothesis of God. It is a hypothesis, remember; it is not really there.

There is no person like God sitting somewhere above in the sky listening to everybody's prayer. If there was such a person he would have gone mad long ago -- so many many people, millions of people on the earth.... And now scientists say there are at least fifty thousand earths in the universe, all populated. Now millions and millions of prayers are arising every day, and God is one. Poor God! And so many worshippers!

When I used to travel in this country -- for fifteen years I was traveling and traveling, twenty-one days per month

traveling -- I was in a difficulty. The greatest difficulty was the Indian attitude towards saints. They would come and they would massage your feet, and I was tired of those massages!

Once it happened I was coming from Udaipur. The train was stopping at some station; it must have been twelve o'clock at night. After a seven-day camp I was feeling very tired, and a man entered into my compartment and started massaging my feet. I said, "You will do a great service to me if you stop all this nonsense. Simply get out of the room!"

He said, "You go to sleep, don't prevent me! I have been waiting for the whole year so that when the train comes here to my station and you come back from your Udaipur camp, I could massage your feet, I could serve you."

I said, "How long is this train going to stay here?"

He said, "Don't be worried! It stays here for two hours, because from here the engine changes and the route changes, so you can go to sleep."

I said, "How can I go to sleep?"

And he was really doing such hard work -- something like Rolfing! I asked him, "Where did you learn Rolfing?"

He said, "I have waited for one year!"

I said, "That I understand." So he was taking revenge! Finally I got tired, so tired that I had to call the police to remove that man. Now he was very angry. He said, "No saint has ever done this!"

I said, "I am not a saint!"

But that is not the point: first he projects the saint, then he can serve him. He really wants to serve some holy man; whether the holy man is holy or not is not the point.

I said, "I am even ready to be a sinner if you will leave me alone!"
Just think of God! That day I started thinking of God, what must be happening to him. The praying... millions of people praying. And there are millions of people already in heaven -- they must be doing Rolfing on him! He must be constantly escaping, running away.

I have heard:
In the beginning God used to live on M.G. Road in Poona, but then people started troubling him too much. Day and night they would knock on his door -- complaints and complaints: "Do this, do that. Tomorrow we need rains," somebody would say. And then somebody else would come; he would say, "Tomorrow no rains, because I am doing my laundry tomorrow."
He started feeling that he would go crazy! He asked his advisors. They said, "You can move to the Himalayas."
He said, "That is not going to help very much, because I can see into the future: soon..." because in the world of God time goes fast. For us it is centuries, for God it is moments.

Just the other day I was reading a story. A male dinosaur was in great love with a female dinosaur. For ten thousand years he waited to say to her, "I love you." Then for ten thousand years he courted her. Then for ten thousand years he said all the sweet things that lovers say to their beloveds. This way thirty thousand years passed. And then one day he said, "Darling, it is time: should we make love?"
And do you know what the female dinosaur said? She said, "I am having my decade!"

If this is so in the world of dinosaurs, what to say about God? Time scales are different.

God said, "You don't know -- soon a man named Hillary, helped by another man, Tenzing, will reach Everest. And once one man reaches there, then it is finished! Then buses will soon be coming and helicopters and airplanes, and hotels will open up and restaurants and I will again be on M.G. Road! That won't help."
Somebody suggested, "Then why don't you move to the moon?"
He said, "That is not going to help either. Just a few years more" -- that means a few moments more -- "and another man will walk on the moon. And if they find any trace of me anywhere, the whole world will rush towards me."
Then one advisor came close to him, whispered something in his ear, and God became really happy and said, "This is right!"
The man whispered, "Then why don't you hide in man himself?"
God said, "That's right! There, it is very very rare that people look. Once in a while, few and far between -- a Buddha, a Jesus will look in. Otherwise nobody looks in. And the people who look in are not dangerous. The deeper they go inwards, the more peaceful they become. By the time they reach to the center they have lost all language, so they can't complain and they can't pray! By the time they reach me they will melt into me and I will melt into them."
And since then God has been residing in man. This is a secret I should not have told you. At least do me one favor -- don't tell it to anybody else!

YOUR WORK IS TO DISCOVER YOUR WORK. The first thing is to decide whether you feel joy being alone. For example, Chetana is sitting here. Vivek always asks me, "Chetana remains alone and she looks so happy. What is the secret?" She is a meditative type! Vivek is unable to understand that one can live totally alone. Now Chetana's whole work is doing my laundry; that is her meditation. She never goes out, not even to eat in the canteen. She brings her food... as if not interested in anybody at all.

If you can enjoy this aloneness, then your path is meditation. But if you feel that whenever you relate with people, when you are with people, you feel joy, cheerfulness, bouncing, you feel more alive, then certainly love is your path.

Watch, and you will find it is not very difficult to decide what your path is. Once you have found your work, then Buddha says: WITH ALL YOUR HEART TO GIVE YOURSELF TO IT. Then don't wait a single moment and don't withhold any energy from it. Get involved totally, absolutely -- because transformation is possible only when you are boiling at the one-hundred-degree point, not lukewarm. Being lukewarm won't do; you have to boil at a hundred degrees. You have to be totally in your work. First find out, take time.

The function of the master is to help you to find out what your real work is, what your type is. If you cannot find out, take the help of a master. Take the help of the master to find out what exactly is meditation and love. He will show you the path, but then you have to follow and you have to follow totally. You cannot follow it in fragments, in parts;

you have to go utterly into it. Then transformation is possible instantly. In a single moment one can become a buddha or a christ.
And remember, it is only you who can do this miracle, nobody else can do it for you.
Enough for today.
The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 5
Chapter #8
Chapter title: A little taste of buddhahood
18 October 1979 am in Buddha Hall

The first question:
Question 1
BELOVED MASTER,
I HAVE EXPERIENCED THE FRAGRANCE AND THE NECTAR OF THE BUDDHAFIELD WHILE I HAVE BEEN HERE. HOW DO WE KEEP THIS WITH US WHILST WE ARE AWAY, ESPECIALLY IN THE MIDST OF ANTI-BUDDHAFIELD FORCES?

Jagdeesh Bharti, to experience the presence of the divine is to be transformed so essentially that even if you want to lose it, you cannot lose it. It becomes part of your being, and more so when you are surrounded by anti-buddhafield forces. It will crystallize there. The contrast is always helpful. The contrast cannot destroy it; it becomes a challenge, it is an opportunity. Never think of it as a calamity.

I send my sannyasins to the farthest corners of the earth; that is a device, because when they go away, far away from me, they start relying more on their own awareness -- they have to. They start being more spontaneous -- they have to. They become more responsible, and each moment they have to be alert, watchful, because there are so many things to destroy their treasure. The very existence of the anti-forces becomes a constant challenge for them. It helps integration.

So you need not be worried; the fragrance will remain with you. The nectar is already a part of your being. And while you are in Chicago you will find yourself closer to me than you can be here, because here there are so many sannyasins, you are lost in the many. There you will be alone and you can relate to me more directly, more intimately. And the physical distance makes no difference at all. Love knows no distance. Then Chicago becomes a suburb of Poona. And whenever you close your eyes, you will find me there. The right way to see me is to see me with closed eyes. With open eyes you can see only the physical part of me, with closed eyes you can see the real me.

A great Indian mystic, Paltu, has said something very strange; nobody else has ever said it. He has said: Only those who are blind will be able to understand me, only those who are blind will be able to see me -- who I am. A very strange statement when you think of other statements made by other mystics. For example, Jesus says: Those who have ears, hear me! Those who have eyes, see me! Paltu says: Only the blind ones can see me. He means, "I can be seen only with closed eyes." When your eyes are

open your energy is moving in an extrovert way. And I am not there. You can find me only when your eyes are closed; then in the deepest core of your being, at the innermost shrine you will find me. That's how the disciple always finds the master.

And that's how the disciple, in one sense becomes absolutely devoted to the master, and in another sense becomes absolutely free of the master. Because when you have found the master within yourself, then there is no dependence on the outer master; then the outer master was just a reflection of the inner. Hence people go on seeing in me what they want to see, they go on projecting.

There are three kinds of meditators in the world. The first kind meditates with open eyes. There are methods of meditation which can be done only with open eyes. With open eyes you relate with nature, the physical manifestation of God, with all its beauties, all its rejoicings, the birds singing and the trees flowering and the stars. With open eyes you can see the manifest God; hence there are a few techniques of meditation which have to be done with open eyes.

And there are a few techniques which have to be done with closed eyes. Then you see the unmanifest God, which is far more important, because the manifestation is momentary and the unmanifested is eternal. I am here in the body; this is a momentary phenomenon. Tomorrow I may not be here in the physical body.

My sannyasins have to learn it -- whether they are in Poona or Chicago they have to learn to connect with me, to contact me with closed eyes. Then I am forever; then whenever they close their eyes they will be surrounded by

me. It will not be a form, it will not be a face, it will be simply fragrance; it will not be a flower but only fragrance. You can catch hold of a flower but you cannot catch hold of fragrance. You can experience it but there is no way to keep it in your fist. You cannot touch it, but you can be moved, tremendously moved by it, transformed by it, transmuted by it.

And there are a few meditations which are done with half-closed and half-open eyes; Buddha particularly insisted on doing your meditation with eyes half-closed and half-open. Why? His path is the middle path in everything. He is a very consistent man. He says: Be exactly in the middle, because if you are outside with open eyes you may become attached to the manifest world; if you are with closed eyes you may become attached to the unmanifest world. But with half-open and half-closed eyes you will remain detached from both. You will be just a watcher, in the middle. On one side the existence of nature, on the other side the existence of God, and you simply standing in the middle -- that too is a way to meditate.

My own suggestion is: first meditate with open eyes; second, meditate with half-open and half-closed eyes; third, meditate with closed eyes. Slowly slowly, move into the unknown and the unknowable.

Jagdeesh Bharti, you say, "I have tasted the fragrance and the nectar of the buddhafield while I have been here."

My effort is to make this whole earth a buddhafield, so wherever my sannyasins are there is a mini-buddhafield. And now that you are one of my sannyasins, you will function there as a vehicle for me. Allow me to function through you and a mini-buddhafield will be created. Slowly

slowly, each of my sannyasins has to become a buddhafield, he has to carry around himself the aroma of enlightenment, of love, of prayer. He has to create a small climate that follows him wherever he goes. He has to remain in that small atmosphere of his own; wherever he goes it follows him like a shadow.

Soon we are going to fill the whole earth with many many sannyasins, and wherever a sannyasin is, there is an oasis. And a single sannyasin can trigger the process, and many more souls can be ignited, can be made aflame. And this is going to happen with you.

I have seen in you a great potential, you can become a true vehicle for me, you can be a hollow bamboo and I can sing the song. Now spread the fragrance and the nectar that you have tasted -- what else can we give to our friends? What else can we give to our lovers, beloveds, our wives, husbands, children, parents? What more is there to give or what is more precious than to give them a little taste of buddhahood?

Whatsoever you have tasted here, share it and by sharing it will go on growing. In the inner world the economics is totally different from the outer. In the outer, if you share you lose; whatsoever you give is lost to you. In the inner world whatsoever you cling to is lost, whatsoever you share is yours forever; not only is it yours forever but it is multiplied. Give more and you will have more.

Go with great joy, you are carrying a treasure with you. You are a messenger and you are carrying a message which is immensely needed by humanity today. It has always been needed, but never so much as today.

Man has never been in such anguish before, man has never been in such despair before, man has never felt so meaningless before. He needs people whose presence can make him feel again at ease, relaxed, whose presence can give him hope again that meaning is possible, that life can be lived in a totally new way, that there are new ways of life, new altitudes of life, that one need not remain empty. Then one can have a new kind of fullness which does not come by money, by power, by prestige, but comes only through a meditative awareness, a loving awareness.

Go as my messenger, spread whatsoever you have tasted here to as many people as possible, and you will see: the more you spread the message, the more deep-rooted you will become in it. You will not lose contact; don't be worried at all. I will be coming with you, following you. You will find me always very close to you. Yes, sometimes you can chitchat with me, and if sometimes the idea arises to have a little dialogue with me, don't feel that it is crazy. Let the dialogue happen and you will be surprised that your questions are answered in the same way that I am answering them here. They will be answered from the deepest recesses of your own being. They will be answered by your own center; the questions come from the circumference and the answers come from the center. In the beginning it will look as if I am answering you, but sooner or later you will discover that they are being answered by your own real self.

The master represents only your real self; he speaks to you only to provoke the sleeping center of your being. Once the center is awake the master becomes silent with the disciple.

There is a Sufi story about Bahauddin, one of the great Sufi mystics.

He was living with his disciples, a few hundred disciples, in the desert. A few travelers passing by thought just out of curiosity to see what was happening, so they went to the monastery and asked permission. They wanted just to see what was happening and they could not believe their eyes: hundreds of people were looking crazy. Somebody was dancing, somebody was shouting, somebody was talking to the sky, and it was all chaos. They said, "This man, Bahauddin, seems to be insane and he has gathered all kinds of insane people here. What is going on?" And Bahauddin was sitting just in the middle of it all.

They went away to their destination. When they were coming back, again out of curiosity they thought, "What is happening now? We should go and see." They went there. Bahauddin was still sitting in the same place and all the disciples who had been shouting and looking crazy just a few months before were all sitting in silence, as if no one was there. The monastery was so quiet, so utterly quiet. Now they were even more puzzled: "What has happened? Where has all that insanity gone?" Not a single word was uttered by Bahauddin, not a question was asked by the disciples. The spectators remained there for a few minutes and then they went away.

After a few years they were again passing by and they said, "Now let us see what is happening." They went there; Bahauddin was still sitting in the middle and there was not a single disciple around; the whole monastery was empty. Now they could not contain their curiosity, more so

because Bahauddin was alone. They thought, "Why not ask him?"
So they asked. "When we first came a few years ago," they said, "all hell was loose, and we thought that you were mad and your followers were mad. What was happening at that time?"
Bahauddin said, "Catharsis. They were throwing out the insanities that they had gathered in many many lives because of you people, because of a repressive society, because of an insane society. I was allowing them to throw it out, to get rid of it."
The people asked, "Then what happened? When we came back they were all silent!"
Bahauddin said, "They threw out all that was inside and nothing was left; they became sane. Hence they were sitting in silence."
Those people said, "We can understand these two things. But what has happened now? Where have they gone?"
Bahauddin said, "Now they have gone to spread the message. Now there is no more for them to do. They have tasted the nectar; now they have gone to the farthest corners of the earth to bring more crazy people. And next time when you come you will again find the same thing happening: crazy people throwing out all their craziness."

Jagdeesh is a professor of psychology in Chicago. Go there and bring as many insane people as you can. Help my work. And to help my work is to be with me, to help my work is real intimacy with me. And I will be constantly watching you.

Remember, wherever you are, that I am with you. And soon it will not just be an idea, it will become a reality; it IS a reality -- you just have to discover it. And the anti-buddhafield forces are going to help you immensely. Because of these anti-buddhafield forces you will become more crystallized, you will become more centered, more rooted.
This is part of the process of growth, to send you again and again into the marketplace.

The second question:
Question 2
BELOVED MASTER,
YOU TALK SO MUCH ABOUT THE WITNESS, BUT WHAT IS THE WITNESS AND WHAT IS THE JUDGE? HOW CAN WE TELL WHICH IS WHICH -- THE WITNESS OR THE JUDGE?

Deva Bhumika, it is very simple; the distinction is very clear. It is impossible to be confused about it. The judge is always judging, saying, "This is good, this is not good. This is virtue, this is sin. This is moral, this is immoral. This should be and this should not be." The judge is continuously judging. A thought passes in the mind and immediately the judge says, "This is not good to have such a thought, this is a bad thought, evil." Or the judge says, "This is a beautiful thought, cherish it, nourish it, treasure it; it is very precious."
The judge is always making judgments, for or against. It has a priori ideas of what is right and what is wrong. The judge is given to you by the society; hence there are

different judges in you. A Christian has a different judge from a Hindu.

I have heard:
A woman went swimming in the sea, went too far, was drowned and was pulled out of the sea by the guards. They made every effort to revive her but it was too late, so they had to leave her body there and they went to the nearest phone to inform their office that a woman had died. It happened somewhere on the French coast.
When they came back they were surprised; a Frenchman was making love to the dead woman. They said, "What are you doing? Are you mad or something -- the woman is dead!"
The Frenchman said, "My God, I thought she was Catholic!"

Now a Catholic woman is not expected to enjoy or to move or shriek with joy or to shout "Alleluia!" No, not at all. She has to lie down there absolutely dead. Only bad women make any kind of movement, good women never. They simply lie there, they simply suffer.
A Catholic has a different conscience, hence a different judge. A Hindu has a different conscience, hence a different judge. The Jaina has a different conscience, hence a different judge. And the conscience is created by the society, the judge is in the service of the society. From their very childhood we start teaching children what is right and what is wrong. And by and by they imbibe it, they imitate it, it becomes part of their conditioning.

The judge is in the service of the society in which you have been brought up; hence there are as many judges as there are cultures, societies, religions, ideologies.

But the witness is one; there is not any difference between a Christian and a Hindu and a Buddhist. The witness is one. The witness is not given to you by the society; it is the awakening of your soul, it is awareness. What is meant by being a witness is that you don't condemn, you don't appreciate either. You don't evaluate at all -- you don't say anything, you simply see.

A thought passes inside your mind; you simply see it, mirrorlike. You don't say good, bad; you don't label it. You simply see it is coming in, it is in front of you, it is going out. You don't make any comment about what it is. A witness is a pure mirrorlike consciousness; judges are different but the witness is one. If the Christian becomes a witness he will be the same as the Hindu when he becomes a witness.

That's why Buddha and Jesus and Moses and Mohammed are not different; they are witnesses. But the Mohammedan, the Christian, the Buddhist, the Jew, they are different. They live through the ideology given by the society, and the society has its own interests. You can be given very stupid ideas and you will carry those ideas your whole life. Unless you make great efforts to awaken yourself you will remain enclosed in your ideologies; they will dominate you. This is a social strategy to dominate you. Not only have they placed the policeman outside, and the magistrate and the government; inside they have also interfered with your being, inside the society has also trespassed on you.

The judge simply shows the trespass of the society. If we are to create a better humanity we have to stop creating judges. We have to help people to be conscious. Don't give conscience to people, just give them consciousness. And their consciousness about their lives has to be decisive; then they have to act out of their own awareness, not by given commandments, not by rules given by others. That is the way of slavery. That's how we have existed up to now. My effort here is to help you to drop your conscience; that's why all the religions are against me. It is natural. On one point they agree. In India, the Christians, the Hindus, the Jainas, the Buddhists, the Mohammedans, they are all agreeing on one point: that I am a dangerous man, that people should be prevented from approaching me, that great barriers should be created so that nobody can come under my influence, because to them it seems an evil influence.

Just the other day I saw one Italian magazine with my picture on the front cover -- I loved it -- my picture with two horns. That's how I must be appearing to the pope of the Vatican, that's how I appear to the SHANKARACHARYAS, that's how I appear to the Jaina monks. It is natural; I appear to them to be the most dangerous person. And the reason? -- because whatsoever they have created I am trying to destroy, because to me they have created only bondage for you. They have created chains for you, subtle prison cells for you. The conscience is the most subtle slavery.

Live through consciousness, not through conscience. Be so alert that you can take responsibility for your own life. Witnessing is totally different from being a judge;

witnessing is simple. You come before the mirror; whether you are beautiful or ugly the mirror makes no comment. It simply mirrors you, that's all, whatsoever you are, with no comment, with no judgment. It does not say, "You are ugly -- get lost!" or, "You are beautiful -- remain here a little longer. I enjoy you, I enjoy your company." A witness becomes a mirror, he goes on watching.

And the miracle is, if you can watch your mind without becoming a judge, you will go beyond mind very soon. It is your judgments which create entanglements with the mind. One thing you like and you cling to it, another thing you dislike and you want to push it away. You become entangled, you get involved with the mind, you become identified with the mind. And you don't know what truth is and you don't know what good is and you don't know what beauty is. All that you know is borrowed, all that you know is what the society has told you.

And societies have been repeating for centuries, and go on repeating the same things. Society is not enlightened; there has not yet been an enlightened society, only enlightened individuals.

You can become enlightened by becoming more conscious, more of a witness. Be less of a judge and you will be surprised that when you become a witness and you don't judge yourself, you stop judging others too. And that makes you more human, more compassionate, more understanding. The man who judges himself continuously is bound to judge others too. Even more -- he will be cruel, he will be hard on others. If he condemns himself for something, he will condemn others even more; he will always be looking for faults. He will never be able to see

the glory of your being; he will become too concerned with trifles, with trivia. He will become too concerned with your small acts.

If he finds a Buddha sipping tea, he will become more concerned about the tea than about the buddha. He will say, "Buddha, and sipping tea?" You will be surprised, there are people, for example Mahatma Gandhi -- he was against tea.... "It is a sin!" It was a sin in his ashram. If somebody was found drinking tea a great fuss was made about it. Once he himself went on a three-day fast to purify himself because one of his disciples had been drinking tea. He punished himself -- that is a very subtle and cunning way to punish somebody.

Just think: if you do something and I go on a fast for three days, that will be a great torture for you; you will not be able to sleep those three days; it will be heavy on you. You will think again and again, "Why did I do such a thing? The master is suffering!"

And he is purifying himself. Why? -- because he said, "If I was really pure then no disciple could do anything which is wrong. How can a disciple do anything wrong if the master is absolutely pure?" That was his arithmetic. So he would punish himself. Punishing himself was a kind of masochism, but it worked; it works better than punishing others -- because the people who have gathered around such a person love him; that's why they have gathered around him. Now for such a small thing... but he created a great clamor about tea and about smoking.

In his ashram nobody could smoke, nobody could drink tea, what to say about wine? If he had met Jesus he would have condemned him immediately; he would have gone on a fast

for at least three months to purify himself and to help Jesus, because he used to drink wine. The best wine was always created by Christian monasteries; in their cellars they have the oldest wine, the best.

Now this must have been inconceivable to Mahatma Gandhi -- a man like Jesus drinking wine? But Buddhists have been drinking tea down the ages and there is no problem. In fact in Japan they have made it a great ceremony. They drink tea so meditatively that each Zen monastery has a special temple. Yes, it is called a temple where they go to drink tea.

You can't enter the temple with shoes on. You can't talk in the temple where you drink tea. There is a special process and the whole thing is so meditative that the guests will come silently and they will sit in a meditative posture. The host, usually a woman, will prepare tea, and the aroma of the tea, and the samovar and the sound and the music of it.... And everybody will be silently sitting and listening to the sound of the samovar, and everybody will be smelling the beautiful perfume of the tea. And they are getting ready; as the tea is getting ready they are getting ready, becoming more silent, more quiet.

Then the tea is served in beautiful, very aesthetic cups and saucers, specially made, handmade, so they can be unique. And then people will drink tea -- not as people do on railway stations: one sip and then they look back at the train, then another and then they look back at the train, somehow they have to swallow it and run to catch the train, otherwise the train may be gone -- not like that. Sitting silently for hours, sipping tea slowly. There is no hurry. It is a meditation.

Now, I would say that Zen people are really doing something more beautiful than Mahatma Gandhi. The real art is to transform the mundane into the sacred. That is the touch of a master. He touches dust and it becomes gold. Now tea is transformed into prayer. This is beauty, this is alchemy; now tea-drinking becomes a witnessing, a watchfulness.

But if you are prejudiced against something... and everybody is prejudiced; the whole world is prejudiced in one way or another. And I am here to destroy all your prejudices. All that has been implanted in you has to be taken out; you have to be made pure again, pure like a child, innocent, not knowing what is wrong and what is right, just witnessing.

Out of that witnessing a response arises -- a response which is total because your whole heart is behind it, a response which is total because it is your own response, not a repetition of somebody else's teachings; a response which you will never regret, a response which will not make you feel guilty, that "I have done something wrong," which will not make you feel egoistic, that "I have done something great." A response is a simple response, it neither makes you feel inferior nor superior. It is simply the requirement of the moment. It comes out of your witnessing and it is finished. It leaves no trace behind.

The witnessing soul is like the sky. The birds fly in the sky but they don't leave any footprints. That's what Buddha says, that the man who is awakened lives in such a way that he leaves no footprints. He is without wounds and without scars; he never looks back -- there is no point. He has lived that moment so totally that what is the need to look back

again and again? He never looks ahead, he never looks back, he lives in the moment.
Judgment comes from the past, and witnessing is a present consciousness. Witnessing is now and here, and judgment is somewhere else in the past. Whenever you judge anything, try a small experiment: try to find out who has given you this idea. And if you go deeply into it, you will be surprised: you can even hear your mother saying it, or your father, or your teacher in school. You can hear their voices still there resounding in your memory, but it is not yours. And whatsoever is not yours is ugly; and whatsoever is yours is beautiful, it has grace.

The third question:
Question 3
BELOVED MASTER,
WHY DO YOU TELL SO MANY JOKES ABOUT THE JEWS?

Sanatano, Jews have a sense of humor as nobody else has. For example, Hindus have no jokes, not a single joke which can be called Hindu. All the jokes that Indians tell to each other come from the West. India has lost the sense of humor; it has become too serious.
Jews could not become too serious for the simple reason that for centuries their lives have been of great suffering. It is humor that helped them to survive. They had to create a great sense of humor.
India has lived in a lukewarm way. It has not suffered much, nobody has tortured it much, nobody was bent upon destroying it. It never needed a sense of humor to save

itself from seriousness; on the contrary, because life has been simple, without much suffering and pain, people have become serious.
Jews have the best jokes in the world. You will be surprised, but this is my observation: it is their sense of humor that has saved them; otherwise they would have been destroyed long ago. They had to create a great sense of humor; even in the concentration camps of Adolf Hitler they were joking. That was their way of remaining alive. And I love jokes, hence I love Jews too.

Two Jews met each other for the first time.
"Where are you from?" asked one.
"Miami Beach, Florida," answered the other. "Where are you from?"
"Lincoln, Nebraska," answered the first. "What's the population of Miami Beach?"
"Oh, about a hundred thousand people."
"And how many Jews are there?"
"About ninety thousand."
"And what do they do for a living?"
"Oh, they are doctors, lawyers, judges, accountants, retired wealthy men, bankers, etcetera."
"And tell me about the other ten thousand people? What do they do?"
"They are policemen, carpenters, laborers, etcetera. So now you tell me about Lincoln, Nebraska. What's the population there?"
"About three hundred thousand people."
"And how many of them are our people?"
"I guess there are about five thousand Jews."

"Wow!" said the other, "How come you need so many servants?"

Jews are intelligent people, they snatch away more Nobel Prizes than anybody else. That intelligence is also there because they have suffered long, and they always have to find new ways to survive.
Intelligence arises when it is challenged; intelligence arises, becomes sharpened, when it is used. If it is not used it gathers dust. When it is not used, when there is no need to use it, it dies. It is as if you don't use your legs for years -- you will lose them, you will not be able to walk again. It is as if you keep your eyes closed for three years, you will lose your eyesight.
Thieves have better eyesight than anybody else; naturally, because they have to look in the dark into other people's houses. Maybe they have entered into the house for the first time: they don't know where the door is and where the wall is and how the furniture is arranged -- still they have to walk silently. They start getting better eyesight than anybody. You will not find a thief with glasses; at least I have not found one yet. So whenever you see a person without glasses, beware! Who knows? Keep watch.

A man with eyeglasses, you need not worry about him. He cannot even find his own things; how can he find your things? -- impossible. He cannot find things in his own house.
Jews have really lived a long long, arduous life because of the Christians. The whole idea is absurd, because once Jesus was crucified, the Jews did not need to be tortured for

ever and ever. And the Jews you are torturing did not crucify Jesus; those people are gone. But that's how foolish prejudices continue, and Christians particularly go on and on repeating the same thing.

The sin that was committed by Adam and Eve is still heavy on them. Now if Adam and Eve committed it, they will suffer for it. Why are you worried? You have not committed it. But they think it is in your blood; it has come to you because you are in the same chain, in the same continuity. This is absurd, utterly absurd.

Buddha had a son, Mahavira had a daughter; the daughter must have given birth to a few children -- where are they? Mahavira is not carried by his descendants. Where are Zarathustra's sons or daughters? Zarathustra is not carried by his sons and daughters. Everyone lives his own life and dies his own death. Everyone is unique.

Remember, the body comes from the parents but not the soul. And it is so with Adam and Eve. Adam and Eve are not carried by blood cells. It is utterly stupid to torture Jews for something that happened two thousand years ago. But it continues. In a way it has been a blessing in disguise: it is a curse but it has given Jews a sharpness, a brilliance, an intelligence, a sense of humor. They can laugh even when they are facing death.

I have heard that in the concentration camps they survived not on food, because the food was not enough -- they survived on jokes. Even going into the oven, into the gas chamber, they were going telling jokes to each other, laughing. A beautiful people!

Christians don't joke about their bishops, popes; Hindus never joke against their mahatmas, impossible. Jews joke

even about their rabbis; they joke more about rabbis than about anybody else. That shows intimacy, that shows love and respect, remember. That shows that the rabbi is not something of an outsider, he is an insider.

There was a function in a Jewish community. They were raising money for the synagogue -- the synagogue was in bad condition -- so they had sold tickets for a lottery. And now the day had come when the first three prizes were going to be distributed.
A man was called and it was declared that he had got the third prize -- a Lincoln Continental. The beautiful car was there on the stage. That was the third prize.
Then the man was called who had got the second prize -- he was given just a big cake. He was hoping that he might be given an airplane or something. The third prize was a Lincoln Continental and the second prize was a cake! He said to the man who was distributing the prizes, "Are you mad?"
But the man said, "You don't understand. The cake was prepared by the rabbi's wife herself."
The man was so angry he said, "Fuck the rabbi's wife!"
And the man said, "But that is the first prize."

Only Jews can joke this way; that shows intimacy, that shows respect, love. The rabbi is part of the community.

Three men were hurt in an airplane crash in Africa and were recuperating in a Moroccan hospital. In Morocco they allow the shepherds to bring their flocks into town to graze -- which helps to keep the grass short.

Confined to their hospital rooms for several months, one day, one of the three, a Christian, looked out of the window. There was a flock of sheep enjoying lunch.
The Christian pointed to a plump ewe and exclaimed, "I wish that one was Elizabeth Taylor!"
The second, who was a Mohammedan, said, "I wish that was Raquel Welch!"
And the third, who was a Jew, said, "I just wish it was dark."

The fourth question:
Question 4
BELOVED MASTER,
YOU ONCE SAID THAT ACTING IS THE MOST SPIRITUAL OF PROFESSIONS, AND NOW WE HAVE A THEATER GROUP. CAN YOU SAY SOMETHING ABOUT ACTING?

Krishna Prem, acting is certainly the most spiritual of professions for the simple reason that the actor has to be in a paradox: he has to become identified with the act he is performing, and yet remain a watcher.
If he is acting as Hamlet he has to become absolutely involved in being a Hamlet, he has to forget himself totally in his act, and yet at the deepest core of his being he has to remain a spectator, a watcher. If he really becomes absolutely identified with Hamlet, then there is bound to be trouble.

In India the most popular scripture of the Hindus is the RAMAYANA, the story of Rama. It is played all over the

country every year; it has been played for thousands of years and every village has its own small theater group to play RAMLEELA. In RAMLEELA, Rama, one of the characters, is the incarnation of God, and Ravana, his opposite, the incarnation of the Devil. The fight is between light and darkness; it is a parable.

Rama gets married to Sita, one of the most beautiful women of those days. In those days marriages were not arranged; they were called SWAYAMVARAS. Swayamvar means the woman was free to choose, and particularly the women from royal families used to make conditions. Those people who fulfilled these conditions would be entitled to be chosen.

The condition that Sita made was that anybody who could break the great bow of Shiva with his bare hands would be chosen. Now the bow of Shiva was of such strength and made of such steel that nobody could even bend it with his bare hands, what to say about breaking it into pieces?

All the princes of the country had gathered. Rama came too, and Ravana also. Ravana was the king of Sri Lanka, and there was great fear in the camp of Sita's father because they did not want Ravana to win the contest. And there was every possibility that he would because he was the strongest man in those days. He was also a devotee of Shiva, and his devotion was such that once Shiva had appeared to him and told him, "You can ask anything and I will give it to you."

Ravana had ten heads, a beautiful metaphor, ten faces; everybody has. Who can have only one single face? -- only a buddha, the original face; otherwise everybody has many faces. You need one face with your wife, another face with

your mistress. You can't function with the same face with them both. You need one face with your servant, another face with your boss. If the servant and the boss are both present, when you look to the left, at the servant, you show him one face, and when you look to the right, at your boss, you show him another face; you start smiling and wagging your tail.

It was said that Ravana had ten faces. He asked Shiva, "Give me this blessing that if one of my heads is cut off, immediately another will grow and I will always have ten heads, never less than that." And Shiva had blessed him; such a devotee of Shiva and such a powerful man that you could not cut off his head -- it would immediately grow again. There was fear, great fear of his power. He might win the contest.

And Janaka, the father of Sita, was really in great anxiety. Something had to be done, so a conspiracy was made. When all the princes and the kings had gathered and the contest was going to happen and the bow was brought, a false messenger came running to Ravana and said, "What are you doing here? Your country is on fire. Sri Lanka is burning!"

So he rushed immediately to Sri Lanka. Meanwhile Rama won the contest and was married to Sita. This is the story. Now, in a village it happened: the play was being played, and when the messenger comes and says to Ravana, "Your country is on fire!" he said, "Let it be. I don't care. This time I'm going to win Sita. Enough is enough!"

In fact, this man had always loved the woman who was acting as Sita, deep down in his heart. He completely forgot the play; he became utterly identified. It became a reality.

He rose... now it was not Shiva's real bow, just one a village carpenter had made. He broke it into many pieces and threw it away before anybody could prevent him. Then he said to Janaka, "Now, where is Sita?"
Now, what to do with such a man? And the whole audience was simply shocked. He was finishing the whole story, because now there could be no more to it. The whole story depends on Ravana being avoided, Rama getting married, and then the struggle when Ravana steals Sita, and the war and the whole thing happens. But if Ravana marries Sita, then it is all finished within two minutes -- and it is just the beginning, the first scene. And the man who had become Ravana was the strongest man in the village, naturally, and Rama was just a boy. He could crush Rama at any moment!
For a moment there was utter silence. But Janaka, the father of Sita, was an old man, an experienced man; he had played the role many times. He said, "It seems that my servants have brought the wrong bow. This is not the real bow, drop the curtain and bring the real bow!" The curtain was dropped... ten people had to carry Ravana out, but he was shouting and people could hear him saying, "Where is Sita? This time I am not going to lose!"
Somehow tranquilizers were given to him, he was put to sleep -- otherwise he might have come back again and created trouble -- and another man had to play the role. He became too much identified. He forgot that this was just a play.

The real actor has to live a paradox: he has to act as if he is what he is acting, and yet deep down he knows that "I am

not this." That's why I say acting is the most spiritual of professions.
The really spiritual person transforms his whole life into acting. Then this whole earth is just a stage, and all the people are nothing but actors, and we are enacting a play. Then if you are a beggar you play your act as beautifully as you can, and if you are the king you play your act as beautifully as you can. But deep down the beggar knows, "I am not it," and the king too knows, "I am not it."
If the beggar and the king both know that "What I am doing and acting is just acting; it is not me, not my reality," then both are arriving at the very center of their being, what I call witnessing. Then they are performing certain acts and witnessing too.
So, Krishna Prem, acting is certainly the most spiritual profession, and all spiritual persons are nothing but actors. The whole earth is their stage, and the whole of life is nothing but a drama enacted.

The last question:
Question 5
BELOVED MASTER,
IT SEEMS THAT NOBODY UNDERSTANDS ME EXCEPT YOU. I HAVE BEEN TO THE PSYCHOANALYSTS, BUT THEY ALSO SEEM NOT TO UNDERSTAND ME.
WHY AND HOW DO YOU MANAGE TO UNDERSTAND ALL KINDS OF PEOPLE?

Gatha, the most fundamental secret is that I never try to understand them at all. I simply look at them, I love them, I

accept them as they are. The very effort of understanding the other person is to reduce him into an object of inquiry; it is immoral. He becomes an object. And to reduce a person to an object is the most ugly thing you can do to anybody. Who are you to understand the other? Understand yourself, because there the object and the subject are one; the observer and the observed are one. There the knower and the known are one.

But how can you know the other? You can love and through love this miracle happens. If you love the other, great understanding arises on its own. Not that you try to understand the other: you simply love the other as he is, with no judgment.

The psychoanalyst cannot understand you, Gatha, because he has his own judgments. Before you start saying anything he has already judged you by the way you walk in, the way you sit in the chair. He is watching you, he has learned all these strategies, the body language; he has already reduced you to an object. He will not allow love to happen; he is already far away, an inquirer, a scientific inquirer. You are a guinea pig; he is insulting you, offending you.

It is said that a psychoanalyst is a person who looks at others when a beautiful woman comes in. He does not look at the beautiful woman, he looks at others -- how they are feeling about the beautiful woman, what they are thinking about the beautiful woman. His whole interest is to penetrate the mystery of people, why and how.... He wants to reduce everything to manipulatable knowledge.

And the moment you lie down on the couch of a psychoanalyst, he is reducing you to less than human. In fact, when you lie down on the couch, you lose much.

Lying down on the couch is a good posture for sleep, you become more prone to unconsciousness; you become defenseless, vulnerable. And the psychiatrist or the psychoanalyst stands behind a curtain so that his presence does not keep you alert. He wants you to become as unalert as possible so in your unalertness you can blurt out many things which you would not have said to anybody else. He wants to poke into your unconscious; he wants to unlock you. He is treating you as if you are a machine.

And then immediately he labels this as an inferiority complex, that as schizophrenia, this as neurosis, that as psychosis. You are removed; now he will treat the label that he has given to you -- he does not relate to the person, he relates to the labels. He cannot understand you. In fact he does not even understand himself, and the first requirement to understand anybody in this world is to understand yourself.

If you understand yourself you will never try to understand anybody. You will love, you will accept, and your acceptance and love will be unconditional. My love for you is unconditional, I make no condition. I don't give you a certain discipline to follow; I want you to be yourself, totally yourself. I give you absolute freedom to be yourself. I support you in every possible way, so that you can be independent.

The psychoanalyst is not really making you independent; he makes you more and more dependent so the psychoanalysis goes on being prolonged for years and years. And when you get tired of one psychoanalyst you have to go to another. It becomes your style of life, going from one psychoanalyst to another.

And these psychoanalysts are in the same misery as you are; they are not different people, they can't be, because only one thing makes the difference -- that is love, and that is missing. Only one thing transforms a person and that is meditation, and that is missing.
Sigmund Freud knew nothing of meditation; all was intellectual analysis. He was really afraid of meditation, afraid of falling into some uncharted sea, unfathomable. Analysis is within your hands; it is a mind thing. The psychoanalyst is in the same boat as you are.

A disillusioned man finds his way to a psychiatrist. When he is called in, he explains, "Everybody neglects me. It is as if I'm not there at all, as if I'm the air, they just don't notice me, they...."
The psychiatrist stands up, walks gently to the door and opens it saying, "Next patient, please!"

He is not different from you. Knowledgeable he certainly is, but wise he is not. He suffers from the same problems, the same anger, jealousy, possessiveness, as you suffer. Even the greatest of psychoanalysts, like Reich, one of the greatest of this century.... His wife has written in her memoirs about Reich that he talked so much of how to get rid of jealousy, he talked so much of freedom in sex. And as far as he himself was concerned he moved with many women, but he never allowed his wife to have any freedom. He was so suspicious and so possessive that he would open all the letters written to his wife. And he would keep an eye on her; he would tell the children to keep a note of who came when he was not at home.

Now this man talked about getting rid of jealousy, possessiveness, and he was really a great intellectual, but as far as his own life was concerned, he behaved in the same way. And many are the followers of Reich who will go on repeating him, never knowing the real person.

The wife of a well-known psychoanalyst was entertaining a number of guests one evening.
At one point during the party her ten-year-old son flitted into the room, arrayed in a strapless black evening gown, his lips covered with lipstick, high-heeled suede shoes on his feet, and a feathered hat on his head.
Quite naturally, the woman was stunned.
"Rodney!" she cried. "You naughty, naughty boy! Go upstairs and remove your father's clothes before he comes in and catches you!"

They cannot understand you. In fact, nobody can understand you except an enlightened person, a Buddha, a Jesus, a Lao Tzu -- but not Freud, Jung, Adler, they cannot understand. They don't have that light in their being yet; they cannot shower that light on you. They are not really authentic people; they are as inauthentic as you are, and as foolish and as stupid as you are.

During a beautiful walk in the Himalayas a father who was a famous psychoanalyst suddenly hears his son scream as he falls into a deep ravine.
"Johnny!" he cries desperately. "Don't move, I'll get a rope to pull you out!"

A few hours later he returns with a rope. Throwing it down he cries, "Johnny boy, grab the rope."
"Daddy, I've got no hands anymore," was the answer from deep down.
"Use your teeth, bite strongly on the rope and I'll pull you up."
Slowly slowly, meter by meter, Johnny is pulled up. When only the last few meters remain the father calls, "Johnny, is everything alright?"
"Yeeeeeeeeeeeeeehhhhhhh!"

Enough for today.
The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 5
Chapter #9
Chapter title: Entering the stream
19 October 1979 am in Buddha Hall

DO NOT LIVE IN THE WORLD
IN DISTRACTION AND FALSE DREAMS,
OUTSIDE THE LAW.

ARISE AND WATCH.
FOLLOW THE WAY JOYFULLY
THROUGH THIS WORLD AND BEYOND.

FOLLOW THE WAY OF VIRTUE.
FOLLOW THE WAY JOYFULLY
THROUGH THIS WORLD AND ON BEYOND!

FOR CONSIDER THE WORLD --

A BUBBLE, A MIRAGE.
SEE THE WORLD AS IT IS,
AND DEATH SHALL OVERLOOK YOU.

COME, CONSIDER THE WORLD,
A PAINTED CHARIOT FOR KINGS,
A TRAP FOR FOOLS.
BUT HE WHO SEES GOES FREE.

AS THE MOON SLIPS FROM BEHIND A CLOUD
AND SHINES,
SO THE MASTER COMES OUT FROM BEHIND HIS
IGNORANCE
AND SHINES.

THIS WORLD IS IN DARKNESS.
HOW FEW HAVE EYES TO SEE!
HOW FEW THE BIRDS
WHO ESCAPE THE NET AND FLY TO HEAVEN!

SWANS RISE AND FLY TOWARDS THE SUN.
WHAT MAGIC!
SO DO THE PURE CONQUER THE ARMIES OF
ILLUSION
AND RISE AND FLY.

IF YOU SCOFF AT HEAVEN
AND VIOLATE THE LAW,
IF YOUR WORDS ARE LIES,
WHERE WILL YOUR MISCHIEF END?

THE FOOL LAUGHS AT GENEROSITY.
THE MISER CANNOT ENTER HEAVEN.
BUT THE MASTER FINDS JOY IN GIVING
AND HAPPINESS IS HIS REWARD.

AND MORE --
FOR GREATER THAN ALL THE JOYS
OF HEAVEN AND OF EARTH,
GREATER STILL THAN DOMINION
OVER ALL THE WORLDS,
IS THE JOY OF REACHING THE STREAM.

The first sutra:

DO NOT LIVE IN THE WORLD
IN DISTRACTION AND FALSE DREAMS,
OUTSIDE THE LAW.

It is one of the most misinterpreted sutras of Buddha. For centuries the Buddhists have believed that Buddha is saying, "Renounce the world," that Buddha is against the world, that he is a life-denyer, that he would like everybody to become an escapist. But that is not the meaning of the sutra; the sutra has a totally different meaning.
The sutra says: DO NOT LIVE IN THE WORLD IN DISTRACTION AND FALSE DREAMS, OUTSIDE THE LAW. It does not say: Do not live in the world. It says: live in the world, but do not live in distraction and false dreams. Live in the world, but do not live outside the eternal law of life and existence. Live in the world, but be not of it. Live in the world, but do not let the world live in you.

If it had been understood the way I understand it, the whole history of Buddhism would have been totally different, and not only the history of Buddhism but the whole face of humanity would have been totally different. Because the sutra was understood as AGAINST the world, the Buddhists became life-negative. They became more interested in dying than in living. They became more interested in suicide -- slow suicide, gradual suicide. Suicide became their goal. This is a perversion -- a perversion of a great master and his great words.

The words are clear: DO NOT LIVE IN THE WORLD IN DISTRACTION AND FALSE DREAMS, OUTSIDE THE LAW. Live in the world without distraction, without dreams, and in communion with the law. His expression is a little negative. His expression is always a little negative, for a certain reason. Rather than speaking in an affirmative way, Buddha always says the same thing in a negative way. The reason is that when you affirm something it becomes so definite, so solid, that people tend to follow it blindly; hence Buddha uses the negative expression. That way he gives you freedom to analyze, to meditate, to find out on your own. He never says what is, he always says what is not; he defines through the negative. It is a beautiful device for those who can understand, but for those who cannot understand, it is a dangerous device because they will become victims of negativity.

And Buddha had to choose the negative way of expression, because for centuries before him religion was always expressed in the affirmative way, and the affirmative way had become a burden on people's being. He changed the whole religious expression. He would not say: God is; he

would only say: You become absolutely empty and then see what is. This is just indicating a way very vaguely, so you cannot cling to it. Otherwise people are clingers: they will fall upon anything and they will possess it.

Buddha is elusive, you cannot catch hold of him. He says: Be empty and see. He says: Let there be no mind and then see. He never defines exactly what will happen when there is no mind. He knows that if he says what will happen when there is no mind, you will start desiring it. And to desire it is never to achieve it, because desiring is a process of the mind.

For example, if Buddha says, just like the Upanishads say, that when there is no mind there will be great bliss... now listening to this, a great desire for bliss is bound to arise. But desire is mind, even the desire for bliss. If, just like the Upanishads, Buddha says: If you drop the mind you will find God, freedom, absolute freedom -- immediately the desire enters from the back door: "How to find this eternity, this deathlessness, this joy, this God? How to attain to paradise?"

Now it will be impossible to drop the mind. The mind has taken a new form, a new desire, new garments, but it is the same old mind. First it was desiring money, power, prestige; now it desires God, samadhi, enlightenment, bliss, truth, freedom. The objects have changed -- but the mind is not in the objects; the mind is in the process of desiring.

Hence Buddha never gives you any object to desire; he takes away all objects. This can be done only through VIA NEGATIVA. And he leaves you in an emptiness... but that emptiness is not real emptiness. Just the contrary: it is fullness, it is plenitude, it is overflowing with bliss, with

God, with love. But Buddha will never say that, about that he is very conscious -- because for centuries the affirmative has been a distraction for people.

Millions of people in the East have become desirous of the other world, the other shore -- so much so that the very desire for the other shore became their hindrance. To destroy that hindrance, to remove that obstacle, Buddha uses the negative way.

But man is such a fool! The masters move very cautiously, they take every step very cautiously, because man is such a fool. They take every precaution not even to use any word which can be misinterpreted -- but all words can be misinterpreted! Man is so unconscious that to expect that he will understand rightly is to expect too much from him. He is bound to misunderstand; in unconsciousness, misunderstanding is the only possibility.

The Upanishads were right, but they were misunderstood because of their affirmative approach. People became very indulgent: "If life is God, then indulge in God as much as possible!" This is a logical conclusion: "If existence is God, then eat, drink and be merry! If to be is to be divine, then enjoy life, then let your life be a merry-go-round. All is divine. The Upanishads say: SARVAM KHALVIDAM BRAHMA -- all is God. If all is God, then why not accumulate as much money as you can? -- because money is God!"

You see how our unconscious mind goes on distorting: "If all is God, then why not have more power, more prestige? Then why not go on great ego trips? If all is God, then ego too is God!" The Upanishads say: AHAM BRAHMASMI -- I am God. And when it is heard in deep unconsciousness,

we understand the Upanishads are saying the ego is God, because to us 'I' and 'ego' are synonymous. The Upanishads are misunderstood because of their affirmation, their total affirmation.
And Buddha is misunderstood because of his negation, total negation. He moved the pendulum to the other extreme; just to avoid the pitfalls that he had seen on the path of affirmation he moved to the other extreme. He used only negative expressions. DO NOT LIVE IN THE WORLD IN DISTRACTION AND FALSE DREAMS, OUTSIDE THE LAW. He could have said, in a more positive way: LIVE in the world, without distractions, without dreams. LIVE in the world, in accordance with the ultimate law. AES DHAMMO SANANTANO -- LIVE in accordance with the eternal law. But that is not his choice. He had seen the affirmative becoming an imprisonment and it was a necessity to destroy the affirmative. You can destroy the affirmative, and for the time being, while the master is alive, people will understand his negative approach because he is there to explain it to you. But when he is gone, then? The negative becomes your imprisonment.
Hindu sannyasins are caught in the affirmative and Buddhist BHIKKHUS are caught in the negative.
My effort here is to help you understand both, and to understand your capacity to misunderstand. And be alert; otherwise each word is going to create something else, something that was never meant.

A performing octopus could play the piano, the zither, and the piccolo. His trainer wanted him to add the bagpipes to

his accomplishments, so he placed the Scottish instrument in the octopus' room. Hours passed, but no bagpipe music was heard.
The trainer was disturbed. The next morning he anxiously asked the eight-tentacled creature, "Have you learned to play that thing yet?"
"PLAY it?" replied the octopus. "I have been trying to LAY it all night!"

The octopus can be forgiven -- YOU cannot be forgiven. But men behave in the same way, as unconsciously as possible. Even if they become conscious sometimes, their consciousness is also mixed with unconsciousness. Even if they are alert, their alertness is not pure. Even if they are watchful, their watchfulness has something wrong in it.

McBride and Kavanaugh were in a cafeteria sitting near the WATCH YOUR HAT AND OVERCOAT sign. McBride kept turning every minute, nearly choking on his food, to look at his overcoat.
Kavanaugh continued eating, paying no attention to his own coat on the hook. But McBride's constant twisting began to irritate him. "You dope!" he said. "Stop watching our overcoats!"
"I am just watching mine," said McBride. "Yours has been gone for half an hour!"

Man's state is that of a mess, of chaos! Great work is needed to make you really alert. And the first sutra is the beginning of that great work: DO NOT LIVE IN THE WORLD IN DISTRACTION AND FALSE DREAMS....

Your mind is continuously creating distractions. Just watch your mind, and you will understand what Buddha is saying. It never allows you to sit silently even for a few moments. If you sit silently it says, "Why not listen to the radio? The newspaper must have come, your post may have arrived. Why not go to the movie? Why not watch TV?" If you are in the shop your mind says, "Go home, rest -- you are tired." If you are at home your mind says, "What you are doing here, wasting your time? Go to the shop -- you could have earned something!"

The mind never allows you to be where you are, it never allows you to see things as they are. It is always taking you somewhere else, either into the past or into the future; it never allows you to be in the present. Either it drags you into memories -- which are nothing but footprints on the sands of time -- or it drags you into the future: great projections, great expectations, desires, goals.... And you become so much involved with them -- as if they have some reality! And the reality is slipping out of your hands while you are engaged in all these trips into the past, into the future.

The mind never allows you and will never allow you to see that which is; it always takes you to that which is not.

Edith was complaining to her friend, Rose, that her husband never showed any interest in making love. He would just sit every night and watch television. Rose suggested that she make herself more appealing and somehow tantalize him.

So the next night Edith put on her most bewitching perfume and dressed herself in nothing but shoes, hat, gloves, and

handbag. She went into the living room and casually strolled around. Her husband kept his eyes glued on the TV set. She coughed, and he finally looked up at her.
"Oh, are you going out?" he asked.
"Of course!" she said sarcastically.
"Great," he replied, "because I was hoping you could mail this letter for me."

He is not there. He is not seeing the woman, he is not seeing that she is naked. He is not there at all! Nobody is -- everybody is somewhere else.
It is said by the ancient Sufis that God wants to meet you, and wherever he thinks you should be he comes, but he never finds you there. You are always somewhere else. He comes in the present -- you are in the past, you are in the future. He knows only one time: now, and only one place: here. But you are never here and you are never now; you are always there and you are always then. The meeting is impossible. He knows no other time than the present and no other place than this. He lives in thisness, suchness. Buddha's word is TATHATA -- he lives in suchness, tathata.
One of the names of Buddha is TATHAGATA -- one who lives in suchness, one who has become free from all the distractions of the mind. And the miracle is that the mind consists only of distraction, so once you are free of all distractions there is no mind left. In the present there is no mind. In the present there is only consciousness, awareness, watchfulness.
Live in the world, but not through the mind. Don't let the past or the future stand between you and reality. And if you

can manage the state of no-mind even for a few moments -- that's what meditation is all about -- you will be surprised: suddenly you are in rhythm with existence. You will know what Buddha calls AES DHAMMO SANANTANO -- the eternal law. You will pulsate with it, vibrate with it. You will be just a wave in the great ocean of the law. You will be in such attunement, in such at-onement, in such deep harmony and accord, that the whole sky will start showering flowers on you, the whole existence will rejoice with you.

This is paradise: paradise is the state of no-mind. Buddha calls it the lotus paradise, because your consciousness opens up like a lotus in the early morning sun and there is great fragrance, great beauty, and there is great grace.

But remember, he does not mean renounce the world, as all the commentators down the ages have said. He is saying: Renounce the mind -- MIND is the world! Renounce distractions and renounce dreams -- because if you live in dreams you cannot see the reality. Your eyes are covered with the dust of dreams, layer upon layer. There are dreams and dreams and dreams, and you are surrounded by so many dreams that you cannot see what reality is. And your priests go on helping you to create new dreams, your psychologists go on helping you to create new dreams. If they take away one dream they immediately replace it with another.

This is the whole foundation of the science of hypnosis: man can be persuaded to believe in something absolutely false. Hypnosis shows the capacity of man to fall into such dreams, into such unrealities that on the surface it looks unbelievable.

Have you seen a hypnotist perform? If he says to a person, "You are not a man but a dog," the man believes it -- if he has been hypnotized rightly, if he has been hypnotized into deep sleep. Hypnosis means created sleep, deliberately created sleep. If he has been hypnotized rightly and told that he is not a man but a dog, he starts barking like a dog! He may never have done it before, but he can do it immediately. He believes it, and the moment you believe something you become it. Of course, your belief is false and your becoming is false.

Psychologists are becoming aware that almost ninety percent of diseases are only beliefs. My own understanding is that as they go deeper into it, they will find that almost ninety-nine percent of diseases are beliefs. Maybe it was a real disease the first time, but then you started believing in it, you started projecting it, you started repeating it, rehearsing it, practicing it. And slowly slowly, it became a reality for you.

Go into an insane asylum sometime and watch people. They are the same people as you, just a little ahead of you -- the difference is only of degrees. You may be below the boiling point, maybe ninety-nine degrees, and they may have gone beyond -- one hundred and one degrees -- just a two-degree difference or a one-degree difference.

Insane people go on living in their own worlds; they create their own worlds, they believe in their own worlds. They believe in them so much that you cannot pull them out of their dreams. Their dreams have become realities -- that is their insanity.

I have heard about one man who became mad and started thinking that he had died. Now the whole psychological department of that mental institute was after him to pull him out of the idea that he was dead. It was a challenge for them, it was also something new -- they had never come across such a case.

They tried everything but it was impossible, because mad people may be mad but they are as logical as you are. They have their own logic, their own rationality; they have a great capacity to rationalize everything that they are doing.

Finally, a great psychologist was called from the outside to help. The great psychologist came; he talked to the man and he asked him one single question. He asked, "Do you believe that dead men can bleed?"

He said, "No, never! How can dead men bleed? Once one is dead... it is impossible for a corpse to bleed."

Then the psychologist said, "Come along with me!" He took him to the mirror; he pricked his hand with a sharp instrument -- blood started coming out. He said, "Look! So this proves that you are still alive!"

The madman laughed and he said, "This only proves that my statement was wrong -- dead men DO bleed!"

It becomes so impossible to pull them out! And the same is the case with you. As far as buddhas are concerned, the same is the case with you. To pull you outside your minds, to help you to climb out of your dreams -- it is really difficult.

Hypnosis tries one method, but that is not the method of the buddhas. It gives you another dream, maybe a better one -- a little more sophisticated, a little less dangerous, less

harmful, more beneficial -- but a dream is still a dream. Whether you dream of poison or of nectar does not really make much difference; at least it makes no difference to the man who has become awakened.
Ordinarily it will make a difference: a man who believes that he is drinking poison will always remain ill; the man who thinks that he is drinking nectar will always look healthy, joyful. Yes, in the ordinary way there is a difference. Hence hypnosis has a limited utility: if you cannot be pulled out of your dreams, at least you can be helped to move from nightmares to sweet dreams. That's the function of hypnosis.

After being troubled with recurring headaches for which her doctor could not find the cause, Jean decided to consult a hypnotist. Amazingly enough, after two treatments the headaches disappeared. Her husband, Ben, was intrigued and asked how the cure had been effected.
Jean said, "Well, all I had to do was to put my hand over my forehead and repeat several times, 'I have no headache, I have no headache.'"
Some months later Ben was aware that he was losing interest in the physical side of marriage and decided to consult the same hypnotist for help. He did so, and the result was amazing.
Jean was ecstatic and asked how it had been accomplished, but Ben refused to tell her. Finally one night, Jean noticed that Ben was staying in the bathroom for an inordinate length of time before coming to bed.
She tiptoed to the bathroom door and peeped through the keyhole. He had one hand over his forehead and his lips

were moving. Putting her ear to the keyhole, she heard him murmuring, "She is not my wife, she is not my wife...."

Now, this is creating a new conditioning. You are going from one prison into another -- maybe a better prison with more facilities, but a prison is a prison, after all. And the buddhas want you to be free of all prisons.
DO NOT LIVE IN THE WORLD IN DISTRACTION AND FALSE DREAMS, OUTSIDE THE LAW.

ARISE AND WATCH.
FOLLOW THE WAY JOYFULLY
THROUGH THIS WORLD AND BEYOND.

You can see how Buddha has been misunderstood. You will not find Buddhist bhikkhus joyful, not at all. They are very sad, somber, living almost hopelessly, in despair. They can't find anything to be joyful about, because from the very beginning they have gone on a wrong track.
Buddha says: ARISE AND WATCH. How to get out of the mind and its distractions and dreams? ARISE AND WATCH. Wake up and watch! Watch your mind -- what it goes on doing to you, how it plays games with you, how it goes on and on creating new illusions, new hopes for you. Buddha is not saying become hopeless, he is not saying fall into despair -- because that is again a mind strategy: the despair, the anguish, the anxiety.
Escape is again a mind game. You are worldly; the mind says, "There is nothing in the world. Listen to the buddhas. Escape from the world, go to the Himalayan caves, and everything will be perfectly right. In this world nothing can

ever be right." Now the mind is giving you a new projection, a new project.
Buddha says: Don't follow the mind -- detach yourself from the mind. See the mind separate from yourself: playing around, creating new games -- alluring ones, enchanting ones in which you can be caught again.
FOLLOW THE WAY JOYFULLY.... And if you are really following the awakened ones you will follow joyfully, because a man without distractions and dreams is naturally joyful. Not that he has something to be joyful about, not that he has attained great money, power, prestige, or the power to do miracles -- the power to walk on water and cure the blind people and help the dead to be alive again. No, he has no reason to be joyful. But just because all the distractions of the mind have disappeared, the energy involved in the distractions is released -- that energy is joy.
William Blake is right. He says: Energy is delight. William Blake has many beautiful insights. He is one of the greatest poets the West has produced. Just a few steps more and he would have been an enlightened person. These two poets -- Walt Whitman and William Blake -- they could have been RISHIS, seers. Just a few steps, maybe only one step, a little jump... but they had come very close to the boundary of realization.
William Blake says: Energy is delight. He is right -- this is a great revelation. It can't be said without experiencing it somehow, in howsoever small a measure.
Your joy is always caused from the outside. You have won a lottery and you are joyful; you have purchased a house that, for many years, you have been longing for -- and you are happy; you have found the woman that you had desired

and you are happy. But these are momentary happinesses. After two or three days the house will be old, and after a few days the woman will look ordinary. How long can one remain interested in a woman or in a man? Because these are superficial attractions, sooner or later the reality will be revealed.

The Nazi leader, Goring, was seated next to a fine blonde Aryan FRAULEIN at a very important state dinner. During dessert he began feeling her leg under the table. As his hand moved up her thigh he heard a hoarse masculine whisper, "Don't be surprised when you get to my balls -- I am Secret Agent X-7."

What things appear to be from the outside is one thing; what you will find inside is totally different. You may have fallen in love with a secret agent! Everybody is in for a surprise.

When you fall in love with a woman, she is a totally different kind of person. When you are married to her, to your surprise, she is no longer the same person. Sometimes you suspect: what has happened? Has she deceived you? But she is also in the same situation. She is worried: where has that beautiful man disappeared to?

There are old stories of frogs becoming beautiful princes. In my own experience just the opposite happens: you bring home beautiful princes and overnight, in the morning, you find there is a frog! Princes disappear and become frogs -- all princes, unconditionally. Those stories have some truth in them. If frogs can become princes, why not vice versa?

Nobody has ever seen a frog becoming a prince, and everybody has seen many princes becoming frogs!
ARISE AND WATCH. The essential core of Buddha's message is awareness, mindfulness. Look at your own mind. Don't get involved with it, remain unidentified. That's what he means when he says: Watch. And as you watch you will become more and more awake and your life will start having a new kind of joy, which has nothing to do with the outside; it wells up within your being.
FOLLOW THE WAY JOYFULLY.... If you are rightly following the way of the awakened ones -- Jesus, Buddha, Mahavira, Mohammed, it does not make any difference -- then one sure sign is that you will be joyful for no reason at all. You will be just joyful, naturally. If that thing is missing, remember, you have misunderstood. You have gone onto some wrong track, you have misinterpreted.
FOLLOW THE WAY JOYFULLY THROUGH THIS WORLD AND BEYOND. And look at the Buddhist bhikkhus -- they are miserable! I have known many, I have known very famous ones -- miserable! There is no dance in their feet and no song in their hearts. They are deserts: nothing grows in their being, nothing is green in their life. I have never come across a Buddhist monk who has flowers in his heart, lotuses blooming, birds singing -- nothing of the sort, just an empty desert.
And the reason is, Buddha's negative expression has become his way of life; he has become caught in negativity. How can he be joyous? Joy does not fit with his interpretation of Buddha. And the words are so clear -- but you read only that which you want to read and you see only that which you want to see. You don't read, you don't see

that which goes against your prejudices. Such clear words, and yet great misunderstanding has arisen.
Buddhist monks are the saddest people in the world -- long faces. It is bound to happen because they have become escapists.
And Buddha says: FOLLOW THE WAY JOYFULLY THROUGH THIS WORLD AND BEYOND. He does not forget this world. He says: THROUGH THIS WORLD.... If he is in favor of renouncing the world, then what is the point of saying: THROUGH THIS WORLD...? He is not saying renounce the world: renounce the mind and the world is renounced. You live in the world and yet you remain untouched by it. And a great joy arises in you, a great laughter, a great love. And you will be able to carry this love, this joy, this dance, to the other shore, because it is something that is happening inside you; it is not dependent on outside causes, it is not caused by anything. Remember, one of the fundamentals of life is: that which depends on outside causes will be taken away from you sooner or later. At least one thing is absolutely certain: you will not be able to carry it with you into death. But that which is independent of outside causes, that which is caused in the innermost core of your being, in your own interiority, nobody can take it away. You cannot be robbed of it, it cannot be stolen -- even death cannot destroy it. The body will be destroyed, but not the song. The body will be gone, but not the dance. The dance, the song, the joy, will move into the universal song, into the universal joy, into the universal ocean of consciousness, of truth, of godliness.

FOLLOW THE WAY OF VIRTUE.
FOLLOW THE WAY JOYFULLY.

He repeats it again, because he wants to emphasize it. He must be alert that his way of expressing things negatively could create a great misunderstanding. People could become sad, and the moment you are sad you have fallen out of tune with existence.

FOLLOW THE WAY OF VIRTUE. And what is the way of virtue for Buddha? He does not give any details, he does not give you ten commandments. He gives you the eleventh commandment, and the eleventh is enough. If you fulfill the eleventh then you can forget all about the ten, because in following that one, the eleventh, all ten are contained. That eleventh commandment is meditation. Meditate. That is what is missing in the Jewish-Christian ten commandments: nothing is said about meditation. Everything else is included in them; those are consequences, not causes. That cause is missing. Virtue without meditation is an imposition, a forced imposition. Virtue without meditation is repressive. Virtue without meditation is pseudo. Virtue without meditation is just a facade: you can deceive others, but how can you deceive yourself?

With meditation there arises a totally different kind of virtue: a natural virtue, a spontaneous virtue. Whenever Buddha says: FOLLOW THE WAY OF VIRTUE, he means meditate: arise, awake, watch. These are his words for meditation because if you are alert you cannot do anything that is wrong. Not that you will have to prevent yourself from doing it; even if you want to do it you

cannot. Sin becomes impossible if you are alert. Then virtue is the only possibility. Then whatsoever you do is virtuous.

Out of meditation the flowers of virtue arise, bloom. Their fragrance is released to the winds, into the infinity of existence. Buddha gives you only one commandment: awareness. You can call it meditation, you can call it watchfulness. His own word is SAMMASATI -- RIGHT awareness. He insists each time he mentions awareness that it should be of the right kind, because he knows there is a possibility of a wrong kind of awareness too.

What is wrong awareness? People can be aware of others' acts, of others' faults: they can be very keenly aware -- in fact they are. It is so easy to see everybody else's faults in the world. That is a wrong kind of awareness; that is not your business at all. Who are you and why should you be worried?

Right awareness is awareness of one's own being in its totality: all that is good and all that is bad. But as you become aware, the bad starts disappearing -- just as when you bring light into the room, the darkness disappears. When light is in the room, darkness cannot exist there. Sin is darkness, forgetfulness, unconsciousness.

FOR CONSIDER THE WORLD --
A BUBBLE, A MIRAGE.
SEE THE WORLD AS IT IS,
AND DEATH SHALL OVERLOOK YOU.

One thing which is unique to Buddha is that that he never says "Believe." He never says, "You simply have to follow

what I am saying." No, that is not his approach. He is very much against believing. He invites you to consider. He says: FOR CONSIDER THE WORLD -- A BUBBLE, A MIRAGE. He says: Not because I am saying it is it a bubble, a mirage, do you have to believe it. You consider it yourself. If it is a truth, your consideration will show it to you. What is the point, what is the need, of believing? Religious priests go on telling people: Believe there is God. Believe there is paradise. Believe that your good acts will be rewarded and your bad acts will be punished, that there is heaven and hell -- believe! No priest ever says "Consider." No priest ever wants you to be independent. Only a buddha, an awakened one, can say to you "Consider" -- because he respects you. He knows you are deeply asleep, but your sleep is full of the potential of waking up. Today you are asleep, tomorrow you may be awake. Today you are not a buddha, tomorrow you may be a buddha. Your potential is there. You can go on neglecting it for lives together, but one day or another it is going to happen.

A buddha has tremendous respect for people; hence he can never say "Believe." Belief means that the person who is saying it has no respect for you, he does not trust your intelligence enough. Buddha trusts your intelligence. He provokes it, he challenges it, he invites you. It is an invitation.

CONSIDER THE WORLD -- A BUBBLE, A MIRAGE. He says: I considered it and I found it only a bubble, a mirage, a deception, an illusion. I have lived in the illusion, believing that it was true. You are also living in the illusion believing that it is true, but consider. Give it a little more

time. See a little more intensely, concentratedly. Try to penetrate its secret, and you will be surprised: just a pinprick and the bubble is gone, just a little more alertness and there is no mirage... it disappears.

Gurdjieff, one of the buddhas of this century, used to give a certain meditation to his disciples which is very significant. He used to say to his disciples, "If you can remember in a dream that 'This is a dream,' then you are on the very threshold of transformation."

But it is very difficult to remember in a dream that it is a dream. When you are in a dream you believe that it is the truth. And every night you are in a dream, and every morning you come back and you see and you know that it was all false. And again when you fall asleep the dream is there and you start believing in it again, as if you never learned anything. But how to remember?

He created a small device. He would give this device to a few advanced disciples: that in the daytime... because you cannot do anything while you are asleep and in a dream. The preparation has to be done in the daytime; then you have a little bit of awareness. He used to tell them, "As many times as you can manage -- brushing your teeth in the morning -- just put your left hand on your head and say, 'This is all dream.' Walking on the street, put your left hand again on your head and say, 'This is all dream.' Let your left hand and the putting of it on your head become associated with the idea that 'This is all dream.'

"Repeated many times, whenever you put your left hand on your head, immediately the idea will come: 'This is all dream.' Or whenever you say, 'This is all dream,'

automatically your left hand will go on your head. This has to be practiced for at least three to nine months in the daytime.
"And then," Gurdjieff used to say, "one day suddenly in a dream you will see it happen: the dream is there, and you put your hand on your head, your left hand, and suddenly you say, 'This is all dream.' And the moment you say it the dream disappears, you are fully awake. The dream cannot exist if you know that it is a dream."

And that is a great experience when it happens -- you can try it. When it really happens, that one night your hand goes to your head while you are asleep, while you are dreaming, and suddenly the idea comes that "This is all dream...." And you are immediately fully awake and you find your hand on your head. It has become so associated; it is like a conditioned reflex. But one thing has become clear: if you can remember, "This is all dream," the dream disappears. The dream can only disappear by your remembering that this is a dream; reality cannot disappear. You can go on remembering, "This is all dream," but you know all the time this is not so. Philosophically you can go on repeating, "This is all dream," and you can be very cunning philosophically.

Once it happened:
A great philosopher came to the court of a king. He said, "This whole world is a dream."
The king was a crazy type of person; he said, "Then wait." He had a mad elephant. He told his whole court to watch. The mad elephant was brought into the courtyard of the

palace and the poor philosopher was left alone with the mad elephant. The mad elephant started chasing him, and the philosopher started crying, "Save me! He will kill me -- save me!" He was crying and weeping. And the mad elephant took him and threw him at least thirty feet away. He fell on the ground -- so many bones fractured -- crying and weeping.

Then he was brought back to the court and the king said, "What now? What do you say about the elephant? Is that too a dream, MAYA, illusion?"

But philosophers are cunning people. He said, "Yes, it was a dream -- a bad dream, a nightmare."

And the king said, "What about the fractures?"

He said, "That too is a dream."

"Then why were you crying?"

He said, "I was crying in the dream, and I was crying and shouting -- I remember perfectly well -- 'Save me!' But it was all a dream."

Now this is cunningness -- but man can find cunning rationalizations for everything. The philosopher knows it was not a dream: the elephant was far too real, and he was shaken, afraid, and death was so close that he had forgotten all his philosophy. But back again in the safe court and the mad elephant gone, although he was fractured all over and it was painful, his philosophy was back again, his ego was back.

Reality is reality -- you cannot make it disappear by remembering that it is a dream. But if something is a dream, just by remembering that it is a dream, it disappears.

Buddha says: FOR CONSIDER THE WORLD.... What world? Does he mean the rocks and the mountains and the rivers and the stars? No, not at all. He means the world that you have been creating in your mind -- your mind world is a bubble, a mirage.

SEE THE WORLD AS IT IS,
AND DEATH SHALL OVERLOOK YOU.

If you can see the truth as it is, without your mind coming in between, you will not die; death will be impotent in encountering you. Death will come, but it can't take anything away from you, because you have already dropped all those dreams which death can destroy. Death can destroy only the mind. Consider it. Death cannot destroy your body, death cannot destroy your soul; death can only destroy the mind. The mind is a mirage, but the man who has dropped his mind himself, voluntarily... nothing is left for death to destroy.

COME, CONSIDER THE WORLD,
A PAINTED CHARIOT FOR KINGS,
A TRAP FOR FOOLS.

Buddha calls those people kings who have intelligence, understanding. He does not call a person a king who has much money, a great kingdom -- no. Buddha calls a man a king, an emperor, who has conquered himself, who has conquered his foolishness, his unconsciousness, who has been able to dissipate all illusions. He is the real king: he has entered into the kingdom of God. Again he invites:

COME, CONSIDER THE WORLD, A PAINTED CHARIOT FOR KINGS....

As far as kings are concerned, the knowers are concerned, the wise ones are concerned, it is just a painted chariot; it is not a real chariot. It is just a painting. But a painting can be done so beautifully -- the painting can be three-dimensional -- that it can give you all the appearances of being real. But a painting is a painting, it is not real. It is real as a painting, but it is not the chariot. It cannot take you anywhere, you cannot ride in it.

The world is A PAINTED CHARIOT FOR KINGS, A TRAP FOR FOOLS. It is because of our unintelligence, unawareness, that we become trapped in it.

The seventy-year-old groom and the twenty-five-year-old bride caused raised eyebrows when they checked in at a hotel. Next morning, he came down early into the dining room, and ordered ham and eggs. From his smile and twinkling eyes, it was obvious that he was extremely happy.

After a while the bride came down. Her face was drawn, voice weak, complexion pale. She ordered toast and coffee. The waitress said, "Honey, I don't understand a young bride looking worn out, with an old man for a husband."

"He double-crossed me," replied the young bride. "He told me he had saved up for sixty years, and I thought he was talking about money!"

Beware of your mind! It can give you great illusions. It can make things appear as they are not and it can help you to see things as they are not. The mind is very inventive. The

mind has only one power -- that of dreaming. In the daytime it dreams -- then it dreams through words, language; and in the night it dreams -- then it dreams in pictures.

And there are two types of people: a few people dream in black and white and a few people dream in technicolor. The people who dream in technicolor can become poets, painters, sculptors; they can be very artistic. They need not depend on drugs; their minds supply mescaline and LSD. Their body chemistry is enough to create psychedelic trips for them. But there are other people who only dream in black and white. Those people are scientists, businessmen, bankers -- calculative people -- mathematicians. But whether you dream in black and white or in color it does not matter -- a dream is a dream.

Beware of dreams! And watch your dreams day in, day out, because they are continuously there. You can watch them, and by watching them you will become unidentified with them, you will become a mirror reflecting them. And this brings great freedom. Freedom from dreams is freedom from the world.

COME, CONSIDER THE WORLD, A PAINTED CHARIOT FOR KINGS, A TRAP FOR FOOLS. It is the same world: for the meditators, for the kings, it is a painted chariot. Buddha is not saying anything against the world -- simply describing its truth. And for the fools it is a trap. It depends on you.

They had been married that afternoon in Minneapolis and journeyed to the city of Saint Paul, where they had a room at a downtown hotel. Night had fallen. The bride had

already donned the beautiful silken nightie reserved for this occasion and was lounging voluptuously upon the bed. For over an hour now, the groom, still fully dressed, had been gazing out the open window into the darkness.
Impatiently Gladys addressed him: "Why don't you undress, dear, and come to bed?"
"Never mind me," he replied. "Go ahead and go to sleep. My mother told me this would be the most wonderful night I would ever see, and I don't want to miss a single minute of it!"

Now, how are you going to interpret the buddhas? In the world of your unconsciousness everything is distorted. You impose your ideas, you color, you distort. You manage to believe in whatsoever you want to believe; otherwise it is a simple fact.
If you look at the world, if you look at yourself, if you look at people, if you look at your life, your past, it will not be very difficult to find that ninety-nine percent of it is just dreaming; only one percent is true. And because of this ninety-nine percent of dreaming you are not able to find that one percent. And only that one percent is substantial, all else is shadow. That one percent is truth, all else is untruth. That one percent can save you, can become the boat to the other shore.

AS THE MOON SLIPS FROM BEHIND A CLOUD
AND SHINES,
SO THE MASTER COMES OUT FROM BEHIND HIS
IGNORANCE
AND SHINES.

What is Buddha's idea of ignorance? -- not the lack of information but the lack of attentiveness. This sutra also has created great trouble, because the Buddhist bhikkhu thinks that to come out of ignorance he has to become very knowledgeable. So he ponders over the scriptures for years, he goes on repeating scriptures upon scriptures... and there are many scriptures. In fact, Buddhism is the richest religion in that sense.
Buddhism has nearly sixty thousand scriptures. Christianity is very poor -- just the Bible; Mohammedanism is very poor -- just the Koran. Buddhism has so many scriptures that one can go on wasting many lives pondering over them. And yet that is not Buddha's meaning.
When he says: ... THE MASTER COMES OUT FROM BEHIND HIS IGNORANCE AND SHINES, he is saying, it is not a question of gaining more information, it is a question of becoming more conscious, more alert, more attentive. But these people -- the pundits, the scholars -- they can always find reasons, proofs, arguments, to support themselves. All their arguments are stupid!

Once I was staying with a Buddhist monk. He was reading LANKAVATAR SUTRA, one of the very famous Buddhist scriptures. I asked him how long he had been reading it.
He said, "For twenty years this has been my everyday practice. I cannot live without it; this is my food, my nourishment. This is my soul."
I asked him, "But you don't seem yet to have become a buddha. I don't see light in your eyes, any silence around

you. I can't smell any fragrance. Twenty years you have been trying to dispel ignorance by knowledge! And LANKAVATAR SUTRA is a beautiful scripture, but it is like a painted lamp: you can go on worshipping the painted lamp for twenty years or twenty centuries -- it is not going to dispel darkness. A real lamp is needed. One has to become conscious inside."

But he started arguing, giving so many reasons. His first argument was this... which is absurd to all outsiders, but this is how it happens. The insiders think this is a great argument. He had two disciples with him. They said, "Right! This is a beautiful argument!"

The first sutra says that those who read this sutra are bound to become liberated. He said, "Look! The sutra itself says that 'Those who read this sutra are bound to become liberated!'"

I said, "This is foolish! It is like...."

I have heard:

Mulla Nasruddin one day declared in the marketplace, "My wife is the most beautiful woman in the world." People gathered; they knew his woman, his wife, perfectly well -- she was an ordinary, homely woman -- and here he is declaring that she is the most beautiful woman in the world. They said, "Mulla, who has given you this information?" He said, "Who else? -- my wife herself! Just last night she told me."

Now, quoting the sutra itself in its favor... scholars are cunning people. In Indian scriptures this is always done: first they will praise the book, so much so that they say if

you read it once you will be liberated; even a single word of it heard is enough for liberation. Now they are persuading your greed, seducing your greed! They will relate old stories saying, "One man who heard this sutra on his deathbed went directly to heaven. Another, who was ill, heard this sutra and became healthy. Another, who was poor, heard this sutra and became rich. This sutra is so precious that it gives both in this world and the other!" Every sutra, every scripture, starts this way. This is nothing but salesmanship and rationalization.

The husband wired home that he had been able to wind up his business trip a day early and would be home on Thursday. When he walked into his apartment, however, he found his wife in bed with another man.
Furious, he picked up his bag and stormed out. He met his mother-in-law on the street, told her what had happened, and announced that he was filing suit for divorce in the morning.
"Give my daughter a chance to explain before you take any action," the older woman pleaded. Reluctantly he agreed.
An hour later, his mother-in-law phoned the husband at his club. "I knew my daughter would have an explanation," she said, with a note of triumph in her voice. "She did not receive your telegram!"

The mind is very cunning. Unless you are really watchful you are bound to be trapped by it.

THIS WORLD IS IN DARKNESS.
HOW FEW HAVE EYES TO SEE!

HOW FEW THE BIRDS
WHO ESCAPE THE NET AND FLY TO HEAVEN!

Very rare! It is very rare to find a man who has eyes to see, and very rare is the man who has got back his wings and can fly to the ultimate.

THIS WORLD IS IN DARKNESS -- and the darkness is created by our unconsciousness. It is not part of the world, it is projected by us.

HOW FEW HAVE EYES TO SEE! It is really very rare; hence in the old days people used to travel far and wide to seek somebody who had eyes. They would knock on many doors before they came upon the right door. They would listen to many teachers before they found a master. And once they had found a master, that was the end of their journey. Then they would become involved, committed; then they would devote their whole life and their whole energy to the work.

Again something like that is happening in the world: people have started looking for masters. And when you look for masters, remember, out of one hundred, ninety-nine will be false. And the false will appeal to you more than the real one, because the false will speak your language and the false will try to convince you, to argue. The false will quote scriptures, the false will console you. They will try to convince you, they will give you beliefs. And the real is going to be hard.

Many people knocked on George Gurdjieff's door, and then escaped from the man because he seemed to be so cruel. He was immensely compassionate, but because of his

compassion he had to be hard; otherwise people could not be awakened.

When you want to wake a man up, you don't go to sing a lullaby by his side. You have to shake him, you have to throw ice-cold water into his eyes -- and of course it looks cruel. He may be having sweet dreams, and you are throwing cold water into his eyes!

A real master is hard. A real master is always watching for the right moment to hit you, to hammer you. And he is trying to find the weakest point in you so that you can be exposed easily -- exposed to yourself -- because if you are not alert to your own weaknesses, to your own limitations, you cannot grow.

A real master gives you growth, gives you wings, but takes away many things. He takes away all the rocks hanging around your neck, although you think they are diamonds, great diamonds. He takes your chains away, although you think they are your securities. He takes away all your conceptions, beliefs -- and you think those beliefs and conceptions are great knowledge; you have been bragging about them. He takes away many things from you which you have always cherished and thought were great treasures. He looks hard. And he gives you something of which you have had no taste up to now. He gives you something very unknown and takes away all that is known to you. He looks cruel.

Many people come to me. Very few courageous ones are going to stay with me. The cowards will escape. They will find many rationalizations.

One coward wrote a letter to me yesterday. I will not tell you his name, because he is new and it is not right to hit him so hard immediately! He wrote a long letter saying, "You talk about freedom, you talk about love, you talk about how to get rid of churches, beliefs, rituals. I want to become a sannyasin, but I don't want to wear orange, because this is a ritual and this is again a bondage. This is again fettering me, this is again a chain."

He does not know what it is, because one can know sannyas only by entering into it. No outsider can know what it is, and no insider can explain it to the outsider. It is not explainable. No lover can explain about love to somebody who has never loved. No man who has eyes can explain to the blind man what light is.

What he is really trying to do is to protect his ego, but he is not aware of that. Sannyas is dropping your ego. Yes, by dropping your ego you become free. Freedom means egolessness.

"And the orange clothes and the mala and meditation," he says, "these are the three fetters you are giving to your sannyasins." These are not fetters; these are just indications from the sannyasin that he is ready to take the plunge into the unknown. A simple gesture that he belongs to me, a simple gesture that now, if I want to do something to him, he is ready.

Orange has no other meaning. It is just a statement from your side that you are even ready to look crazy for me, that's all! It is a love affair, and if you are not even capable of looking crazy for me, then it will be difficult -- because later on more and more surrender will be needed.

And ultimately, when you drop your mind, it will look like insanity. In the beginning it looks like insanity; ultimately it proves to be the only sanity in the world. But that is only later on, when the mind is dropped.
Now the mala around your neck with my picture -- it makes you look silly! It is not a fetter, it is simply your readiness. You say, "Okay, if you say this has to be done, I am ready to do it."
And if you think even meditation is a chain, a prison, then why do you want to become a sannyasin at all? The man seems to be very clever in his foolishness. A long letter... and he concludes the letter saying, "If whatsoever I say is right you need not answer. If what I say is wrong, then too there is no need to answer."
Then why write it to me? Why waste my time? Reading the whole letter! If it is right, please don't write to me; if it is wrong, what is the need of writing to me? If you know already that you are right, there is no need to be here, and if you know that you are wrong, then take a jump! Then seek and search for that which is right.
Yes, I am all for freedom, but by freedom I don't mean what you mean. You mean freedom of your ego and I mean freedom FROM the ego. That's how things go on being continuously distorted.

SWANS RISE AND FLY TOWARDS THE SUN.
WHAT MAGIC!
SO DO THE PURE CONQUER THE ARMIES OF ILLUSION
AND RISE AND FLY.

Be ready! Kabir's statement is worth remembering. He says: HANSA UR CHAL VA DESH: O great swan, let us fly to our real land.
The swan is a symbol of purity in the East, because it is so white. And the swan is also the symbol of purity because it lives in the deepest mountains in the Himalayas, it drinks the purest of water.
There is a lake in the Himalayas, Mansarovar. It must be the most pure water in the world, because the air is absolutely unpolluted. Rarely does a man reach there. Very rarely, once every few years, a man reaches there; the journey is long, arduous, dangerous. Swans live on that lake. Only when it is too cold and the lake becomes frozen do they come to the plains; otherwise they remain there, that is their original land. Once the winter is gone, they start flying back to the Himalayas.
The swan is a symbol that this world is not our home, this muddy pool of water is not our real home. We belong to some other world: the world of the Himalayas, of virgin peaks, of the purest of lakes. We belong to Mansarovar. Don't forget. Don't become too much involved in the muddy water of this pool. Remember, go on remembering, your real home.
Buddha also uses the same symbol: SWANS RISE AND FLY TOWARDS THE SUN. WHAT MAGIC! SO DO THE PURE CONQUER THE ARMIES OF ILLUSION AND RISE AND FLY.

IF YOU SCOFF AT HEAVEN
AND VIOLATE THE LAW,
IF YOUR WORDS ARE LIES,

WHERE WILL YOUR MISCHIEF END?

Beware of yourself!

THE FOOL LAUGHS AT GENEROSITY.
THE MISER CANNOT ENTER HEAVEN.
BUT THE MASTER FINDS JOY IN GIVING
AND HAPPINESS IS HIS REWARD.

Don't be a miser! Share your love, share your joy, share your dance. This is the way of my sannyasins, and this is what Buddha wanted, but his followers never followed him.

AND MORE --
FOR GREATER THAN ALL THE JOYS
OF HEAVEN AND OF EARTH,
GREATER STILL THAN DOMINION
OVER ALL THE WORLDS,
IS THE JOY OF REACHING THE STREAM.

That is a Buddhist expression: REACHING THE STREAM. Buddha says: Coming to a master is reaching the stream, getting involved with the master is entering the stream. And once you have entered the stream you can relax, you can go with the stream. The stream is already going to the ocean.
Be part of a master and your journey, your real journey, has started. Now you are on your way towards the ultimate ocean, the ocean of joy, of peace, of silence, of truth. What other religions call God, Buddha calls nirvana: the ocean of enlightenment.

Enough for today.
The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 5
Chapter #10
Chapter title: This mad, mad game
20 October 1979 am in Buddha Hall

The first question:
Question 1
BELOVED MASTER,
WHEN I EXPECT YOU TO USE A PRECISION SCALPEL WITH MUCH SUBTLETY, YOU USE A SLEDGEHAMMER. WHEN I EXPECT YOU TO USE A SLEDGEHAMMER, YOU KISS ME. I GIVE UP!

Amitabh, God functions in a very mysterious way; it is never according to your expectations. And I am not here as a person but only as a vehicle. I simply allow God to function through me; I am not doing anything at all. Things are happening, but they are not being done. I am just as much a spectator as anybody else.
I am also surprised, just like you. When you expect a sledgehammer, I also expect one. And when I see the kiss happening I say, "Gosh! What is he up to?" But I have also given up.
You are on the right track. When so many times you expect something and just the opposite happens, slowly slowly you learn a great secret: that expectation is not the way to be with the divine; it is the barrier, not the bridge. Expect, and you will be frustrated. Don't expect and simply wait...

then whatsoever happens has tremendous beauty. Be ready to be surprised, constantly ready to be surprised.
Each moment brings new surprises to the one who has no expectations, who comes with an absolutely open mind. Then incredible things start happening. Even if you had wanted them you could not have expected them; you could not have found yourself worthy enough to expect them. When you feel that you are unworthy, suddenly great love showers from the divine. You were thinking you would be punished, you were thinking you would be judged, condemned. That's not the way of God: there is no judgment and there is no condemnation. There is no hell, all is heaven -- and all the way to heaven it is heaven. You just need a totally different way of looking at things.
Look with clean, clear eyes, with not even a slight expectation lurking somewhere. Then each moment is a mystery, a revelation. And slowly slowly, you will come upon the second secret -- this is the first secret, when one says, "I give up."
The second secret is: suddenly you see that the sledgehammer is also a kiss and the kiss is also a sledgehammer. Then opposites lose their opposition, they become complementaries. If a sledgehammer is used, that too is because of love, for no other reason. It IS a kiss! Those who understand, those who are ready to surrender, to trust, know it is a kiss. And a kiss is also a sledgehammer, because to be kissed by God is to be transformed -- to be crushed, killed, resurrected. Sledgehammer or kiss, there is no difference: that is the second secret.
And once these two secrets are fulfilled, there is no more to discipleship. One has arrived home. You have fulfilled half

the journey by saying, "I give up." Now please don't forget it.

The mind tends to forget. The mind is very much attached to its old patterns. It goes on again and again slipping and falling back. It is easier to fall back because it is downhill. It is difficult to remain with the understanding that happens once in a while because it is an uphill task.

It is one thing to see the sun, it is another thing to remain filled with its light twenty-four hours a day. Yes, there are moments when windows open and everything is clear and transparent, but those moments will be gone. Soon they will be only memories, just dry flowers with no perfume, just ruins of something. And slowly slowly, as the experience recedes into your memory, you start being doubtful about whether it ever happened or you just imagined it. Was it really so? And once that suspicion, that doubt, arises, you have lost contact with something great, something of the unknown -- you have lost track of it.

This is a great moment, the moment of giving up. It means no more expectations from now on. And when there is no expectation there is no possibility of frustration.

Expectation is the mother of all frustrations; expectation gone, frustration disappears. And when there is no frustration in your life, life really becomes a bed of roses. Then God is a constant blessing; he goes on raining his grace, his beauty on you.

I am here only to be a medium, just like a window. Don't be attached to the frame of the window; look at the sky that the window makes available. The stars and the sun and the moon, they don't belong to the window. What I am giving to you does not belong to me; there is no one inside to

whom they can belong. I possess nothing, but that is the greatest possession in the world -- nothing -- because when you are nothing, a nobody, you are God. When you are nobody, for the first time the whole can flow through you. What I do here with my disciples is not my doing; I simply allow something to happen. I don't know what is going to happen, I don't know what I am going to say, I don't know what is going on -- why you are here, why I am here. But something mysterious is happening. I am here, you are here, and between the master and the disciple something transpires which belongs neither to the disciple nor to the master.
It is a mad, mad game in which a third party is involved which is invisible. Yes, I call this disciple/master game a mad game -- M stands for master, A for and, D for disciple!

The second question:
Question 2
BELOVED MASTER,
LOVE IS A SECRET. WHY?

Ganesh Giri, love is certainly a secret, but not an ordinary secret -- an extraordinary secret. And its extraordinariness consists in its being an open secret. Everybody knows it and yet nobody knows it; hence I call it the open secret. Everybody knows it in his deepest heart, but nobody knows it in his head. It is a totally different kind of knowing. It is NOT knowledge. You cannot learn about it, you can only live it. Living is knowing. It is not something that scriptures can give to you; nobody can give it to you. Only you are

capable of conferring this gift upon yourself; it is your responsibility. You can KNOW it, but knowing is intuitive. This word 'intuition' is beautiful. You know the other word, 'tuition'; tuition means somebody else is giving it to you. Intuition means nobody is giving it to you; it is growing within yourself. And because it is not given to you by somebody else, it cannot be put into words.
Language is needed when we are talking to each other. Language is not needed when something is growing in your consciousness, because there is no dialogue. It grows in silence, it blooms in silence; hence when you try to put it into words it escapes. Its very climate is silence. It can't be brought into language; it can't be reduced to theories, concepts, ideologies. That's why it is an open secret: knowing is possible, knowledge is impossible.

Saint Augustine is reported to have said once.... Somebody asked him, "What is love?"
He said, "Love is like time."
The questioner was puzzled. He said, "Okay, then -- what is time?"
Augustine said, "You misunderstood me. I meant it is like time because everybody knows what time is, but if somebody asks you what it is, you can't answer."
Can you answer what time is? And you KNOW -- it is not that you don't know -- but knowing seems to be so deep that it cannot be brought to the surface. Or if you try to bring it to the surface it becomes so distorted that it is no longer the same. In the depth it is a diamond; the moment you bring it to the surface it turns out to be an ordinary

pebble. And because you know it is a diamond, you cannot use the pebble to represent it.

Love is one of the most mysterious phenomena in existence -- next to God. That's why love is closer to God than anything else. If you can understand love, if you can be love -- because that is the only way to understand it -- you will become aware of the presence of God, immediately, instantly! The moment of love is the moment of the experience of God. Suddenly he is everywhere.

Once your eyes are full of love you have the capacity to see into the trees, to see into the rocks, to their very innermost core, and find God there. Then he is everywhere. All that is needed is a loving heart.

And the problem with modern man is that we have forgotten the language of silence, we have forgotten the way of the heart. We have completely forgotten that there is a life which can be lived through the heart. We are much too hung up in the head, and because we are so much in the head we cannot make any sense out of love. It becomes more and more problematic. It becomes such a problem that there are many people who deny it just as they deny God. They say, "There is no God -- it is fiction; and there is no love either -- that too is only a fiction."

They would like to reduce love to pure chemistry; they would like to reduce love to something physiological, hormonal, concerned with your glands and their secretions. Yes, that too is part of love, but the most superficial part -- the chemistry, the physiology. They are its circumference but not the center. The center is elusive, mercurial; you cannot grasp it with your hand or with your head. It slips

out, it escapes your fist. You can have it only with an open hand -- I call it the open secret.

Never make love a question.

You ask me, "Why? Why is love a secret?" There is no why: it is so. Why are the trees green? Small children sometimes ask, "Why are the trees green and why is the rose red?" How are you going to explain to them? If you are foolish enough -- that means if you are scientific enough -- you will try to explain to them that it is because of chlorophyll that the trees are green. But the child can ask, "But why does the chlorophyll make them green and why is the chlorophyll green?" The question remains the same, you have simply pushed it a little further back.

D.H. Lawrence is right. A child asked him, "Why are the trees green?" He said, "They are green because they are green." And the child rejoiced immensely in the answer. He said, "This is the right answer! I have been asking many people; they say foolish things. This I can understand. Yes, they are green because they are green!"

Love is a secret because it is a secret. But it is an open secret -- that much I would like to add -- it is an open secret. It is available! Nobody is guarding it. It is not locked in the temples, it is not locked somewhere in the libraries, it is not locked in some underground treasure. It is an open secret! It is in the rain and in the wind and in the sun. It is just for you to be open and allow it to happen to you. Don't make a question out of it.

Never make a question out of life. Let life remain a mystery, don't try to change it into a problem. That is one of the greatest mistakes we can make, and we have been making it continuously. First we make a question out of

something which is a mystery, and then the question cannot be answered. Then the only resort is to deny the whole thing.

Make God a question and then sooner or later a Friedrich Nietzsche is bound to arrive and say, "God is dead." In fact, God died the day you put a question mark on him; he cannot live with a question mark. The question mark shows doubt, and God can live only with trust. The question mark shows doubt, and love can only be felt in trust.

Ganesh Giri, feel it, don't think about it. It is not a question to be solved by philosophy: it is a mystery to be understood by the poet, by the musician, by the actor. Love is not part of the territory of philosophy but part of the territory of poetry.

But poets can only give you glimpses; they cannot give you the experience of it. They can allure you, they can persuade you to go on a great pilgrimage, but they cannot deliver love to you -- it is not a thing to be delivered -- but they can make you enchanted with the mystery of love.

I am not a philosopher; I am very close to the poets -- but poets can also give you only a glimpse. Mystics can help you to experience it; I am a mystic, I can help you to experience it, but the way to experience is not to be intellectually concerned about it. You have to be more sensitive.

Love is herenow. This whole place is full of love -- this is a temple of love.

That's why I am condemned all over the world, criticized, because the whole of human history has been a history of war, violence. The whole human past has been ugly, inhuman, uncivilized, primitive, animalistic. And all the

societies that have existed up to now have tried to kill love and the very possibility of love in you, because only if love is killed can you then be reduced to a machine -- a machine which can kill, a machine which can function efficiently without creating any problems, a machine which will be obedient, a machine which will not rebel against any kind of slavery, oppression, exploitation. The priests, the politicians, all have wanted you to be machines, not men, and for centuries they have been in power because you were ready to be reduced to machines.

The only phenomenon that can bring you back to your real nature, that can revive you again into humanity, into human beings, is love. The whole human past has been against love. Yes, to write about love was allowed, but love itself was not allowed. In very cunning ways it was destroyed, killed, uprooted. And there is a great need that man should know what love is, because without love the soul remains unnourished, starved. What food is to the body, love is to the soul. Without love you can't have a very alive soul. Without love your potential will remain a potential; it will never become actual.

This is a temple of love. I am creating a situation here where you can start melting, where you can again start becoming warm, where you can start playing, where you can again be cheerful.

I am not here to create more soldiers in the world, but sannyasins. All the past societies were soldier-oriented. I see the future as sannyasin-oriented. The sannyasin is just the opposite of the soldier, exactly the opposite. The society that has lived up to now, rooted in the soldier, has really outlived its time. It is dying, it is going to die, and it

is good that it should die. But before it dies we have to revive a few people as sannyasins; they will be the heralds of a new world, a new age.
But love cannot be taught, it can only be caught. I am love, my people here are love.
Ganesh Giri, what are you doing here? Melt, mix, drop your head! Become as headless as my people are, and you will know what love is. But still it will not become knowledge, it will remain a deep knowing. But that's enough -- that is nourishing. That's enough because that is transforming. That's enough because that opens the door to the divine.

The third question:
Question 3
BELOVED MASTER,
WHAT IS UNCONSCIOUSNESS?

Consciousness means living with a witness; unconsciousness means living without a witness. When you are walking on the road, you can walk consciously -- that's what Buddha says one should do -- you are alert, deep down you are aware that you are walking; you are conscious of each movement. You are conscious of the birds singing in the trees, the early morning sun coming through the trees, the rays touching you, the warmth, the fresh air, the fragrance of newly opening flowers. A dog starts barking, a train passes by, you are breathing... you are watching everything. You are not excluding anything out of your alertness; you are taking everything in. The breath

goes in, the breath goes out... you are watching everything that is happening.
It is not concentration, because in concentration you focus on one thing and you forget everything else. When you are concentrating you will not listen to the humming of the bees or to the singing of the birds; you will only see what you are concentrating upon. Concentration is narrowing down your consciousness to a point. It is good in archery: you have a target and you have to see only the target and you have to forget everything else.

In MAHABHARATA, one of the ancient scriptures of this country, this story occurs:
Drona, a great archer, is teaching his disciples archery. Arjuna wins finally, for the simple reason that his concentration is the most acute.
A bird is sitting on a tree, and Drona tells all his disciples to take their bows and arrows, focus on the bird, and get ready to shoot it. Then he comes close to each disciple and whispers a question in his ear, "What are you seeing?"
One disciple says, "I see many trees and the bird and the eyes of the bird."
Drona moves to another disciple. He says, "I see only one tree and the bird sitting on it and his eyes."
He moves to the third. He says, "I see only the bird."
He moves to the fourth. He says, "I see only the two eyes of the bird." And Drona had said that the right eye has to be penetrated; that is the target.
Then he comes finally to Arjuna and he asks him. Arjuna says, "I see only the right eye of the bird and nothing else."

In a sense Arjuna is the most concentrated, but he has become unconscious of the whole -- just a pinpoint of consciousness.

When I talk about consciousness it is not the consciousness that is needed in archery. I am talking about a totally different phenomenon: a diffused consciousness, not concentrated, because concentration is tiring, tense, and sooner or later you will fall into unconsciousness. Anything tiring cannot be carried for long.

Consciousness has to be relaxed; it has to be equivalent to opening. You are simply open to all that is happening. I am talking to you, and the train is passing by, and the distant call of a cuckoo... and you are aware of it all. You are open to all the dimensions of your being. You are simply open and vulnerable, alert, not asleep.

This is consciousness, and its opposite is unconsciousness. You are not open at all, you are closed. You are in a kind of sleep -- a metaphysical sleep. All the buddhas down the ages have been fighting the metaphysical sleep.

George got drunk in a bar one night, and as he staggered home he tried to figure how he could hide his not very sober condition from his wife. He decided he would go home and read, since whoever heard of a drunken man being able to read a book? And he laughed at his own cleverness. He thought it would be good to read the Bible!

He made it home and went into the den. A few minutes later his wife called out to him, "What are you doing in there at this hour?"

"Oh, just reading, darling -- reading the Bible," he nonchalantly replied.

Knowing reading was not one of his late evening pursuits -- and certainly nobody had ever thought that he would read the Bible -- she got up and peeked in. "You idiot!" she cried. "Close that suitcase and get to bed!"
When you are drunk, whatsoever you do is going to be like that.

I have heard:
Mulla Nasruddin got so drunk that there was a fight with another drunkard, and he had wounds and scratches all over his face.
He came home in the middle of the night, looked into the mirror and thought, "Now, tomorrow morning is going to be difficult!" How is he going to hide these wounds and these scratches? His wife is bound to know and she will say, "You got drunk again and you have been fighting again!" How to hide it?
A great idea occurred to him. He searched in the medicine chest, found some ointment. He put it on his wounds and scratches, was very happy, pleased with himself that by morning things would not be so bad... and went to sleep.
Early in the morning when he was still in bed, his wife shouted from the bathroom, "Who has put ointment on the mirror?"

Of course a drunken man, a drunkard, looking into the mirror thinks that that is his face. It is natural; if you are unconscious, whatsoever you do is bound to be wrong.
And there is a great metaphysical drunkenness. From many many lives it has become a great weight on you. You have

lived unconsciously for so long that the effort to live consciously even for a few minutes seems to be too much. You love, it is unconscious, and it becomes jealousy, possessiveness. It is no longer love, because love cannot be unconscious. You make friends only to create enemies. You earn money to be happy, but by the time you have earned enough money you are only deeply tense, anxiety-ridden, and there is no joy in it. You run after power, fame, and one day, if you make hard efforts, you certainly succeed. You become famous, but then you realize the fact that by becoming famous nothing has been achieved. Everybody knows you, that's all. Everybody knows your name, but how is that going to make you happy? You have power, but what are you going to do with the power?
In the hands of an unconscious man everything turns sour, bitter, poisonous, everything turns stupid. Give him some intelligent advice and it is bound to fall into wrong hands.

The young lady who was about to get married talked with her mother about the birds and the bees. In this conversation her mother told her that she did not have to take off everything when she went to bed on her honeymoon.
When they returned, the groom asked his mother-in-law, "Is there any insanity in this family?"
"No, why?"
"Well, your daughter slept in her hat all during our honeymoon!"

People are bound to do something stupid. And that's what they have done to the statements of all the buddhas. They

write commentaries, great scholarship, but what comes out is stupid. Libraries are full of it, universities are full of it. All rubbish! But people are sacrificing their whole lives for that, and they are not doing the first necessary thing.

You cannot be wise unless you become conscious, unless you break this old habit of functioning in an unconscious way. You have to de-automatize yourself.

Simple things can do the trick. For example, you always walk in a hurry. Start walking slowly. You will have to be alert; the moment you lose alertness you will start again in a hurried way. These are small devices: walk slowly -- because to walk slowly you will have to remain conscious. Once you lose consciousness, immediately the old habit will grab you and you will be in a hurry.

If you smoke cigarettes, make it a very slow process, so slow that it becomes de-automatized. Otherwise, people are not smoking cigarettes -- cigarettes are smoking people! They are not conscious of what they are doing. In a very unconscious way they put their hands into their pockets, take out the packet, the cigarette and the matchbox. They are going through all these motions but they are not alert. They may be thinking a thousand and one things. In fact, when they are more unconscious they tend to smoke more. When they are more in anxiety, tension... worried, they tend to smoke more; that helps them to keep a face as if they are relaxed.

Make it a slow process. Take the cigarette packet out of your pocket as slowly as possible, as consciously as possible. Slowing down the processes is very helpful. Then hold the packet in your hand, look at it, smell it, feel its texture. Then open it very slowly, as if you have all the

time in the world. Then take a cigarette out, look at the cigarette from all sides. Then put it in your mouth... wait! Then take the matchbox -- again go through those same slow movements. Then start smoking so slowly... take the smoke in very slowly, let it out very slowly.

And you will be surprised: if you were smoking twenty-four cigarettes per day you will be smoking only six at the most; it will be reduced to one-fourth. And slowly slowly, only two, one, and one day suddenly you will find the whole thing so stupid! Still you can go on carrying the cigarette packet in your pocket for a few days, just in case -- but it is finished, de-automatized.

This is one of Buddha's great contributions to the psychology of man: the process of de-automatization, slowing down everything.

Buddha used to say to his disciples, "Walk as slowly as possible, eat as slowly as possible. Chew each bite forty times and go on counting inside: one, two, three, four, five -- forty times. When the food is no longer solid, it is almost liquid...." He used to say, "Don't eat, but drink." That means make it so liquid that you don't eat it, you have to drink it. And he helped thousands of people to become conscious.

You are unconscious, although you believe you are conscious.... That is like seeing a dream in which you think you are walking in the marketplace. You are awake in your dream, but your awakenness in a dream is only part of the dream -- you are unconscious.

It hurts to accept that "I am unconscious," but the first act of being conscious is to accept that "I am unconscious." The very acceptance triggers a process in you.

The fourth question:
Question 4
BELOVED MASTER,
DOES LOVE ONLY HAPPEN WHEN IT WANTS OR IS THERE SOMETHING WE DO, LET DOWN, OPEN UP, TO ALLOW IT?

Madhuma, positively, nothing can be done; negatively, much can be done. You will have to learn what negative action is. Lao Tzu calls it WU-WEI: doing without doing, action without action, effort without effort. It is one of the most significant things to learn. We know how to do things; that is a positive, aggressive, masculine way.
There is another approach, more subtle, more graceful, more feminine: to be in a state of let-go, to be in a state of surrender, and to allow existence to flow through you. That is doing through nondoing. In a sense it is negative, because you are not doing anything.
Sitting silently, doing nothing, the spring comes and the grass grows by itself.
This is the secret of real meditation: sit silently, do nothing. Wait.... Wait patiently. Wait in deep trust that the existence cares about you, that whenever you are ready and ripe you will be filled with love, that love will overflow you. The spring comes... that means there is a season to everything. You cannot have it before its time, you have to attain to a certain maturity.
And the greatest maturity is attained by learning the action which is basically inaction, the doing which is not doing at all but a state of nondoing. You remain available; if God

calls you, you are ready. You are listening -- that is real prayer. When you say something to God, that is not real prayer; you have moved into action, you have become aggressive.
The real prayer is when you listen to God, you become all ears. You simply listen from every pore of your being; your every cell is just waiting: "If he calls, I will be ready. If he needs me, he will find me available." You remain unoccupied so that you can be available. You remain without thoughts so that you can hear him without distortion.

A maid who seemed to enjoy her work gave notice one day without warning.
"Why do you wish to leave?" the lady of the house asked her. "Is anything wrong?"
"I just can't stand the suspense in this house a minute more," the maid replied.
"Suspense? What do you mean?"
"It is the sign over my bed that says, 'Watch ye, for ye know not when the master cometh.'"

That statement, that beautiful statement -- "Watch ye, for ye know not when the master cometh" -- is one of the greatest sayings of Jesus Christ. But to the poor, unconscious maid it has a different meaning, altogether different -- a very distorted meaning, a meaning that SHE has given to it.
That's what goes on happening to you: God calls you, the spring comes, but finds you so much occupied that the grass cannot grow by itself; he finds you so much

burdened, so full of yourself, that he cannot enter into you -- he finds you without any space. And he needs great space. You have to be utterly spacious, you have to be absolutely empty -- only then can God descend in you.
And love is nothing but God approaching closer and closer to you. The rays of God -- that's what love is.
You ask me, "Does love only happen when it wants?"
There is no question of God wanting -- he is ALWAYS ready to happen to you -- just YOU are not ready. And what is needed on your part is not aggressive action; what is needed on your part is to become feminine, receptive, passive. Allow him in: he is knocking on your doors.
Jesus says: Ask, and it shall be given to you. Seek, and ye shall find it. Knock, and the doors shall be opened unto you.
I say to you: He is knocking on your doors -- please leave them open. He is seeking you and you are hiding. He is asking, but you are not responding.
It is not only that man seeks God -- in fact, God is seeking man continuously. But he never finds you, because you are never now, you are never here. You are always gone somewhere else.

Mulla Nasruddin was talking to one of his friends.
The friend said, "How was your night last night?"
Mulla said, "It was a beautiful night! I dreamed that I had gone to the Taj Mahal Hotel, and I have never tasted such delicious food in my life. I enjoyed my night, my dream. I can still feel the flavor of the food, I still feel the joy. Those dreams are still around me."

The friend said, "That's nothing! That's why I asked how your night was, because last night I dreamed that I was on a boat at sea and Sophia Loren was with me -- naked, absolutely naked!"
Mulla suddenly became angry and he said, "What kind of friend are you? Why didn't you ask me to come?"
The friend said, "I did phone. Your wife said you had gone to the Taj Mahal Hotel!"

You are never at home. God goes on calling you, you are always somewhere else: the Taj Mahal Hotel, the Oberoi, the Blue Diamond... somewhere else. You are never found at home. Whenever he comes you are not there -- because God knows only the present time; he has no idea of the past and no idea of the future. Now is the only reality for him, and you are absolutely unaware of the now.
You enjoy, you reminisce with great joy... your old days, your childhood, your youth. You are always going backwards, into your memories, or you are always moving into "not yet," the future, and imagining, projecting. But you are never now.
The small gap between the past and the future is the only real time. It does not belong to your time, it belongs to eternity. It is only through that moment that God can penetrate you. It is only through that moment that love happens, the spring comes. The spring is always now, here; it is never then or there.
Love is the closeness of God felt in the heart. Be available, Madhuma. Allow. Be open and vulnerable. Don't live with armor around yourself. It is your armor, your safety and security arrangements, it is your strategies that are

destroying you. Be innocent, be authentic, be true, whosoever you are. Then you will be able to see that which is, to know that which is. And seeing that which is creates love, releases your love energy.
In the ancient Hebrew the word for God simply means "that which is." It is a code word; it stands for reality itself.
But man goes on distorting scriptures, words, language, everything. Because of your preoccupation, your prejudices, your concepts, your knowledge, you remain ignorant.

It was their honeymoon night and the bride put on a sheer nightgown and crawled into bed -- only to discover that her husband was about to go to sleep on the couch.
"George," she called out, "aren't you going to make love to me?"
"I can't, honey," he replied, "because it is Lent."
"Why, that's awful!" she exclaimed, bursting into tears. "To whom and for how long?"

The preoccupied mind can't see what is, can't hear what is, can't feel what is. The preoccupied mind lives in its own world. Buddha calls that world the real problem: the world that is created by your mind. Renounce that world, renounce the mind! And, Madhuma, you will be overflowing with love and overflowing with God, overflooded. And it is an inexhaustible source; you can go on sharing it, but you cannot exhaust it. AES DHAMMO SANANTANO -- so is the ultimate, inexhaustible law, the law of the universe.

The fifth question:
Question 5
BELOVED MASTER,
DID YOU SAY TODAY THAT THE PATH OF MEDITATION WAS FOR SPIRITUALLY MASCULINE PEOPLE? I AM CONFUSED AS BUDDHA, LAO TZU AND ALL THESE PEOPLE SEEM TO BE MORE FEMININE. PLEASE EXPLAIN.

Anand Dharmen, you are right and yet wrong. You are right because Buddha and Lao Tzu ARE feminine, but they are feminine when they have attained to the ultimate peak of meditation -- at the peak they are feminine. At the peak everybody is feminine, only God is masculine. At the peak only God is "he," everybody is a she.

There is a beautiful story about a great woman mystic of India, Meera. She was really a mad devotee, a mad BHAKTA, in tremendous love and ecstasy with God. She was a queen, but she started dancing on the streets. The family disowned her. The family tried to poison her -- the family itself -- because it was a disgrace for the royal family. The husband was feeling embarrassed, very much embarrassed, and particularly so in those days. And the story belongs to one of the most traditional parts of this country, Rajasthan, where for centuries nobody had seen women's faces; they were covered, always covered. Even the husband might not have been able to recognize his wife in the daylight, because they were meeting only in the night, in darkness.

In those days, in such a stupid climate, in such a milieu, the queen started dancing on the streets! Crowds would gather, and she was so drunk with the divine that her sari would slip down, her face would be exposed, her hands would be exposed. And the family was obviously very much perturbed.

But she sang beautiful songs, the most beautiful ever sung in the whole world, because they came from her very heart. They were not composed, they were spontaneous outpourings.

She was a devotee of Krishna, she loved Krishna. She told her husband, "Don't go on believing that you are my husband -- my husband is Krishna. You are not my husband, only a poor substitute."

The king was very angry. He expelled her from the kingdom; she was not allowed to enter the territory. She went to Mathura, the place of Krishna. Krishna had died thousands of years before, but for her he was as alive as ever. That is the mystery of love: it transcends the barriers of time and space. Krishna was not just an idea to her, he was a reality. She talked to him, she slept with him, she hugged him, kissed him. Nobody else could see Krishna, but she was absolutely aware of him.

Krishna represented to her the very spirit of existence, what Buddha calls dhamma, the law. That is the masculine formation, the masculine expression: the law. Meera calls Krishna "my beloved" -- not law but love; that is the feminine heart.

She reached Mathura; there is one of the greatest temples of Krishna. And the head priest of that temple had taken a vow that he would not see any woman in his life; for thirty

years he had not seen a woman. No woman was allowed to enter into the temple and he had never left the temple. When Meera reached there, she danced at the gate of the temple. The guards became so enchanted, magnetized, that they forgot to prevent her. She entered into the temple; she was the first woman after thirty years to enter the temple. The head priest was worshipping Krishna. When he saw Meera he could not believe his eyes. He was mad. He shouted at her, "Get out of here! Woman, get out of here! Don't you know that no woman is allowed here?"
Meera laughed and said, "As far as I know, I know that except God everybody is a woman -- you too! After thirty years of worshipping Krishna, do you think you are still a male?"
It opened the eyes of the head priest; he fell at the feet of Meera. He said, "Nobody has said such a thing ever before, but I can see it, I can feel it -- it is the truth."

At the highest peak, whether you follow the path of love or meditation, you become feminine. So you are right, Dharmen, that Buddha and Lao Tzu, all these people seem to be feminine, because you know them only when they have reached the highest peak. But you don't know their path, you don't know their journey. Their journey was masculine, it was not feminine.

Another story will help you:
A king was very much interested in the ideas of Moses; Moses was alive. The king said to the court painter, "Go and paint an absolutely realistic painting of Moses as he is. I would like his picture to always be in my bedroom."

The painter went. It took six months for him to do a really realistic painting. But when he came back with the painting, the king was puzzled, the whole court was puzzled, because the face of Moses looked like that of a murderer, that of a thief, that of a criminal.

He said, "You say this is the painting you have done in six months? The face looks like Moses, but it can't be Moses' face. I know the man, I have seen him with my own eyes! Yes, the outer lines are exactly like his face, but the gesture, the expression, it is not that of Moses!"

The painter said, "But you have told me to be very realistic, so I have not created any fiction around him. As he is I have painted him; this is just an exact replica. Now I am not responsible. If you find any difficulty in it, you ask Moses."

The painter, the king, the court, they all traveled. They went to Moses, the painting was brought to him and the king asked, "Sir, I have known you for years -- you are the most graceful man I have ever seen in the world. There may never be such a graceful man again... and this is the painting! My painter is a great painter, there is no doubt about it. He has never made any fault like this. He has painted my father, my mother, and thousands of other paintings -- he has painted me. And he is absolutely exact, whatsoever he has done. But with this painting we are not satisfied -- not only not satisfied, I am angry at him. Your face looks like that of a murderer, a thief or a criminal."

Moses said, "You are both right. Now, looking at me, you will see grace. But your painter has painted with such acuteness that he has caught my whole life in the painting. Yes, for the first time I am confessing: once I killed a man.

I am a murderer. I have never told this to anybody else. And I have been, in my past, all the things that your painter has painted; they have left their subtle marks on my face. You cannot see them because you don't have the eyes which your painter has. So your painter is right: he has depicted my whole history. It is not only my present face but all the faces that have been there before. And you are also right, because it does not correspond to my present face -- but I have to agree with your painter."

It is a very significant story. At the peak a person is transformed, but on the path he may have been a totally different person.

Yes, I did say that the path of meditation was for spiritually masculine people. In India, the Buddhists and the Jainas have followed the path of meditation. All the twenty-four TIRTHANKARAS, the great masters of the Jainas, were warriors. They belonged to the KSHATRIYA caste, the caste of the warriors; they were not brahmins. Buddha himself was not a brahmin; he was a kshatriya, a warrior. These warriors followed the path of meditation; they were as masculine as possible. Their whole training was that of the warrior. But at the ultimate peak they certainly were transformed: they became feminine. You can't find a more feminine man than Buddha. They became so feminine, they became so soft, so vulnerable, so beautiful, so graceful, so rounded -- they lost all the corners, all roughness. They became like lotus flowers -- the East has painted them without mustaches, without beards.

Have you ever seen a statue or a painting of Buddha with a beard and mustache? Not that some hormones were lacking

in him, not that he could not grow a beard. I know him perfectly well -- he had a beautiful beard! But we have left it out because it does not represent his inner reality. His inner reality has become so feminine that we had to make his face according to the inner. The inner cannot be painted; it can only be painted symbolically. That's why Rama, Krishna, Mahavira, Buddha, none of them is painted with a beard, a mustache, no.

And one thing more: nobody is painted as bald. And I know perfectly well, they were all bald! But women don't go bald, hence the mustache and the beard have been taken away, and instead hair has been added to their baldness -- the same hair maybe, take it away from the beard and put it on the head.

So your question, Dharmen, is right in a way, and yet not right. The man on the path is one thing, and the same man at the peak is a totally different person, transformed, transmuted.

The last question:

Question 6

BELOVED MASTER,
I AM SEVENTY YEARS OLD, AND IT FEELS EMBARRASSING TO BE STILL LONGING FOR SEX. WHAT SHOULD I DO?

Jagat Narayan, the first thing is to accept your longing. Don't reject it, don't deny it, don't repress it. It is because of repression that it continues; in your youth you must have repressed it too much.

Once it happened:
I was in New Delhi and a young monk was brought to me; he must have been not more than thirty-five. He was living a life of absolute celibacy. He told me, "It is only a question of a few more years that I have to fight with my sexual desire. Can you tell me," he asked me, "exactly how many more years it will take? I am thirty-five. I am getting a little bit tired of fighting, fighting. Up to now I have succeeded -- now how many more years?"
I said, "It is better if you don't ask me, because the real problem is still ahead of you. The real problem has not happened yet; it happens at the age of forty-two."
He said, "What do you mean?"
I said, "Right now you are young, full of energy, strength -- you can repress your sexual desire. But after forty-two you will become weak; slowly slowly, every day you will become weaker. YOU will become weak, but the repressed sexual desire, accumulated for years, will be very strong. The energy that is repressing it will be weaker and the energy that is repressed will become stronger every day. The real problem starts after forty-two."
He said, "Nobody has ever said that to me. People say that by the time you reach forty-five, if you can manage to keep yourself celibate, the problem disappears."
I said, "They don't know at all, they don't know the ways of energy. The repressor will become weak, but the repressed never becomes weak, because the repressed accumulates."
After ten years, when he must have been forty-five, he came to see me again. I was in Amritsar. He touched my feet, cried, and he said, "You are right. Now I am on the verge of breaking down. Now the urge is so intense, as it

has never been, and I am not in a situation to fight. I am tired, defeated, weak. You were right, but I didn't listen to you. And all the people who have been telling me that after forty-five the problem disappears, either were deceiving me or they were deceiving themselves or they were utterly ignorant, unaware of how energies function."

Jagat Narayan, you must have repressed. That's how people are brought up, particularly in India: the religious person is one who represses all his natural desires. Now you are seventy and it really looks embarrassing to still be so childish. The older you grow, the more embarrassing it will become, but the more persistent it will be. Twenty-four hours of your day will become obsessed with sex. And this is what has been done to you by your society: the society has created a kind of split in you, you have become divided from your own nature.

Even now it is not too late. Don't be worried and don't feel embarrassed. Why? If God has given you sex and the longing for it then it is perfectly right, it is divine. YOU have not created it -- why do YOU feel embarrassed? It is instinctive.

If you really want to feel embarrassed, feel embarrassed because you are a Hindu and for seventy years you allowed foolish people to dominate you, stupid priests to dominate you. Feel embarrassed that you were not intelligent enough to get out of the prison in which you were accidentally born. But don't feel embarrassed about sex and the longing for it -- that is natural. Being Hindu is not natural, being Mohammedan is not natural. Feel embarrassed that for

seventy years you have been doing such harm to your own nature.
Accept your sexuality, say yes to it -- because only by saying yes to it is there a possibility of going beyond it. Yes is the stepping-stone. Without yes you cannot reach the other shore; the yes becomes the boat.
But my feeling is that you are still saying no. Be less of a Hindu, be less of a fanatic, be less of an idealist. Be a little more realistic.

Tony's wife passed away and he was almost inconsolable. At the cemetery he collapsed with grief. In the car riding back home, his whole frame shook with wild sobs.
"Now, now, Tony, my boy," soothed his friend. "It's really not so bad. I know it is tough now, but in six months maybe you find another beautiful bambina and before you know, you get married again."
Tony turned to him in rage. "Six months!" he shouted. "What I gonna do tonight?"

You laugh at Tony, but he is more natural. He is not embarrassed about it, he accepts it.
Jagat Narayan, even though you are seventy years old, your sex, because it has remained somehow unfulfilled, is not seventy years old but seventy years young! Now there is going to be difficulty: you are seventy years old and your sex is seventy years young. But if you accept it, if you embrace it, if you take it naturally, still it is not too late.
In the East we have a saying: Even if you come back home when the sun is setting, it is not too late....

Eighty-five-year-old Will Jones hobbled down to the local bar to have a cold one and shoot the breeze with his friends. Mr. Jones was the talk of the town, as he had recently married a beautiful nineteen-year-old girl. Several of the boys bought the old man a drink in an effort to get him to tell about his wedding night. Sure enough, the old rascal fell right into their plans.
"My youngest son carried me in and lifted me on the bed with my young bride. We spent the night together and then my three other sons carried me off the bed."
The men scratched their heads and asked the old boy why it took his three sons to take him off when it only took his youngest boy to put him on.
Proudly he replied, "I fought them!"

Jagat Narayan, gather courage! Don't feel embarrassed. At least deep down accept it, even though you may not be able to move into a sexual relationship. The very acceptance -- total, I mean, less than that won't do -- if you accept totally, even that very acceptance will heal the wound. There may be no need to actually move into a sexual relationship. That may be even dangerous; that may create more problems for you than it will solve.

I have heard:
One Friday afternoon a couple appeared before a justice of the peace in a small town and had a marriage ceremony performed. The man must have been nearabout eighty and the girl was only twenty-two. They then drove to a motel and checked in for their honeymoon. They had a lively evening together.

The next morning the groom raised the window shade just to take a look outside, pulled it down again and went back to bed.
The next morning, Sunday, this performance was repeated. The groom raised the shade, looked out for a moment, then pulled it down and went back to his bride.
On the third morning, as he raised the shade, he flew up with it.

So it can be dangerous! Don't blame me that I am telling you to find a bambina, no! You may be too old for it. But nobody is too old to accept something that he has been denying. Drop condemning it -- respect your nature.
And my own observation is, the moment you accept something totally, the very acceptance brings a revolution, a radical change. It is your energy -- accept it. It will make you stronger. Reject it, it keeps you weak. Fighting with your own energy is dissipating it. And fighting with your sex will take so much of your time and so much of your energy -- then when are you going to look at God who is knocking on your door?
Stop fighting, stop fighting absolutely. Start respecting. Drop condemnation. Nothing is sin -- not sex at least. It is a natural phenomenon. If people are allowed to live it naturally, then at the age of fourteen they will become flooded with it. But in an unnatural society they will be flooded before their time.
Do you know? In America the boys and girls are becoming sexually mature earlier than anywhere else. In every other country the boys become sexually mature at fourteen; in America, at thirteen or twelve they become sexually

mature. There is too much sex around in the movies, on the TV, everywhere.

A small boy -- must have been six or seven -- was sitting on the steps of his house and crying big tears.
An old man came by and he asked, "My son, why are you crying?" He wanted to help the boy. He sat by his side, wiped his tears with his handkerchief and asked, "Why are you crying? What has happened?"
The little boy said, "I am crying because I can't do what other boys are doing."
And the old man started crying!
The little boy was surprised. He said, "Pop, why are YOU crying?"
He said, "I can't do what the other boys are doing either. Our problems are the same."

In America people are becoming sexually obsessed before their age. That is ugly, that is ill, that is premature. In India the opposite happens: people remain sexually interested even when they are seventy, eighty, ninety. They may not say so -- Jagat Narayan, you are at least authentic, courageous, to say it is so -- but they remain obsessed with it.
In a natural society, children will become sexually overflooded at fourteen -- a beautiful energy -- and by the time they are forty-two the energy will disappear suddenly, as it appeared at the age of fourteen. If a person lives naturally, without the interference of the priests.... Priests who are against sex or priests who are for sex -- avoid both! If a man lives naturally, then between fourteen and forty-

two his sex energy will give him tremendous joy, great experience of ecstasy, first glimpses of God and samadhi. And by the time it disappears it will leave you ripe, mature, centered, rooted.
Right now you can do only one thing: accept it totally, absorb it. It is not too late, although the sun is setting. If you can come home, if you can become natural and spontaneous about yourself, authentic, true, at least to yourself, you will be able to face God with a smile on your face. You will be able to enter death dancing, singing. And a death that can be welcomed with dance and song is not death at all. It becomes the door to the deathless, it leads you into immortality.
Enough for today.

The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 6

Talks given from 21/10/79 am to 30/10/79 am
English Discourse series
10 Chapters
Year published: 1990
The original tape and book title was "The Book of the Books, Vols 1 - 6". Later reissued as twelve volumes under the present title.

The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 6
Chapter #1
Chapter title: The security of insecurity

21 October 1979 am in Buddha Hall

HE IS AWAKE.
THE VICTORY IS HIS.
HE HAS CONQUERED THE WORLD.

HOW CAN HE LOSE THE WAY
WHO IS BEYOND THE WAY?
HIS EYE IS OPEN.
HIS FOOT IS FREE.
WHO CAN FOLLOW AFTER HIM?

THE WORLD CANNOT RECLAIM HIM
OR LEAD HIM ASTRAY,
NOR CAN THE POISONED NET OF DESIRE HOLD HIM.

HE IS AWAKE!
THE GODS WATCH OVER HIM.

HE IS AWAKE
AND FINDS JOY IN THE STILLNESS OF MEDITATION
AND IN THE SWEETNESS OF SURRENDER.

HARD IT IS TO BE BORN,
HARD IT IS TO LIVE,
HARDER STILL TO HEAR OF THE WAY,
AND HARD TO RISE, FOLLOW, AND AWAKE.

YET THE TEACHING IS SIMPLE.
DO WHAT IS RIGHT.
BE PURE.
AT THE END OF THE WAY IS FREEDOM.
TILL THEN, PATIENCE.

IF YOU WOUND OR GRIEVE ANOTHER,
YOU HAVE NOT LEARNED DETACHMENT.

OFFEND IN NEITHER WORD NOR DEED.
EAT WITH MODERATION.
LIVE IN YOUR HEART.
SEEK THE HIGHEST CONSCIOUSNESS.

Gautama the Buddha is talking today about the very essence of buddhahood: the height of buddhahood and the depth of it, the glory and the grace, the tremendous freedom that it brings, the light that it showers, the love, the joy, the bliss, the awakening.

These sutras are rare -- rarest amongst the most rare sutras, because Buddha is opening his own heart to you. He is inviting you to become a guest into his innermost core. He is revealing, in simple words, the fragrance that has happened to him and that is possible for you too -- because each man is born to be a buddha.
Unless one becomes a buddha one has not lived and one has not known what life is. One has dreamed of course -- dreams of a thousand and one things -- but one has been asleep. And whether you dream beautiful dreams or ugly dreams it does not matter. In the morning of buddhahood,

all those dreams, both good and bad, sweet and bitter, golden dreams and nightmares, will be known as false, illusory. It was a self-deception, and the capacity to deceive oneself is enormous. Beware of it! One can even dream that one is awake, one can even dream that one has become a buddha. That is the ultimate trick the mind can play upon you.

It happened in Baghdad:
A man was brought to the caliph, because the man had declared that he was the new messenger of God. The caliph was irritated, annoyed, and he said, "You must be mad, because Mohammed is the last messenger of God and there is not going to be anybody else. The message has arrived in the Koran. Yes, before Mohammed there had been other messages, but all those messages were fragmentary because man was not ready and ripe. Mohammed has brought the full message; now there is not going to be any other messenger in the world. You bring yourself to your senses; otherwise you will have to suffer for it!"
The man was thrown into the prison for seven days, tortured, beaten, starved. After seven days the caliph arrived. The man was bound to a pillar, bruised, wounded. The caliph said, "Now you must have come to your senses. What do you say now?"
The man laughed and he said, "All the torture and all the suffering that have been imposed upon me simply prove that I am really the messenger, because when God was sending me to the world he warned me that 'My messengers have always been tortured.' And I was doubting, 'Why are

people not torturing me if I am the real messenger?' You have proved it! God was right, there was no need to doubt."
The caliph was at a loss -- what to say to this madman? But suddenly another man who was also bound to another pillar started laughing hysterically. The caliph asked him, "Why are you laughing?"
The man said, "This guy is a cheat -- because I am God myself, and I have never sent this man to the world as my messenger!"
That man had been imprisoned one month before, declaring himself God.

Mohammedans are very fanatic; they can't allow -- sometimes even when it is the truth. When al-Hillaj Mansoor declared, "ANA'L HAQ! -- I am God himself!" it was a truth, he was not dreaming. But he was crucified. When Sarmad, another Sufi mystic, declared, "I am God!" his head was cut off. And these people were not dreaming. But it is very difficult from the outside to decide who is dreaming, who has gone mad, who is imagining, and who is declaring the truth. Because sometimes the dreamer believes in his dream, believes absolutely, so belief cannot prove anything. It may be just an ego trip.
The last deception that the mind can play on you is to say to you, "Why are you unnecessarily bothering? You are a buddha!" And I want you to be aware of it, because this is going to happen to many people. People can believe anything.
Just the other day a man wrote a letter to me saying, "I want to become a sannyasin, but I am a little afraid because I know that I am a Judas and I will prove to be a Judas to

you." People can believe they are Christ, they can believe they are Judas. And he must be believing it really deeply. I have sent him a message that "You can become a sannyasin. I already have many other Judases, so what difference does it make? One more is welcome!" Jesus had only one Judas: I have many, and it is better to have many -- one can prove more dangerous. If you have many Judases, first they will have to compete with each other. Their energies will be wasted amongst themselves. They will fight with each other; they will betray each other first. And Judas could betray Jesus because Jesus had only twelve disciples; I have one hundred thousand disciples.

I cannot take too much care as to who is a Judas and who is not; and I need not, because whatsoever happens is God's will. If a Judas is needed then he will have to come, that is the way God wants it to be. But your mind can play tricks with you. You can't just be a nobody -- if you cannot be Christ, at least you can be Judas. You can't accept the fact of anonymity.

And that is the very fundamental -- the first basic requirement, to enter into the world of religion: to accept oneself as anonymous, as if you have no name, no form, no identity. Then the mind cannot deceive you. Then the mind cannot seduce you into some idea, into some imagination.

Buddha is talking about what happens when a person becomes awakened. Ordinarily man is asleep, all men are asleep. Irrespective of their religion, nation, race, on one thing they all agree: they are all fast asleep -- dreaming different dreams, but the sleep is the same. The difference of dreams makes no difference to the quality of the sleep. One is dreaming Christian dreams, another is dreaming

Jewish dreams, another is dreaming Hindu dreams, and so on and so forth, but dreams can't change your consciousness. In fact they are hindrances.
The sleep has to be broken, the sleep has to be shattered; otherwise you don't know who you are, you don't know what you are doing. You don't know where you are coming from, you don't know where you are going. You don't know what you are saying and what you are doing, to yourself and to others. You are accidental. You are like driftwood at the mercy of the blind winds -- there is no destiny. The winds throw you on this shore or on that shore, but you are not the master of your own being. You are a slave, a slave of blind forces.
The first thing to be done is to come out of your sleep. Buddha says... the first sutra:

HE IS AWAKE.

He is defining buddhahood, or you can call it christhood; it is the same. Buddha and Christ are synonymous.
HE IS AWAKE. That is the most essential quality: he is no longer asleep, he is no longer dreaming. He has no thoughts, no memories, no imagination. He is utterly silent and alert. His silence is not a dead, cold silence; his silence is wakeful, warm, alive.
HE IS AWAKE: you are not -- you are so full of junk. Unless you become empty of the junk you will not be awake. And you go on doing the same things again and again, you go on repeating. You move in circles, never seeing the fact that you are functioning like a robot, like a machine.

The legend goes that in the days of ancient Rome an officer called away to the wars locked his beautiful young wife in a chastity belt and gave the key to his best friend with the admonition, "If I don't return in a year, use this key. To you, my dear friend, I entrust it."
He then galloped off to the wars. Ten miles away from home he heard the clatter of hoofbeats behind him and he waited. His friend on horseback galloped up saying, "You gave me the wrong key!"
Man is so deeply unconscious!

A couple of drunks in a bar started talking about sex.
"Say," said the first one, "have you ever gotten so drunk you kissed a broad's navel?"
"Drunker!" answered his pal.

Just watch your life and you will be absolutely in agreement with him: "Drunker!" What have you been doing? Can you say you have lived your life with awareness? Can you say your actions have the quality of awareness? Somebody insults you: do you respond or do you react? If you react, you are asleep; if you respond, you are awake.
And what is the difference between reaction and response? -- the difference is great.

Once Buddha was being insulted very much by a few people. They were shouting at him, saying all kinds of dirty words to him, and he was standing there listening to them as totally as possible.

After a few minutes they felt frustrated, because he was not saying anything, and one of them asked, "Are you deaf or something? Why don't you answer?"
Buddha said, "I am answering, but my answer is a response, not a reaction."
Naturally they asked, "What is the difference between reaction and response?"
And Buddha said, "Sit down and I will explain it to you."
And the enemies turned into disciples! They were listening to Buddha, sitting silently; listening to what he was saying. They were converted. Buddha said, "If you had come ten years ago, when I was asleep just as you are, I would have reacted. You would have pushed my buttons."
When you push the button and the fan goes on it is not a response; it is a reaction, it is mechanical. When you push the button and the lights go on or off, it is a reaction not a response. The light, the fan, or any other mechanism, has no freedom to choose; it simply reacts. Response means choice, response means "chosen with consciousness."
Buddha said, "Ten years ago if you had said these words to me I would have cut off your heads -- I used to carry a sword with me. But now I am awake. I listened to your words and I felt deep compassion for you -- that you were torturing yourselves unnecessarily. You cannot force me to do something -- I am not a machine, now I am a man. You cannot force me to do anything; I act out of my own choice. Hence it is not reaction, it is action, and action is a response. I see the whole situation, then out of my consciousness I act. At this moment I am feeling so compassionate for you, so sorry for you, that I cannot speak the same language that you are speaking to me."

The man who is asleep reacts; he knows nothing of action. And reaction is a binding: it binds you into new prisons, new chains. Response is out of freedom, hence it brings more freedom. Reaction is out of the past; you act according to your memories, built-in by your experiences, conditionings. You react not to the present, not in the present. You don't reflect the real situation as it is; you go on interpreting it according to your past, your past experiences.
The man who is awake is like a mirror: he reflects that which is the case. HE IS AWAKE.

THE VICTORY IS HIS.
HE HAS CONQUERED THE WORLD.

And Buddha says: It is only by awakening that one becomes victorious; not by conquering the world but by conquering one's unconsciousness.
There are only two types of people in the world: the Alexander the Great type and the Buddha type. There are millions... in fact ninety-nine point nine percent of people belong to the Alexander type -- small Alexanders and big Alexanders, but Alexanders all. Everybody is trying to conquer the world in his own way, big or small, through money, power, prestige. And everybody is carrying a deep desire, a great longing to succeed one day in becoming the most famous man in the world, the most powerful man in the world. This is the Alexander type, the extrovert, the worldly; he accumulates money, possessions, but he loses his soul.

And there are very rare, very few people in the world who belong to the Buddha type, who are no longer interested in the world, whose whole interest is in self-actualization, in self-realization, in becoming more aware of the reality that they are.

These are not fixed types, they are liquid. Anyone who belongs to the Alexander category can move to the category of being a buddha. And all the buddhas, in their past, had belonged to the Alexander category, and all those who are Alexanders now can become buddhas one day. It all depends on you; a conscious, deliberate choice is needed: that you turn your energies from extroversion into introversion, that you become more interested in the inner reality, that you become more interested in your subjectivity rather than in objects. You start moving, diving deeply into your interiority to find the center of your being. And the magic is, the moment you find the center of your being you have found the center of the whole existence -- because there is only one center; my center and your center are not two centers. Anybody who moves inwards comes to the same center. On the periphery we are different people; at the center we are one.

HE IS AWAKE. THE VICTORY IS HIS. And Buddha says: The real conqueror is not the one who has conquered the world but the one who has conquered himself. He has conquered the world too, not in a visible way but in a very very invisible way. He becomes the master.

Buddha came to a town. The king of the town was reluctant to go and receive him, because he said, "I am a great king and he is just a beggar."

But his prime minister -- an old man, a wise man -- insisted that, "Either you come to receive Buddha or accept my resignation."
This was too much, because that old man was absolutely needed by the kingdom. The king was utterly dependent on the old man and his advice; he could not afford to lose him. He said, "But why? Why are you so insistent? He is just a beggar, and I am a king!"
The prime minister said, "To be frank, he is the king and you are the beggar! Either you come with me to receive him or accept my resignation, because I cannot serve such a stupid person who can't see a simple fact: Buddha is the real conqueror of the world. What do YOU possess? -- a few things; they will be taken when death comes. But what HE possesses, nobody can take away, not even death. He has conquered himself, and conquering himself is conquering the world."
The young king had to go to receive Buddha. When he was bowing down to Buddha, Buddha said, "No need to bow down to a beggar!"
He was very much shocked: "How does he know?" In that shock his eyes were opened. He looked at Buddha: that grace, that beauty, that silence, that light, that love -- he had never seen it anywhere else. He bowed again.
Buddha said, "Now it is right, now it is of your heart! Otherwise you were following the advice of your prime minister. Now you are really bowing down because you have seen me."
It is rare to find a buddha and more rare to recognize him, because you go on seeing with your old eyes, with your old, stupid mind. Your stupid mind is unable to see

buddhahood. It can see only things; it cannot see the immaterial, the mysterious. It can only see the gross, not the subtle.

One Friday night Bob came home earlier than usual and surprised his attractive wife in bed with another man. Becoming enraged, he seized a pistol he kept hidden in his dresser and shot the lovers to death.
A next-door neighbor, Jim, was discussing the tragedy with some friends a few days later. Jim said, "Well, after all, it is not the worst thing that could have happened."
The others jumped on him. "What do you mean? Two people dead, and Bob may be about to be executed!"
Jim replied, "Well, I still say it could have been worse. If Bob had come home early on Thursday night, I would be dead!"

Man lives in such unconsciousness. He goes on doing things motivated by the unconscious. He is not master of his own soul. He does not know where these desires arise from; they simply possess him. And when he is possessed by a desire, he is utterly helpless.
The buddha is awake, awake to all that is happening in his being; so alert that nothing can take possession of him, so full of light that no darkness can enter into his own being. He lives in that light, he lives with that awareness. His every movement, his every act, comes out of this consciousness. Hence there is never any repentance in a buddha. He never looks back; there is no point. Each thing that he has done, he has done totally and perfectly.

You always have to look back, for the simple reason that you are always partial, fragmentary. Only a part of your being gets involved, and you do everything in such a way that you are not totally in it, never wholly in it. Later on you start thinking, "I should have done that," or "I should have done this," or "maybe a better way of doing it was possible." You start repenting, you start feeling guilty. Your actions are so incomplete, that's why there is this hang-up. When some action is done with your totality, when you are entirely in it, then once you are out of it, you are entirely out of it.

Remember this fundamental law: if you are totally into something, you can be totally out of it. If you are not totally in it you will remain involved in it even when the time is past; even when its days are gone you will remain involved in it. Some part of you will go on clinging to the past, and you will always feel miserable. Whatsoever you choose, misery is bound to follow, because sooner or later you will realize that you could have done better.

But a man of awareness knows that there is no possibility of doing it any better. Then what is the point of remembering it? He does not remember the past. Not that he has no memory -- he has a clearer memory than you have -- but that memory is just a silent storage. If he needs it, that memory can be used, but he is not a slave to the memory.

And he never thinks of the future. He never rehearses for the future, because he knows that "Whatsoever happens, I will always be there with my totality. More than that is not possible." So he simply acts spontaneously, with no memory, with no future projection. His act is total AND of

the present -- and the act which is total AND of the present brings freedom.

HOW CAN HE LOSE THE WAY
WHO IS BEYOND THE WAY?
HIS EYE IS OPEN.
HIS FOOT IS FREE.
WHO CAN FOLLOW AFTER HIM?

HOW CAN HE LOSE THE WAY WHO IS BEYOND THE WAY? By becoming fully aware you are freed from all ways, all methods, all techniques. All techniques and methods are just to bring you to the way -- the way that leads inwards. But once you have reached your innermost core, no method, no technique, no way, is needed. You have gone beyond, you have transcended all. Now you cannot go astray. How can you go astray if there is no way? Now you cannot do anything wrong. If there is no method, how are you going to do anything wrong? HOW CAN HE LOSE THE WAY WHO IS BEYOND THE WAY?
That is the state of a buddha. He cannot fall from that state, because it is not something like an achievement; it is your natural, spontaneous being. Once known it is forever yours. Even if you want to escape from it you cannot.
HIS EYE IS OPEN. Remember, Buddha is not saying: His EYES are open. He says: HIS EYE IS OPEN. We have two eyes; these two eyes look outwards. To look at the objective world we need two eyes, because the objective world is the world of duality. But there is one more eye which looks inwards; your two eyes looking inwards become one. Hence the idea of the third eye.

The third eye is only a metaphysical idea, but of great significance -- a metaphor. Not that there actually is a third eye, that if you operate on your skull you will find a third eye inside -- no. But there is an insight which is not divided in two; it is single, singular, it is one. Hence Buddha says: HIS EYE IS OPEN. Not "eyes" but "eye"; he can see inwards.

And again he says: HIS FOOT IS FREE. Not his feet, because the question is not of moving outwards but moving inwards.

In the inner world, everything is one; in the outer world, everything is two.

WHO CAN FOLLOW AFTER HIM? You cannot follow a buddha; you can understand him. You can learn much from a buddha, but you cannot follow him. You can't be a blind follower to him; you cannot simply say, "I believe."

There are a few people, particularly Indians, who come to me and say, "We don't need any meditation -- we believe in you. We don't need to go into any therapy groups -- we trust that your blessing is enough." Now these people are using beautiful words, but they are deceiving themselves. Buddha has said: Buddhas can only point the way, but you have to go on it on your own. Nobody else can walk for you and nobody else can see for you. You will have to see your inner being yourself. There, at your innermost core, you will have to go alone, absolutely alone.

But you can learn much in the presence of a buddha. You can imbibe his spirit, you can start pulsating with his energy. You can be so utterly silent in his presence that his presence becomes a great transformation for you. But

ultimately you have to go inwards alone; there, nobody can accompany you.
Buddha has said: Buddhas are like birds flying in the sky -- they don't leave any footprints. You cannot follow them, you cannot go after them. You cannot simply say, "I believe in Buddha, I believe in his compassion, and that's enough." No, it is not enough. Belief is not enough; only knowing can bring freedom. Belief brings bondage -- all beliefs bring bondage.

THE WORLD CANNOT RECLAIM HIM
OR LEAD HIM ASTRAY.
NOR CAN THE POISONED NET OF DESIRE HOLD HIM.

Once you have become awake at the center of your being, then a few things become impossible. THE WORLD CANNOT RECLAIM HIM....
The whole world with all its allurements, seductions, is absolutely impotent in impressing the buddha. He remains centered, he cannot be distracted. Distraction is possible only while you are asleep. In sleep you can decide not to be distracted, but you will be distracted. In sleep you can decide, "I will not do this," but you will have to do it.
In sleep, how many times have you decided not to be angry again? But when the opportunity arises you forget all your decisions; you are angry again. In fact, while you are deciding that "I am not going to be angry again," even then in that moment, if you look deep down, somebody is laughing, because somebody deep down knows that this is all nonsense, rubbish! And if someone else insists, "No,

you have made this decision many times before and again and again you forget, and I say to you that you will be angry again," you could become so annoyed that you become angry with that person immediately -- even that may be enough to make you angry!

I have heard:
One man suffered from great anger, so much so that he killed his wife and threw his child into a well. Once he became so angry that he burned his whole house. That was too much! And later on he repented very much.
Accidentally a Jaina monk had come to the place. He went to the Jaina monk and he said, "Initiate me, because I don't think that I will ever get rid of my anger if I don't change my life drastically."
Now, that "drastically" changing your life is again an expression of anger. A drastic change is an angry change. But the Jaina monk was as asleep as this person -- he was very happy, he was getting one disciple! He immediately initiated him.
Jaina monks live naked. He immediately threw off all his clothes. The teacher was very impressed. He said, "It took me five years, slowly slowly to drop my clothes. You are a rare man -- within a moment you have thrown off all your clothes!"
There is a procedure in the Jaina system that first you reduce your clothes to three, then to two, then to one, and then finally you drop that one too. Go slowly, practice, so that you don't feel ashamed of being naked. But a practiced thing is not a real thing; all that is cultivated is false.

The teacher was very much impressed -- but in fact it was also part of the anger of this man... who could burn his house, who could kill his wife, who could throw his innocent child into a well and kill him. This man was capable of doing anything! He could throw off his clothes and be naked. It looks like great renunciation -- it is nothing. If you look deep down, it is anger standing on its head; it is anger against anger.

Soon the man became very famous. Such people can become very famous, because whatsoever they do, they do with passion, with a certain intensity, with fire. He fasted long....

The teacher gave him the name Shantinath -- SHANTINATH means "lord of peace" -- just to remind him that he had renounced anger, now peace had to be his style of life.

And for ten years he was not angry -- not even for a single moment. In fact there was no need, no opportunity arose. Anger does not come from out of the blue; it needs a certain context. His wife was not there, his child was not there, the house, the family, the business, the people, nobody was there. And he was so highly respected; the whole country came to know about this great man, this mahatma.

He was in New Delhi. One of his old friends came to the capital, for some business purpose, but when he came to know that his friend was staying in Delhi and he had become a well-known personality -- the whole land worshipped him -- naturally he went to see him and pay his homage. But deep down he was a little suspicious, because he had known this man from his very childhood; he could

not believe that he had really become "lord of peace." He was a devil incarnate! Was it possible -- such a change and so suddenly? He was suspicious, but changes happen in the world. He went.

He had hoped that the great man would at least recognize him; they were old childhood friends -- for forty years they had known each other. But the great man had become so great now, how could he recognize his friend? He recognized -- the friend immediately knew that he had recognized him -- but he wouldn't look at him. In fact, he avoided him; that very avoiding was an indication that he had recognized him.

The friend thought that nothing had changed -- the anger had now become his ego.

When all the other people were gone the friend remained there; he came close. He asked, "Sir, can I ask your name?"

Shantinath, Lord of Peace, was a little disturbed. What stupidity! All the newspapers printed his pictures and his name. On All-India Radio his name was broadcasted, he was shown on television. Everybody knew about him, he was a household name, and this fool was asking his name! But he didn't show anything on the surface. He simply said, "My name is Shantinath."

Some metaphysical dialogue followed, and the man again asked, "Sir, I have forgotten your name. What is your name?"

Now fire came to the eyes of the mahatma! But still he tried to control, though his face was getting red. He said, "I have told you. You seem to be an idiot! Can't you understand a simple name? My name is Shantinath!"

Again some little spiritual discussion followed, and the man said, "Sir, I have forgotten your name."
Shantinath took his staff in his hand and he said, "This is the last time -- enough is enough! If you ask me the fourth time I will break your skull! My name is Shantinath -- Lord of Peace."
And the friend said, "Now I have understood. You certainly are Lord of Peace -- your red eyes, your face, your fire and the staff in your hand! No, I will not ask the fourth time. I know that you killed your wife, you killed your child -- you can kill me!"

People don't change: so unconscious, so deeply unconscious are the desires, longings -- anger, greed, sexuality -- that on the surface they may seem to be changing, but deep down they don't change. By changing your character you can't change your consciousness, but vice versa it can happen: if you change your consciousness, then your character changes.
And that is the Buddha's way, that is my way too. I give you keys to change your consciousness from sleep to awakening; that is the real thing to be done. Then all that was part of sleep disappears with sleep -- anger, greed, possessiveness, jealousy; all that was part of sleep disappears. You cannot change those things unless your sleep is gone.

Enrico Caruso was the magni-idol of the world opera society in the early 1900's. He was also privately one of the more active lovers of his time. The following remark is attributed to the great Italian tenor: "I never make love in

the morning," Caruso is supposed to have said. "It is bad for the voice, it is bad for the health, and besides you never know who you might meet in the afternoon."

Now you see the unconsciousness! And this is the way of almost everybody.

Two young women were having a conversation. One of them said, "I don't see what fun you and your husband have going out and getting drunk every weekend."
The other replied, "Well, every time he gets boozed up he thinks I am somebody else and sneaks me home the back way!"

Yes, when you are drunk you can even love your own wife. Even the impossible becomes possible when you are drunk. And this drunkenness is not new; it is very ancient, millions of years old. Hence it takes great effort to wake up. Once you are awake: THE WORLD CANNOT RECLAIM HIM OR LEAD HIM ASTRAY, NOR CAN THE POISONED NET OF DESIRE HOLD HIM.

HE IS AWAKE!

Again and again Buddha repeats: HE IS AWAKE!

THE GODS WATCH OVER HIM.

The moment you are awake the whole existence supports you, the whole existence becomes tremendously friendly. That is what Buddha means by "gods watch him, watch

over him" -- every care is taken of him. Not that there are gods, but the whole existence itself, all the elements of nature, visible, invisible, start becoming very friendly towards the man who is awake, because he is the most precious treasure. In him nature has become fulfilled, in him existence has blossomed. He is the goal of all existence: the whole existence is moving towards buddhahood. And whenever one person becomes a buddha, a shiver of joy goes all over the universe... ripples of joy, great rejoicing.
HE IS AWAKE! Remind yourself again and again, the definition of a buddha is: HE IS AWAKE! -- and you are asleep.

A couple named George and Christine had been engaged for years and had put off their wedding day repeatedly because George's work was so important to him he didn't feel he could take any time off even for a honeymoon. Finally, however, Christine's constant prodding made him weaken and they were married. They were all set to drive off to Hollywood on their honeymoon when George got a phone call from his boss.
"Yes, sir," George said, "I will be right there."
"But George," wailed Christine, "what about our honeymoon?"
"I am sorry, honey," he said, "it can't be helped. There is an emergency situation at the office and I am the only one who can take care of it. I will tell you what: you drive out to Hollywood as we planned and I will catch a plane after things are straightened out and meet you there."

"But what if I arrive before you do?" she asked. "What can I do about our honeymoon?"
"Well," George replied, "just begin without me."

Man thinks he is living, but without awareness there is no possibility of life. How can you have a honeymoon without a husband? How can you begin it?
We are born, that is true, but we are not yet alive -- and that is far more true. We have to be reborn. Just as one day a child comes out of the mother's womb; that is a physical birth... the mother's womb is a physical phenomenon. Then one day you have to come out of the womb of your psychology, of your mind.
Unless you come out of your mind and become a no-mind you will not know what life is all about, you will live in vain. You will not have your honeymoon, it is impossible. You will not know the sweetness that existence is full of and the ecstasy. That is all yours just for the asking, but you have to do one thing -- you have to risk.
The child coming out of the mother's womb risks. His risk is great, because for nine months he has known a certain way of life, the most relaxed way he will ever know: no worries, no responsibilities. He is simply enjoying. It is a long long holiday, nine months' holiday, and everything is provided for. He has not even to breathe -- the mother breathes for him. Food is supplied, everything reaches him. He goes on growing, he simply rests. Now coming out of this womb there is a risk, a great risk: losing your old style of life, so comfortable, so secure, so silent, so immensely relaxed. But every child takes the risk, comes out of the womb, enters into the world of worries, responsibilities,

anxieties, challenges. And they are needed for your maturity, for your growth.
One more time you will have to come out of the womb. That womb is your mind, and it is far more difficult to leave it. And many die in that womb, they never come out of it. Those who come out of it are the buddhas.
The way to come out of it is to become more and more a witness of your own mind; that is the way of coming out of your mind. Your witnessing creates distance, your witnessing creates a separation from the mind. Your umbilical cord is cut. Slowly slowly, your identity with your mind is dropped. You start looking at yourself as consciousness; not as mind, not as thought, but as consciousness. That is the great beginning, the real life, the real honeymoon with life, honeymoon with God.
HE IS AWAKE! THE GODS WATCH OVER HIM. And don't be worried that out of your mind you may be unprotected, insecure. The whole existence will care about you, you will be taken care of. The whole existence becomes a mother to you.
Move into the insecurity of no-mind and you will find the real security: the security of insecurity. That's the definition of sannyas: the security of insecurity.

HE IS AWAKE
AND FINDS JOY IN THE STILLNESS OF MEDITATION
AND IN THE SWEETNESS OF SURRENDER.

Again and again Buddha repeats: HE IS AWAKE -- because that is the most essential quality. Everything else follows it, everything else is secondary.

The husband came home to discover his wife in the passionate embrace of his best friend.
"I love him, John," she said to her astonished spouse.
"See here," said the friend, "we are all too sophisticated to let a situation like this get out of hand. Tell you what we will do -- we are both sportsmen; I will play you a game of gin rummy for her."
The husband thought about that for a moment. "Alright," he said, "but let us play for a penny a point on the side, just to keep it interesting."

You cannot hide your unconsciousness; it surfaces. Your reality goes on expressing itself -- you may not be able to see it, but everybody else can see it. This is a strange world! You may not see your unconsciousness, but everybody knows about it, just as YOU know about everybody else's. Because we pay more attention to people than we do to our own mind, we are capable of knowing their faults, their reasons for misery, their causes of hell. We are very wise as far as others are concerned and we are very unwise as far as we are concerned -- with our own inner being.
We are focused on others, and this creates two things: you can't help others, you can only condemn them. And your condemnation is not going to change them; in return they will condemn you.

So society becomes a game of condemning each other. Nobody sees his own faults; on the contrary, everybody tries to cover them up. Not that he does not want to see them, he does not want them to be seen by others. But you can't help it: others are bound to see, because whatsoever there is in your unconscious goes on surfacing.

Doris, Carol and Maria were arrested and brought into night court.
The judge looked at Doris and she rolled her eyes and exhibited her legs.
"What is your business?" the judge demanded.
"Well, Judge," she cooed, "I am a dressmaker and this awful cop...."
"Thirty days!" interrupted His Honor.
Carol was called and she tried the weeping stunt. "Ah, Your Honor, I am a respectable dressmaker with a family to support, a crippled mother and a dying baby."
"Thirty days!" rasped the judge.
Maria was called to order and the judge asked, "What is your business?"
"I am a whore," she answered.
"How is business?" he asked.
"Just lousy," said Maria, "what with all these dressmakers around!"

It is very easy, very very easy, to see others. Everybody is transparent to everybody else; just to himself he is completely blind.
And when Buddha says: HE IS AWAKE, he means: he has started changing his focus, his attention, from others to

himself. He is turning inwards. He is showering his whole consciousness upon his own being. In that very showering he is bathed, he becomes new, he is reborn -- AND FINDS JOY IN THE STILLNESS OF MEDITATION.

And meditation in the East is not what is understood in the West by the word. In the West, meditation means contemplation: meditating on God, meditating on truth, meditating on love.

People ask me sometimes, "You tell us to meditate, but on what?"

If you meditate ON something, you are not meditating at all, because you are again focused on something outside of yourself. It may be love, it may be truth, it may be God, it makes no difference.

Meditation in the East has a totally different meaning, just the opposite of the Western meaning. Meditation in the East means no object in the mind, no content in the mind; not meditating upon something but dropping everything; NETI, NETI, neither this nor that. Meditation is emptying yourself of all content. When there is no thought moving inside you there is stillness; that stillness is meditation. Not even a ripple arises in the lake of your consciousness; that silent lake, absolutely still, that is meditation.

And in that meditation you will know -- you will know what truth is, you will know what love is, you will know what God is. Not by meditating on God.... See the point: how can you meditate on God? You don't know anything about God. All your meditation is going to be just imagination, an exercise of imagination. You don't know truth -- what are you going to meditate upon? Some idea

given by others, some belief, some concept! It is not going to help.
Buddha's way is: first become meditation, and then in meditation, truth, God, love, and all that is transcendental will be revealed to you. Meditation opens the eye and frees the foot.
... AND IN THE SWEETNESS OF SURRENDER. And in meditation, surrender happens -- surrender to the whole. Not to any idea, not to any idol, but to the whole. Not surrender to Krishna or Christ, but to the whole of existence. Nothing is excluded, everything is included in it, from the rocks to the stars, from a blade of grass to the sun. Everything is included: this whole organic, ecstatic celebration which we call the universe.
Why do we call it the universe? Because it is one -- 'uni' means one. Although we go on behaving as if it is a multiverse; it is not, it is a universe. It is one organic unity; it is a dynamic unity and it is organic too. It is tremendous ecstasy to meet and merge into it, to dissolve yourself into it. That is surrender. The river moving into the ocean is surrender. Two lovers dissolving into each other is surrender. But these are small surrenders, indicative only, fingers pointing to the moon.
The ultimate surrender is your individuality moving into the universality. You are becoming part of the whole.

HARD IT IS TO BE BORN....

Buddha means it is hard to be born as a human being. It takes millions of lives to arrive at this stage.

HARD IT IS TO LIVE....

And even if you are born, life is not easy. It is very hard, it is difficult, arduous, a thousand and one problems always surrounding you and no solution seems possible -- insoluble problems. But these are nothing compared to the third thing:

HARDER STILL TO HEAR OF THE WAY....

To be born is hard, because you could have been a dog or a tiger or an elephant or an ant or a rosebush. There are millions of forms; from all those planes you cannot enter into buddhahood. After millions and millions of births you have come to the crossroads. Man is a crossroad: from man all the dimensions are open. And it is up to you to move, up to you to choose, up to you to be whatsoever you want to be. In the whole of existence only man is a free being. It is a glory, a great gift of God.

HARD IT IS TO BE BORN, and HARD IT IS TO LIVE. Life is not easy. And a life of unconsciousness -- how can it be easy? You create your own problems. You dig ditches into which you yourself are going to fall, you create walls which become imprisonments for you. You are your worst enemy.

Life is hard, but the hardest thing is to hear of the way: to find a buddha, a master -- a Christ, a Zarathustra, a Lao Tzu. It is very hard to find a buddha, and harder to hear him and to understand what he is saying. It is easier to misunderstand him, it is easier not to recognize him. You can find a thousand and one rationalizations and deny him.

In fact you will try, because your ego is at stake. If you recognize somebody as a buddha, that means you have to surrender. Recognizing a buddha and not surrendering to him is impossible. Recognizing a buddha and surrendering to him is a natural phenomenon.

Once you recognize somebody as awakened, enlightened, there is no way to escape, you have to surrender. If you want to escape, then be alert. From the very beginning don't recognize, from the very beginning create barriers -- as many as you can. Distort everything, bring in all your prejudices. Don't see -- close your eyes. Don't listen, become deaf. Don't feel, and escape from the buddhafield, because who knows -- sometimes it happens in spite of you.

It is happening to many here in spite of themselves. They had not come here to stay forever. They had come out of curiosity, or a friend was coming and they accompanied him, or they were just passing from Kabul to Goa, or Kathmandu to Goa... and they were trapped in Poona! Then they forgot about Kathmandu and Kabul and Goa and all disappeared, the whole world disappeared. They entered into a totally different reality. They may not have come consciously, they may have resisted, reluctantly they may have decided to be here for a few days. Seeing so many people involved, they may have thought there must be something.

It is hard to recognize a buddha, to hear him silently, without distorting, without bringing your mind in. It is hard to understand him, because he speaks from a different altitude. He speaks from the peaks of the Himalayas, and you live in the dark valleys down below. The distance is

great. He shouts so that he can reach you, but by the time his words reach you they are no longer the same. By the time they reach to your heart, much of their flavor, their authenticity, their truth, is lost. But though it is hard it happens -- and if you are courageous enough it can happen to you.
It has never been that there was not a buddha alive in the world, somewhere, in some part of the world. There has always been a source, there has always been a boat ready to take you to the other shore. If anything is missing it is just readiness on your part.
HARDER STILL TO HEAR OF THE WAY....

AND HARD TO RISE, FOLLOW, AND AWAKE.

And the hardest thing, Buddha says, is: Even if you hear a buddha it is hard to rise to those heights. It is a tremendous effort, an arduous journey, a great pilgrimage to rise to those heights... because you cannot truly understand a buddha unless YOU become a buddha yourself. The only way to understand a buddha is to be a buddha.
... HARD TO RISE, FOLLOW, AND AWAKE. Yes, you can understand intellectually, but intellectual understanding is not going to help; it may even become a hindrance. It will give you the idea in your sleep that you have understood... now there is no need to bother much more, you already know.
Intellectually, many people who come here know what Jesus says, what Buddha says. Intellectually they can analyze, they can discuss, but that is not the point. Knowing has to be existential, not intellectual. Intellect can

be used as a stepping-stone, but it is not the real temple, it is only a stepping-stone.
You have to experience what Buddha is saying; what Buddha teaches has to become your own experience. You have to become a witness to this experience. Then only have you followed, then only have you risen, then only are you awake.

YET THE TEACHING IS SIMPLE.

Buddha says: Although it is hard to find and recognize a master, hard to understand, hard to realize the understanding, actualize the understanding in your life, it still has to be said that the teaching is simple. The difficulty arises from you; the teaching is very simple. It has to be so: truth is always simple.
The complexity is in you, and it is because of your complexity that a simple truth becomes very complex. You don't want to hear or you want to hear something else. You come for consolations, not for revolutions. You come to be patted, you come to be told that you are perfectly right. You come to be accepted and loved, not to be transformed. You come to be respected. You also come so that you can feel that you are important, needed.
The deepest need of the mind is to be needed. And if you start feeling that a master needs you, that you are indispensable, that gives you a great ego, but you have missed the whole point. You come so full of ideas -- and those ideas go on making such noise in you -- that when Buddha is shouting from the housetops, even then you listen only to that which you want to listen to.

A man walks into an ice cream shop. "I will have a gallon of chocolate ice cream."
"Sorry, we are all out of chocolate," says the clerk.
"In that case I will have a quart of chocolate ice cream."
"Listen, we don't have any chocolate."
"Well, in that case I will have a double scoop chocolate cone."
"Mister, we are all out of chocolate, all out!"
"Well, I guess I will just have some chocolate ice cream in a cup."
"Wait a second!" cries the clerk. "Can you spell the water in watermelon?"
"Sure!" says the man.
"Can you spell the gold in goldfish?"
"Easy!" says the man.
"Well, can you spell the fuck in chocolate?"
"Wait a second, there is no fuck in chocolate."
"That's what I have been trying to tell you!"

But it is very difficult when you are obsessed with something to understand a simple thing. YET THE TEACHING IS SIMPLE.

DO WHAT IS RIGHT.

And in Buddha's way, the right is that which is done consciously. That is his definition of right. DO WHAT IS RIGHT.

BE PURE.

And by purity he always means innocence: a state of not-knowing, a state of functioning like a child. He perfectly agrees with Christ, that: Unless you are like a small child you will not enter into my kingdom of God.
Be a child again. Your knowledgeability is a great obstruction in the way -- remove it. Be innocent.

AT THE END OF THE WAY IS FREEDOM.

And if you can fulfill these simple things -- awareness, rightness, innocence -- which are just three faces of the same phenomenon of being conscious, of being meditative, then: AT THE END OF THE WAY IS FREEDOM. Then you will attain to absolute freedom. His word is nirvana. Nirvana means absolute freedom: not freedom for the ego, but freedom FROM the ego; not freedom for you, but freedom from yourself. Freedom to Buddha is equivalent to God. He never uses the word 'God', because God has become a bondage to many people. He uses the word 'freedom' -- moksha or nirvana.
Nirvana means cessation of the ego; literally it means blowing out a candle. Just as you blow out a candle and it disappears and cannot be found anywhere -- it disappears into the whole -- so disappears the ego of the awakened one. And in that disappearance of the ego you become unlimited. The dewdrop falling into the ocean becomes the ocean itself; then there is no limit to you. That is freedom.

TILL THEN, PATIENCE.

But it may not happen today. You may not be immediately ready to take the jump. Till then, patience is needed. Buddha says: YET THE TEACHING IS VERY SIMPLE. He has reduced it to a few words: DO WHAT IS RIGHT. That is, do everything consciously. BE PURE... innocent, childlike... and be patient. Don't be in a hurry. At the end, freedom is inevitable; it is a by-product of total awareness.

IF YOU WOUND OR GRIEVE ANOTHER,
YOU HAVE NOT LEARNED DETACHMENT.

Detachment is also one of the by-products of awareness. If you are alert you cannot wound or grieve another, because you know there is no other; it is all one reality. Wounding somebody else... is as if you are wounding yourself -- maybe your right hand wounding your left hand -- and the pain will be yours. You can wound somebody, but ultimately you have wounded yourself because there is nobody else, it is all oneness.

OFFEND IN NEITHER WORD NOR DEED.
EAT WITH MODERATION.
LIVE IN YOUR HEART.
SEEK THE HIGHEST CONSCIOUSNESS.

Simple statements, not a very complex theology that he gives to the world. He says: Don't offend anybody, avoid it. Don't hurt anybody. People enjoy hurting, because the more you can hurt, the more power you feel. But the power is of the ego, and the ego is going to become, more and more, a heavy load for you. Don't hurt. Don't feed the ego.

EAT WITH MODERATION. Buddha is always in favor of moderation: avoid excess in everything. He is not in favor of fasting. He says don't eat too much, and he says don't eat too little -- moderation. Just be in the middle, always in the middle. Be balanced, keep an equilibrium. LIVE IN YOUR HEART. And slip down from the head to the heart, from thinking to feeling, from logic to love.
AND SEEK THE HIGHEST CONSCIOUSNESS. And keep only one goal: constantly be mindful of it, remember it -- that you have to become a buddha. Less than that is not going to fulfill you.
SEEK THE HIGHEST CONSCIOUSNESS. With these simple requirements fulfilled, one day you will bloom into a one-thousand-petaled lotus. You have the potential to be a buddha; if you don't fulfill it you will live in misery, you will die in misery, you will be born again in misery, and the wheel will continue.
This is an opportunity here for you to jump out of the wheel. Don't miss the opportunity.
Enough for today.
The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 6
Chapter #2
Chapter title: Many are called; few are chosen
22 October 1979 am in Buddha Hall

The first question:
Question 1
BELOVED MASTER,
I AM CONFUSED ABOUT WHICH PATH I AM ON. SOMETIMES I FEEL FILLED WITH JOY WHEN

PLAYING, SINGING, DANCING OR FIGHTING WITH OTHERS AND I CAN ONLY SEE MYSELF BY LOOKING AT OTHERS. AT OTHER TIMES I CAN'T STAND TO BE WITH ANYONE OR RELATE AT ALL; I AM ONLY HAPPY BEING COMPLETELY WITH MYSELF. WHEN I AM WITH PEOPLE, I JUDGE THAT I AM ESCAPING MY ALONENESS AND WHEN I AM WITH MYSELF, I JUDGE THAT I AM AVOIDING LOVE.
ISN'T IT POSSIBLE TO BE ON BOTH PATHS, ALTERNATING BETWEEN THEM? HOW CAN I TELL WHEN I AM USING ONE TO ESCAPE THE OTHER?

Prem Indivar, there is no goal and no path for people like you -- you are just crazy! Buddha is talking about sane people. Buddha is a very rational person: he divides, categorizes. But there is a third category Buddha is not aware of. The Sufis know about the third category; they call them MASTAS -- the mad people.
There is no need for you to alternate, because alternating between one path and the other you will always feel this problem -- the judgment. When you are on one you will think that you are missing the other, and this will become an unnecessary anguish.
Simply be wherever you are. Enjoy the moment, all the moments -- the moments of love and the moments of meditation -- and don't be bothered with the other. In a particular moment, be totally in it. Playing, loving, dancing, singing, forget that there is another path. And while you are feeling silent, still, alone, and enjoying your aloneness, forget that there is any path called love.

It is not a question of consciously alternating between the two; otherwise you will become divided, schizophrenic, and to be schizophrenic is to fall below normal sanity. Mastas, the really mad people, don't fall below sanity -- they go above it, they transcend it. They both look mad; both are no longer in the world of reason: one has fallen below it, one has gone above it. In a sense they are alike and in a sense they are absolutely different.

Indivar, you are a masta. Rejoice in being whatsoever you are. And this is the best that can happen to a man, what is happening to you. It is just natural for you to be sometimes with others and enjoying their company, and sometimes to be with yourself and enjoying your own company. It is like day and night for you. You need not choose: the day is followed by the night of its own accord. It is like summer and winter. It is not a question of choice on your part; it is something spontaneous and natural that is happening to you. I am tremendously happy with you -- so simply be as you are. Drop this judgment.

So let me state it clearly. There are three possibilities: one, meditation; second, love; third, one can just be crazy -- no question of choice, no question of deliberately going on a certain path, forcing yourself on a certain path.

And there are many here who are in the same situation. At least twenty questions have come to me, and the problem is the same. If there is no question for you and you can enjoy meditation without ever being worried about love, then that is your path. If you can enjoy love without ever being dragged by meditation, distracted by meditation, that is your path. If you find yourself in a deep synthesis, that both are happening, then that is your path.

My whole effort here is to help you to be your natural self. Any imposition is a violation. Indivar, rejoice in being whatsoever you are. There is no goal for you, no path for you. Rejoicing is the goal, rejoicing is the path.
In fact, we are all where we should be, we are already there. The paths are needed to awaken us. Don't be disturbed by the word 'path', because it gives you the idea that you have to go somewhere, reach somewhere; it is because of the language. We have to use words, and every word is loaded with our mundane meanings.
Hence the buddhas have always found it difficult to commune with you. You can't understand silence, because you can't be silent. That is the best thing, if you can sit silently with a buddha even for a single minute... and all is conveyed.
Here, being with me, my real message is between the words -- the pauses, the intervals -- not in the words. Read me between the lines, not in the lines, and you will be able to understand me more.

There is a beautiful story:
A mystic received a letter. The letter had come from another mystic, but the letter from him was absolutely empty, nothing was written on it. There had been a problem: the man who had written the letter was older in age, but the man to whom the letter was written was older in enlightenment; he had become enlightened first. So how to start the letter?
In India, if you are writing to an older person you have to be very respectful. So how to start? How to address the person? He is younger, physically, so you cannot show

respect, you have to show love. But he is older as far as enlightenment is concerned, so you cannot talk to him as if you are talking to a young man, younger than you; you have to be respectful.
The mystic was puzzled. And if you cannot start the letter, how can you write it? So he sent the paper empty.
The other mystic received it. He read it, rejoiced in it. He was so happy that a disciple who was sitting close by asked, "You look so happy -- can I also read the letter?"
The letter was passed to the disciple, then he read it and rejoiced in it.
Then the third person who was present became interested -- there seemed to be something very mysterious! But this man was not a disciple; just out of curiosity he had come to see the man. He said, "Can I also have a look?"
Both the master and the disciple hesitated. They looked at each other -- what to say to this man? The man became even more intrigued. He said, "Is there something very mysterious in it?"
They said, "There is really nothing in it! It is a very rare letter, you will not understand its language. That's why we are hesitating. We don't want to offend you, but if you insist you can see."
The man looked this side and that side -- there was nothing at all. He returned the letter without saying anything and rushed out -- both these people seemed to be mad!

Buddhas cannot use silence with you, because then you will not understand; you will escape. They have to use words -- words which have YOUR meanings, so they have to be

very very alert in choosing their words, but even then those words are inadequate.
The word 'path' is so inadequate that Lao Tzu always uses "the pathless path." Now what is the sense of saying "pathless path"? It is empty paper. "Gateless gate," "effortless effort," "action in inaction" -- WU-WEI: all these contradictions together, paradoxes together, are just to shake and shock you out of your sleep. Otherwise there is no path and there is nowhere to go. You are already there -- you have been always there. All that is needed is: Wake up!
And, Indivar, I can see you are coming out of your dreams, your sleep. I can see you turning and tossing in your bed! The morning is not very far away.
Please don't be worried about the paths, because that worry can keep you asleep. Don't judge any moment. Don't compare any moment with another moment, because every comparison is a thought process and every thought process keeps you attached to the mind. Relax. Whatsoever happens, allow it to happen. Be in a let-go.
And I am saying these things to you because that is the easiest thing for you; just be in a let-go. God is going to come to you, you are not going to find him. The goal is going to happen to you. And it can happen anywhere; there is no path leading to it. In fact it is our own reality; we simply have to be alert to see.

In Japan there is the beautiful story of a really great buddha, Hotei. In Japan he is called the Laughing Buddha, because the moment he became enlightened he started laughing.

People asked him, "Why are you laughing?"
He said, "Because I have become enlightened!"
"But," they said, "we can't see any relationship between enlightenment and laughter. What is the point of laughing?"
Hotei said, "I am laughing because I was searching for something which was already in me. I was searching the seeker; it was impossible to seek it. Where can you seek the seeker? How can you know the knower? It was like a dog chasing its own tail or you chasing your own shadow; you cannot catch hold of it. It was so ridiculous, the whole effort was so absurd! That's why I am laughing: I have always been a buddha! Now it looks very strange that for millions of lives I remained unconscious. It seems unbelievable how I went on missing myself. Now that I have known, a great laughter is arising in me."
And it is said he continued to laugh till his death; that was his only message to the world. He must have been a man like Indivar -- just crazy, far out!

The second question:
Question 2
BELOVED MASTER,
CAN SOMEONE WHO IS NOT OPEN WAKE UP?

Deva Ashoka, it is impossible to wake up if you are not open. Opening to existence is what waking up is all about: open to the sun, to the moon, to the rain, to the wind, open to this whole celebration of the trees, of the rocks, the earth and the stars, of animals, birds, people. Existence is a celebration, a continuous festival, a carnival. If you are not open, if you are closed, if you don't have any windows and

doors towards existence, how can you wake up? Waking up and being open are synonymous.
People remain closed in their minds. They never come out of their minds and they never allow reality to penetrate to their hearts. A very transparent China Wall divides them from the world. And the world is divine, existence is God. And why do people remain closed? -- they are afraid, afraid of being open, because when you are open you are insecure, unguarded. When you are open you are vulnerable. When you are open you don't know what is going to happen, everything is a surprise. You are moving into the unknown; each moment brings the unknown to your door.
The closed mind is afraid of the unknown; the closed mind is interested in the known. Why? -- because with the known it is easier to manage. The mind knows everything about it, it is clever and efficient about it. But a closed mind is really below normal; it is not yet human. It cannot be intelligent. Intelligence needs constant challenges, encounters with reality, because only through those encounters is your intelligence sharpened; your potential becomes actual.
Deva Ashoka, it is impossible to remain closed and wake up. You are trying that, I know! But it is not possible in the very nature of things. I feel deep compassion for you. I want to help you, but you won't allow me. You won't allow me to take your hand in my hand. You won't allow my energy to touch your heart, to move it, to bring a dance to it. You remain alert -- you remain alert only to guard yourself. You are afraid, afraid of falling in deep love, because the moment you fall in deep love the ego

disappears. It is a kind of death, and one cannot be guaranteed what will happen afterwards.
Resurrection always looks like a myth, although it happens, it is inevitable. If you are ready to die, resurrection happens.
The last words of Jesus were, "Forgive these people, because they know not what they are doing. And I don't ask anything from you: let thy will be done, let thy kingdom come."
This is surrender! This is totally opening up to God: no complaint, no grudge, not even against those who are murdering him. The trust is total; it is because of this fact that the resurrection happens. It may not be an historical fact that Jesus revived after three days, but it is a metaphysical fact. And a metaphysical fact is far more real than an historical fact; it shows something of the depth of human beings. If you can die as an ego, you will be resurrected as a buddha, as a christ.
Come out of your mind, Ashoka! But we go on moving in circles....

The mother took her son to the psychiatrist and complained that he was always thinking about sex.
The doctor drew a square on a piece of paper, looked at the boy and asked, "Son, what comes to your mind when you see this drawing?"
The kid answered, "Looks like a window."
The doc said, "What do you think is going on behind that window?"
"People are behind that window," replied the kid. "They are huggin', kissin' and makin' love."

The doctor drew a circle and asked, "What comes to your mind when you see this?"
The kid said, "That's a porthole."
"And what do you think is going on behind that porthole?" inquired the doctor.
"Ah," said the kid, "There are people behind that porthole with their clothes off, drinking, making love and having a ball."
The doctor said, "Son, would you mind leaving the room? I would like to discuss this with your mother."
The boy got up to leave and as he reached the door he turned around and said, "Hey, Doc, can I have those dirty pictures you drew?"

A closed mind goes on interpreting life, existence, according to one's own prejudices and concepts, unconsciously acquired, and hence remains unavailable to the reality. Even if you come across a buddha, even if you meet Christ or Krishna or Confucius, you will miss. They can talk to you about the ultimate, but you will listen only about the mundane. They will talk about the sacred, but you will not listen to what THEY are saying; you will listen according to your closed mind. It has fixed ideas.

It was the nurse's day off, and the doctor stuck his head into the waiting room to ask, "Who is next?"
One guy got up and said, "Me, Doc."
"What's your trouble?" asked the doctor. So the guy told him. The doctor grabbed him by the arm, pulled him into his office and balled him out: "Never do that again,

especially not in a roomful of people. Next time just say that your nose or your eyes bother you."
A couple of weeks went by and the fellow came back. The nurse was off again, and when the doctor asked, "Who is next?" the same guy said, "I am."
The doctor asked, "What is your trouble?"
The guy replied, "My ear's bothering me."
"What is wrong with it?"
"I can't urinate out of it!"

Even great advice is of no use -- you will come to your own conclusion again and again.
Ashoka, that's how you have been missing much that is possible here. Be open -- you have nothing to lose. Be open! Just look: what you can lose if you open up? What have you got? But people go on guarding their emptiness, their nothingness, their begging bowls, so much afraid.

In India we have a story that once a naked man was asked, "We never see you taking a bath."
He said, "I never take a bath, because if you put your clothes on the bank and you go to take a bath in the river, somebody may steal them."
The people who were asking said, "But you are naked! Why should you be worried about the clothes?"

But man is not ready even to see that he is naked. He wants to believe that he has beautiful garments. Who wants to see one's nakedness?
And, Ashoka, you are empty, you are naked. There is nothing to lose. Relax and open. And you have all to gain,

you have everything -- the whole universe to gain. Just by waking up one becomes the master; otherwise one remains a slave.

The third question:
Question 3
BELOVED MASTER,
LET US SEE YOU GET OUT OF THIS ONE, YOU TRICKY RASCAL! YOU TELL US OFTEN THAT SANNYAS DOES NOT MEAN RENOUNCING THE WORLD, BUT THE EGO. YET WHEN WE DECIDE TO STAY WITH YOU WE END UP RENOUNCING OUR HOMES, JOBS, MONEY AND POSSESSIONS; OUR PRIVATE SPACE, SOMETIMES OUR FAMILY AND FRIENDS TOO. WE DON'T MAKE ANY FORMAL RENUNCIATION, BUT IT HAPPENS ANYWAY, AND WE FLOURISH AND ARE PERFECTLY HAPPY. YOU ARE SO DEVIOUS, IT IS BEAUTIFUL!

Sannyas can have two possibilities. One is a formal renunciation. That means repression, that means escape. That is ugly. That has been the way in the past. It is life-negative; it is anti-life. It promises you all the joys in heaven. In fact, it is out of greed that you renounce the world. The formal renunciation is pseudo; it is plastic. It is not a real flower, it has no fragrance. On the contrary, deep down it is a great greed: greed for the other life, for eternal life, for the joys of heaven.
Just look in the scriptures of the world and you will be surprised. The way they describe heaven or paradise is

nothing but the dream of a very greedy, sensuous, materialistic mind. It has nothing to do with religion at all. In the Mohammedan idea of heaven there are beautiful women; they always remain young. And not only beautiful women. Because in Mohammedan countries homosexuality has been a long long tradition, young boys are also available, beautiful young boys. And rivers of wine -- you need not go to a pub!... rivers of wine. Drink, swim, dive deep into the wine! And trees are of gold, and flowers are of diamonds and emeralds. What kind of dream is this? Whose dream is this? Greed projected. It is not renunciation. It looks like renunciation but it is not.

And the same is the case with the Hindu heaven and the Christian paradise. In fact, the Christian word 'paradise' comes from the Arabic FIRDAUS. Firdaus means a walled garden of pleasure, just as emperors and great kings used to have a walled garden of pleasure. In order to gain it you have to renounce this world.

If you look at it in the true light, then the so-called worldly people are not so worldly, not so materialistic as the so-called otherworldly. It is because of this that this country, which thinks itself very religious, is not at all religious; it is very materialistic: on the surface is religion, but deep down is the desire for pleasures.

The second kind of sannyas -- the kind I am introducing into the world -- is not one of formal renunciation. In fact, I never use the word 'renunciation' at all. I say: Sannyas is rejoicing. Rejoice in life, in love, in meditation, in the beauties of the world, in the ecstasy of existence -- rejoice in everything! Transform the mundane into the sacred.

Transform this shore into the other shore. Transform the earth into paradise.
And then indirectly a certain renunciation starts happening. But that happens, you don't do it. It is not a doing, it is a happening. You start renouncing your foolishnesses; you start renouncing rubbish. You start renouncing meaningless relationships. You start renouncing jobs which were not fulfilling to your being. You start renouncing places where growth was not possible. But I don't call it renunciation, I call it understanding, awareness.
If you are carrying stones in your hand thinking that they are diamonds, I will not tell you to renounce those stones. I will simply say, "Be alert and have another look!" If you see yourself that they are not diamonds, is there any need to renounce them? They will fall from your hands on their own accord. In fact, if you still want to carry them you will have to make a great effort, you will have to bring great will, to still carry them. But you cannot carry them for long; once you have seen that they are useless, meaningless, you are bound to throw them away.
And once your hands are empty you can search for the real treasures. And the real treasures are not in the future -- as they used to be in the old concept of sannyas. The real treasures are right now, here.

A very handsome young chap was recently hired in a large accounting firm. In a short while the young man came to Mr. Diamond, his department head, and said, "I am sorry to tell you, but some of the young ladies in this office are tempting me sorely."

"Be firm, young man," was the reply, "and you will get your reward in heaven."
A few weeks later the lad complained again. "Mr. Diamond," he said, "I don't know what to do! This time it is that beautiful redhead who is pursuing me."
"Resist, my son, and you will get your reward in heaven."
"I don't know how much longer I can resist," the young man said. "By the way, Mr. Diamond, what do you think this reward will be that I will get in heaven?"
"A bale of hay, you jackass!"

Yes, that's what you will get! If your renunciation is to get something in the other world, you will simply get a bale of hay, you jackass! Because it is greed projected, and greed is going to remain unfulfilled. The so-called religious people are greedy for the eternal -- and you become religious only when greed disappears totally.
Heaven is not somewhere else: it is a way of living. So is hell -- a style of life. Hell is living unconsciously; heaven is living consciously. Hell is your own creation, so is heaven. If you go on living unconsciously, through your unconscious desires, instincts, motives -- of which you are not the master but only the victim -- then you create hell around yourself. But if you start living a conscious life, a life of bringing more and more light to the deep, dark corners of your being, if you start living full of light, your life is moment-to-moment ecstasy.
There is no need for trees to be of gold. They are perfectly beautiful as they are. In fact, a tree of gold will be a dead tree. And the roses need not be of diamonds; roses of diamonds will not be roses, they will not be alive. And only

stupid people need rivers of wine. A man who lives consciously is so drunk with the sheer joy of breathing, with the sheer joy of being, with the joy of the birds singing and the sun rising in the morning... he is so drunk with existence that he needs no other drug -- alcohol, LSD, mescaline or marijuana. He needs nothing! He is always in a psychedelic ecstasy, and that ecstasy is something his inner being releases; it is his own fragrance. Not only is he drunk -- whosoever comes to him, stays with him, becomes drunk with his being.

I am a drunkard! If you allow yourself to be here and available to me, you are bound to become drunkards. That's what has happened. I am not devious, I am simply a drunkard! And I am not trying in devious ways to make you renounce the world; I am simply trying to make you aware of the real world. When the real is known the false disappears. To know the real as real is enough: the false disappears -- it becomes insubstantial.

If you are here with me, it is not that you had to renounce your family; on the contrary, you are here with me because you have found your family here. If you have dropped out of your job, it is not because of your being here; on the contrary, you have found your creativity here, you have found your joy here. You have found your real, authentic work; hence the false has disappeared. It is a transformation process.

But my emphasis is never on renouncing anything; my emphasis is on rejoicing more and more. And your rejoicing is bound to change your life patterns. You can't remain the same when you meditate, when you become aware. How can you remain the same? How can you go on

doing the same foolish things? It was possible when you were unconscious; it is impossible when you become conscious.

A soldier just returning from three years overseas arrived at a camp near his home town. He was naturally very anxious to see his wife, but try as he would he could not possibly wrangle more than two hours' leave.
After six hours' absence he came back to the camp. "Why the hell are you four hours AWOL?" barked the sergeant.
"Well, you see," said the soldier, "when I got home I found my wife in the bathtub, and it took me four hours to dry out my uniform!"

When you live an unconscious life you live in a different way.

When Tom, the rising young insurance executive, appeared at his friend Ed's home in the early morning hours, asking to be put up for the night, Ed was concerned by his friend's hollow-eyed appearance. "What happened, Tom? You and your wife had a fight?"
"Yeah, when I got home last night I was really beat, tired as hell, so when she asked me for fifty dollars for a new dress...."
"Yeah?"
"Well, I guess I must have been half asleep or something, because I said, 'Alright, but let us finish this dictation first.'"

Are you all British, or what? Can't you get such a simple joke? Living an unconscious life you are even bound to miss jokes!

The moment you change from mind to meditation your whole life is going to be affected. It is natural. If it is not affected, that will be something unnatural. Your relationships are bound to change.

For example, a man may believe that he loves his wife. The moment he starts meditating it will become clear and transparent whether he loves her or not. He may never have loved her. He may simply be using her as a sex object, or he may be using her as a mother substitute. He may be using her because he is unable to be alone, but he may never have loved her. He may be dependent on her; she may have great utility.

But to use another human being is immoral, ugly -- and to pretend that you love.... And I am not saying that you are consciously doing it; it may be just an unconscious thing. You may not even be aware that you don't love her; you may also think that you love her. You may not be deceiving her deliberately; you may be deceiving her and you may be deceived yourself too.

But if you start meditating, things will become clear. You will have more light in your life; just as when you bring a candle into a dark room you start seeing clearly. In the darkness the window looked like a door; now it is no longer a door. Or the painting, the frame of the painting, in the darkness and dimness looked like a window; it is no longer a window. Now that you see things clearly you cannot behave in the old way. You will have to change; you will have to rearrange your whole life.

That's what happens to every sannyasin. If your love was true, it will be deepened; if it was false, it will disappear. If your respect for your parents was just a formality, it will disappear; if your respect for your parents was a reality, it will become more and more profound. The work that you were doing -- if it was your heart's fulfillment, you will go deeper into it.

A painter will become a greater painter, a musician will have new visions, a poet will have new insights -- if the poet was really a poet, only then. If the poet was just playing with arranging words and was writing poetry just to become famous and the poetry was not his love affair, he was not ready to sacrifice his life for it, then poetry will disappear. But it is not renouncing anything. You are not renouncing anything! A few things are disappearing; a few other things will appear.

One thing is certain: after meditation, after MY sannyas, whatsoever happens is going to give you more fulfillment, more maturity, more rootedness, more centering. It will become a life which does not only grow old but also grows towards heights and depths. You will start living not only a horizontal life but a vertical life too. You will live on the horizontal as far as it is needed; otherwise ninety percent of your energies will start moving in the vertical dimension, towards heights and depths.

Then this earth, this world, becomes only an opportunity to grow. And the man who is using the world, the earth, this life, as an opportunity to grow is on the right track. If you not only grow in age but you also become grown-ups, then you have lived rightly. And it is not renunciation: it is rejoicing, it is being grateful to God.

Your society, your parents, your teachers, your priests, your politicians, they have all tried to impose something upon you, and you are carrying all that. But anything imposed on you will remain a burden and you will be crushed under the weight of it, and the weight will go on growing every day. The function of the master is to undo what the teachers, priests, parents and politicians have done to you. Here I only make things clear to you. I don't impose any discipline. I don't give you any character. I simply give you more consciousness, more light. Then you have to find your character. Then you have to find your life-style, your life pattern.

I give you just a small candle; then you can find your path into the darkness of life. And even a small candle is enough. If a little space around you becomes lighted and you can take three, four steps in the light, that's enough; because by the time you have taken four steps, the light goes four steps ahead of you. With a small candle one can pass through ten thousand miles of darkness.

And I am not against life at all, as the old sannyas was. The old sannyas had a very strange idea: that if you want to attain to God, you have to be anti-life -- as if God were against life. If God was against life, life would not exist even for a single moment. Who goes on nourishing life? Who goes on pouring energy into life?

The great Indian poet, Rabindranath, has said, "Whenever a child is born, I dance, I rejoice. Why? Because a new child gives me an absolute certainty that God has not yet become hopeless, that he still hopes. Each new child brings this certainty to the world, that God is still interested in humanity, that he has not abandoned the project, that he

still hopes that buddhas will be born, that he still goes on creating new children, that he is not tired, that his hope is infinite and his patience is infinite."

God loves the world. It is his creation. To deny it is to deny him. If you deny the painting, you have denied the painter. If you condemn the poetry, you have condemned the poet. If you reject the dance, you have rejected the dancer. And this stupid logic has been going on for centuries: accept God, praise God, and deny life! And these same people went on saying again and again that God created the world. Then why did he create the world? So that you can renounce it? So that you can reject it? So that you can condemn it and become great saints?
God created the world as an opportunity to grow. Growth needs many many opportunities, challenges.

I have heard a story:
A farmer, an old farmer, mature, seasoned, one day was very very angry with God -- and he was a great devotee. He said to God in his morning prayer, "I have to tell it as it is -- enough is enough! You don't understand even the ABC of agriculture! When the rains are needed there are no rains; when the rains are not needed you go on pouring them. What nonsense is this? If you don't understand agriculture you can ask me -- I have devoted my whole life to it. Give me one chance: the coming season, let ME decide and see what happens."
It is an ancient story. In those days people had such trust that they could talk directly to God, and their trust was such that the answer was bound to happen.

God said, "Okay, this season you decide!"
So the farmer decided, and he was very happy because whenever he wanted sun there was sun, whenever he wanted rain there was rain, whenever he wanted clouds there were clouds. And he avoided all dangers, all the dangers that could become destructive to his crops; he simply rejected them -- no strong winds, no possibility of any destruction to his crops. And his wheat started growing higher than anybody had ever seen; it was going above man's height. And he was very happy. He thought, "Now I will show him!"

And then the crop was cut and he was very puzzled. There was no wheat at all -- just empty husks with no wheat in them. What happened? Such big plants -- plants big enough to have given wheat four times bigger than ordinary wheat -- but there was no wheat at all.
And suddenly he heard laughter from the clouds. God laughed and he said, "Now what do you say?"
The farmer said, "I am puzzled, because there was no possibility of destruction and all that was helpful was provided. And the plants were going so well, and the crop was so green and so beautiful! What happened to my wheat?"
God said, "Because there was no danger -- you avoided all dangers -- it was impossible for the wheat to grow. It needs challenges."

Challenge brings integrity; otherwise a person remains hollow, empty. If all facilities are provided for you and

there is no danger in your life, you will remain hollow and empty. God gives life with all its dangers.
My sannyas is to accept this challenge. To live dangerously is what my sannyas is all about. The more dangerously you live, the more risks you take, the more you grow, the more you become integrated, crystallized, the more your soul becomes a clear-cut, well-defined phenomenon. Otherwise it remains vague, cloudy, doubtful.
I am all for life. If you ask me, God and his creation are not two separate things. The creator has become his own creation. The creation and the creator are one. I am in immense love with life. And this is my message to you: Love life totally! Get involved with life! Don't hold back, because whatsoever you hold back will remain empty. Become committed to life: a multidimensional commitment is needed.
Scientists say that even the greatest human beings use only fifteen percent of their potential -- even the greatest! What about normal people? They use only five to seven percent of their potential. Just think: if every person was using one hundred percent of his potential, if each person was a torch burning from both ends together, with intensity, with passion, with love, then life would be a sheer celebration. And you would see so many christs and so many buddhas walking on the earth! But because of this old idea of renunciation we have missed much.
I want to bring a totally new concept of sannyas to the world: a sannyas that loves, a sannyas that knows how to become committed, a sannyas that goes to the deepest core of life.

But nobody else can decide it for you. Not even I can decide for you. I can only make things clear to you. I can give you the map, but you have to go, you have to journey, you have to move. And remember one thing: my map will really be MY map and it can't be exactly your map. It may give you a few hints, a few indications, but it can't exactly be your map because you are a totally different person. You are so unique that nobody else's map can be your map. Yes, by understanding my map you will become aware of many things about yourself, but you are not to follow it blindly; otherwise you will become a pseudo human being.
Listen to me, to my words, to my silence, to my being. Try to understand what is happening here, what is transpiring here, and then decide on your own. Don't throw the responsibility on anybody else's shoulders. This is the way to grow. This is the way to arrive.

The fourth question:
Question 4
BELOVED MASTER,
I HAVE MANY FRIENDS, BUT THE QUESTION: WHO IS A REAL FRIEND? ALWAYS ARISES IN MY MIND. WILL YOU SAY SOMETHING ABOUT IT?

Satyam, you are asking from the wrong end. Never ask, "Who is my real friend?" Ask, "Am I a real friend to somebody?" That is the right question. Why are you worried about others -- whether they are friends to you or not?
The proverb is: A friend in need is a friend indeed. But deep down that is greed! That is not friendship, that is not

love. You want to use the other as a means, and no man is a means, every man is an end unto himself. Why are you so worried about who is a real friend?

A young honeymoon couple were touring Southern Florida and stopped at a rattlesnake farm along the road. After seeing the sights they engaged in small talk with the man that handled the snakes.
"Gosh!" exclaimed the young bride, "You certainly have a dangerous job! Don't you ever get bitten by the snakes?"
"Yes, I do," answered the handler.
"Well," she insisted, "just what do you do when you are bitten by a snake?"
"I always carry a razor-sharp knife in my pocket, and as soon as I am bitten I make a deep, criss-cross mark across the fang wound and then suck the poison from the wound."
"What? Ah, what would happen if you were to accidentally sit on a rattler?" persisted the bride.
"Ma'am," answered the snake handler, "that will be the day I learn who my real friends are!"

Why are you worried?
The real question has to be: Am I friendly to people? Do you know what friendship is? It is the highest form of love. In love, some lust is bound to be there; in friendship, all lust disappears. In friendship nothing gross remains; it becomes absolutely subtle.
It is not a question of using the other, it is not even a question of needing the other, it is a question of sharing. You have too much and you would like to share. And whosoever is ready to share your joy with you, your dance,

your song, you will be grateful to him, you will feel obliged. Not that he is obliged to you, not that he should feel thankful to you because you have given so much to him. A friend never thinks in that way. A friend always feels grateful to those people who allow him to love them, to give them whatsoever he has got.

Love is greed. You will be surprised to know that the English word 'love' comes from a Sanskrit word LOBH; lobh means greed. How lobh became love is a strange story. In Sanskrit it is greed; the original root means greed. And love as we know it is really nothing but greed masquerading as love -- it is hidden greed.

Satyam, making friendships with the idea of using people is taking a wrong step from the very beginning. Friendship has to be a sharing. If you have something, share it -- and whosoever is ready to share with you is a friend. It is not a question of need. It is not a question that when you are in danger the friend has to come to your aid. That is irrelevant -- he may come, he may not come, but if he does not come you don't have any complaint. If he comes you are grateful, but if he does not come, it's perfectly okay. It is his decision to come or not to come. You don't want to manipulate him, you don't want to make him feel guilty. You will not have any grudge. You will not say to him that "When I was in need you didn't turn up -- what kind of friend are you?"

Friendship is not something of the marketplace. Friendship is one of those rare things which belong to the temple and not to the shop. But you are not aware of that kind of friendship, you will have to learn it.

Friendship is a great art. Love has a natural instinct behind it; friendship has no natural instinct behind it. Friendship is something conscious; love is unconscious. You fall in love with a woman.... Why do we say "falling in love"? That phrase is significant: "falling in love." Nobody ever rises in love, everybody FALLS in love! Why do you fall in love? -- because it is falling from the conscious to the unconscious, from intelligence to instinct.

What we call love is more animalistic than human. Friendship is absolutely human. It has something for which there is no inbuilt mechanism in your biology; it is nonbiological. Hence one rises in friendship, one does not fall in friendship. It has a spiritual dimension.

But don't ask, "Who is a real friend?" Ask, "Am I a real friend?" Always be concerned with yourself. We are always thinking about others. The man asks whether the woman really loves him or not. The woman asks whether the man really loves her or not. And how can you be absolutely certain about the other? It is impossible! He may repeat a thousand times that he loves you and he will love you forever, but still the doubt is bound to persist: "Who knows whether he is speaking the truth or not?" In fact, repeating something a thousand times simply means it must be a lie, because truth need not be repeated so much.

Adolf Hitler in his autobiography says, "There is not much difference between truth and a lie. The only difference is that truth is a lie repeated so often that you have forgotten that it is a lie."

That's what the experts in advertisement will say: go on repeating, go on advertising. Don't be worried about whether anybody is listening or not. Even if they are not

paying any attention, don't be worried; their subliminal minds are listening, their deepest core is being impressed. You don't look at advertisements very consciously, but just passing through them in the movie, on TV or in the newspaper, just a glance and there is an imprint. And it is going to be repeated again: "Lux toilet soap" or "Coca-Cola"....

Coca-Cola is the only international thing. Even in Soviet Russia: "Coca-Cola...." Everything American is banned and barred, but not Coca-Cola. Coca-Cola is the only international thing! Go on repeating it!

In the beginning electricity was used for advertisements -- static electricity was used. It remained "Coca-Cola." But later on they discovered that if you put it on and off it is far more effective, because a man passing by will read it only once if the light remains static. But if it changes, goes on and off again and again, by the time you pass it, even in a car, you will have read it at least five to seven times: "Coca-Cola, Coca-Cola, Coca-Cola...." That goes deeper. And sooner or later you become impressed.

That's how all the religions have lived up to now: they go on repeating the same stupid beliefs, but those beliefs become truths to people. People are ready to die for them! Now, nobody has seen where heaven is, but millions of people have died for heaven.

Mohammedans say that if you die in a religious war you will immediately go to heaven and all your sins are forgiven. And Christians also say that in a religious war, in a crusade, if you die you immediately go to heaven; then everything else is forgiven. And millions of people have died and killed others, believing that this is a truth.

We have seen such things happening even in this twentieth century; it doesn't seem to be very grown-up in that way. Adolf Hitler repeated for twenty years continuously that "Jews are the cause of all misery," and a very intelligent nation like Germany started believing in him. What to say about ordinary people? -- even people like Martin Heidegger, one of the greatest philosophers Germany has produced in this century, believed that Adolf Hitler was right. He supported Adolf Hitler.

A man of the intelligence of Martin Heidegger supporting a stupid, mad person like Adolf Hitler! What must the secret be? The secret is: repeat, go on repeating. Even Jews started believing that it must be true: "We must be the cause; otherwise how could so many intelligent people believe it? If so many people believe it, there must be something in it!"

You have been brought up with such beliefs, such ideas, which have no foundation in reality. And if you go on living according to them you will live in vain. You have to go through a radical change.

Ask questions about yourself, don't ask about others. It is impossible to be certain of the other and there is no need either. How can you be certain of the other? The other is a flux. This moment the other person may be loving, and the next moment he may not be loving. There can be no promise. You can only be certain about yourself, and that too only for the moment. And there is no need to think of the whole future. Think in terms of the moment and the present. Live in the present.

If this moment is full of friendship and the fragrance of friendship, why be worried about the next moment? The

next moment will be born out of this moment. It is bound to be of a higher, deeper quality. It will bring the same fragrance to a higher altitude. There is no need to think about it -- just live the moment in deep friendship.

And friendship need not be addressed to anyone in particular; that is also a rotten idea, that you have to be friends with a certain person -- just be friendly. Rather than creating friendship, create friendliness. Let it become a quality of your being, a climate that surrounds you, so you are friendly with whomsoever you come in contact.

This whole existence has to be befriended! And if you can befriend existence, existence will befriend you a thousandfold. It returns to you in the same coin but multiplied. It echoes you. If you throw stones at existence you will be getting back many more stones. If you throw flowers, flowers will be coming back.

Life is a mirror, it reflects your face. Be friendly, and all of life will reflect friendliness. People know perfectly well that if you are friendly to a dog even the dog becomes friendly to you, so friendly. And there are people who have known that if you are friendly to a tree, the tree becomes friendly to you.

Try great experiments in friendships. Try with a rosebush, and see the miracle: slowly slowly, it will happen, because man has not been behaving with trees in a friendly way; hence they have become very much afraid.

But now scientists say that when you come with an axe to cut down a tree, even before you have started cutting it, the tree goes into a shiver, a cold shiver. It goes into a great fear, panic. You have not even started, but just the intention -- as if the tree becomes aware of your intention! Now they

have sophisticated instruments just like cardiographs, which can make graphs on paper showing what the tree is feeling. When the tree is feeling joyous, there is a rhythm in the graph; when the tree is feeling afraid, the fear is shown on the graph. When the tree sees the friend coming it rejoices, it jumps, it dances; the graph immediately shows a dance. When the tree sees the gardener coming....

Have you ever said hello to a tree? Try it, and one day you will be surprised: the tree also says hello in her tongue, in her own language. Hug a tree, and a day will come soon when you will feel that it was not only you who were hugging the tree -- the tree was responding, you were also hugged by the tree, although the tree has no hands. But it has its own way of expressing its joy, its sadness, its anger, its fear.

The whole existence is sensitive. That's what I mean when I say that existence is God.

Be friendly, Satyam, and don't be worried whether anybody is friendly towards you or not -- that is a businesslike question. Why be worried? Why not transform the whole existence into a friend towards you? Why miss such a great kingdom?

The last question:

Question 5

BELOVED MASTER,

WHY ARE THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD COMING TO YOU?

It is a very difficult question for me to answer. How can I answer on behalf of thousands of people who are coming to me? They have different reasons.

A few are coming to me because I have called them: they may know it, they may not know it. There is more possibility that they will not know it, at least not in the beginning. Only later on, as they become immersed into my commune, into my world slowly slowly, they will become aware that they have been called forth, just as Jesus called to Lazarus in his grave, "Lazarus, come out!" and he came out of his grave.

The life that you have lived has been life in a grave -- and I have called you. A few of you are being called. That's why you are here. About these people I can say why they are here because I have called them. They have been with me for many lives: this is a long long love affair with them. This is not the first time that they are with me: this is the LAST time certainly, because I am not going to come again. I have called them because of certain promises made in the past.

But there are many kinds of people. A few have come just accidentally; but even though they have come accidentally they have a certain potential in them and their potential became involved with me. They were not coming consciously, they were not called -- they were just passing by -- but they got caught in the net.

A few have come for certain needs to be fulfilled. There are a few people who are in search of father figures; because Friedrich Nietzsche says, "God is dead," and once God is dead man feels empty. The West is feeling very empty:

God is dead, and God was the father, the permanent, eternal father.

It is not an accident that Christian priests are called "father," although it is very strange because they don't have any children, they are unmarried. It is a strange world: unmarried priests are called "father"! But it is perfectly logical, because the Christian idea of God is also without a woman. How do they manage it? God the Father, Christ the Son -- at least let the Holy Ghost be a woman! But they don't even allow the Holy Ghost! The trinity is not true: it is lacking something; it is missing something -- the feminine energy is missing.

But at least God was there. If not the mother, God was there as the father, a protector. And people were feeling protected -- whether there was a God or not was not the question, but people were feeling protected. And on the earth was the father, the priest and the pope -- or PAPA -- the great father, the highest priest. 'Pope' also means father -- 'papa', 'popa', 'pope', or whatsoever you call him!

But the Vatican has lost its grip on the West; the relationship between the pope and the West is only formal. Christianity has become a Sunday religion. And exactly the same is the case in the East: all religions have become formal. Now people are in search of a father figure.

A few people come because they are missing protection, they need protection. Either they will escape from me, because I don't give protection... on the contrary, I take all security away. I give you insecurity, because to me insecurity is the right situation in which one grows. If there is no God, no father, the whole responsibility falls on your own shoulders -- and it is good, it is perfectly good.

I absolutely agree with Friedrich Nietzsche. Buddha also agrees. Buddha says there is no God, Mahavira says there is no God, for the simple reason that the idea of God has been dangerous -- dangerous in the sense that people feel protected and they stop growing. If you are unprotected, if you are under the sky, then you have to depend on your own self. Then you have to become stronger, more integrated. Then you are free to live in hell or in heaven; nobody can reward you and nobody can punish you.
A few people are coming because they are missing a father figure. If they stay with me I will transform this situation into a beautiful, positive phenomenon; if they escape, then it is up to them. It is very easy for them to escape, because they will see that I am destroying them. If any idea of protection is left in their minds I am destroying that too. I am taking away all patterns, structures, strategies of the mind.
I want you to be utterly alone, so alone that you have to fall upon yourself -- there is nowhere else to go -- that you have to stand on your own legs, that you can't use any crutches.
A few other people are coming to find some kind of consolation. They will also be shocked, because I don't give any kind of consolation.

A pretty model took her troubles to a psychiatrist. "Doctor, you must help me!" she pleaded. "It has gotten so that every time a man takes me out I wind up in bed with him, and then afterwards I feel guilty and depressed all day long."
"I see," nodded the psychiatrist, "and you want me to strengthen your willpower?"

"Heavens, no!" exclaimed the model. "I want you to fix it so I won't feel guilty and depressed afterwards!"

People, many people, consciously or unconsciously, are here to find some kind of consolation -- some kind of consolation so they don't feel guilty, so that they don't feel unworthy. I am not here to give you consolations. Why give consolations when I can give you the real thing? Why give you plastic toys when I can help you to grow into a soul?

A few other people come because they are on the verge of going insane; psychology, psychoanalysis and psychiatry have not been of much help. It can help only up to a point. It can help a person to be normal if his madness is ordinary madness, but it cannot help a person if his madness has something spiritual in it.

People like R.D. Laing are becoming aware of it: that if a person's madness is because he is too sensitive, too alert and too aware of the misery in which people are living -- and he himself is living; if he becomes aware of the meaninglessness of this whole life that we have created on this earth, he is bound to go berserk. He will not be able to bear it -- it will be unbearable. Those people cannot be helped by psychiatry or psychoanalysis. Those people can only be helped if something like meditation starts happening in their being.

So if some ordinarily insane person comes here I send him back to the West, because psychiatry is perfectly capable of helping him. There is no need for me to waste my time on that kind of person: there are other plumbers who can do that! I do a special kind of plumbing. If your insanity is

spiritual then I am here to help you. And spiritual insanity is really a beautiful beginning; it can become the greatest blessing in your life. It is a blessing disguised as a curse. But still the question is difficult because there are so many people and each person comes with a different motive. But I am not much concerned about your motives -- I know why I am here and I go on doing my thing, irrespective of why YOU have come here!

Those who have something significant growing in them are bound to remain with me -- those who are courageous enough to move beyond the boundaries of the mind, beyond all boundaries and all limits. Those who are not courageous will leave of their own accord.

Many will be called; few will be chosen. Thousands will come, but only a few will be transformed. It is all up to you. You can use this opportunity that I am making available to you; you can miss it too. I cannot be forced upon you. I am available; you can share. You can look through my eyes. I have opened a door and I am standing at the door welcoming you.

Why you have come is not the point. Come in!

Enough for today.

The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 6

Chapter #3

Chapter title: A slave in your own house

23 October 1979 am in Buddha Hall

MASTER YOURSELF ACCORDING TO THE LAW.

THIS IS THE SIMPLE TEACHING OF THE AWAKENED.

THE RAIN COULD TURN TO GOLD
AND STILL YOUR THIRST WOULD NOT BE SLAKED.
DESIRE IS UNQUENCHABLE
OR IT ENDS IN TEARS, EVEN IN HEAVEN.

HE WHO WISHES TO AWAKE
CONSUMES HIS DESIRES
JOYFULLY.

IN HIS FEAR A MAN MAY SHELTER
IN MOUNTAINS OR IN FORESTS,
IN GROVES OF SACRED TREES OR IN SHRINES.
BUT HOW CAN HE HIDE THERE FROM HIS SORROW?

HE WHO SHELTERS IN THE WAY
AND TRAVELS WITH THOSE WHO FOLLOW IT
COMES TO SEE THE FOUR GREAT TRUTHS.

CONCERNING SORROW,
THE BEGINNING OF SORROW,
THE EIGHTFOLD WAY,
AND THE END OF SORROW.

THEN AT LAST HE IS SAFE.
HE HAS SHAKEN OFF SORROW.
HE IS FREE.

THE AWAKENED ARE FEW AND HARD TO FIND.
HAPPY IS THE HOUSE WHERE A MAN AWAKES.

BLESSED IS HIS BIRTH.
BLESSED IS THE TEACHING OF THE WAY.
BLESSED IS THE UNDERSTANDING AMONG THOSE WHO FOLLOW IT,
AND BLESSED IS THEIR DETERMINATION.

AND BLESSED ARE THEY WHO REVERE
THE MAN WHO AWAKES AND FOLLOWS THE WAY.

THEY ARE FREE FROM FEAR.
THEY ARE FREE.

THEY HAVE CROSSED OVER THE RIVER OF SORROW.

MASTER YOURSELF ACCORDING TO THE LAW.
THIS IS THE SIMPLE TEACHING OF THE AWAKENED.

Man can either be interested in domination and mastering others, or he can be interested in mastering his own self. The first category is the category of the fools, but they make the major part of history: Genghis Khan, Tamerlane, Nadirshah, Alexander, Napoleon, Stalin, Hitler, Mao.... History is full of the names of the first category. It is a wrong kind of history to teach.

The right kind of history will teach about the buddhas: those who have tried and conquered themselves. It is far more arduous to conquer oneself. It needs far more integrity, awareness, strength, will, trust, surrender. It requires all the great qualities of consciousness. It basically requires consciousness. One can master oneself only if one is absolutely alert; otherwise you remain dominated by your desires.

You are a slave in your own house. One desire pulls you towards the south, another towards the north, and you are at the mercy of those blind desires. You are always falling apart. It is difficult even to manage to remain together: so many desires, so many attractions, so many objects alluring you. And you are simply in an insane state, running hither and thither, not knowing why, not knowing whether it is worth it at all.

But man is born unconsciously, although he has the potential to become conscious. And the potential will remain only a potential unless you work hard to actualize it. One is born with an intrinsic capacity to conquer oneself, but your whole energy becomes extrovert. Living with people who are extrovert, ambitious, desiring this and that, the child also starts imitating. He learns from others -- from his parents, teachers, priests, politicians -- and these are all in the same boat. Somebody is after money, somebody is after power, somebody is after fame, but nobody seems to be interested in one's own self. Nobody seems to be ready to go on that great pilgrimage of self-discovery.

Buddha says: MASTER YOURSELF.... If you are at all interested in mastery -- and who is not interested? -- then become interested in self-mastery. Don't waste your time in

trying to dominate others. The effort to dominate others creates political conflict; the whole world is full of it. Even in personal relationships politics enters and destroys them. Even when you love a woman or a man, the mind starts its cunning ways to dominate, to possess, to destroy the freedom of the other... because you are afraid. You are afraid that if YOU don't dominate, the other is going to dominate you.

And for all those who want to dominate others, Machiavelli is the teacher. In India also a similar type of man has existed; his name was Chanakya. He preceded Machiavelli by thousands of years. Both men are the foundations of the extrovert mind; they have laid the foundations. And their first foundation is: the best way to defend yourself is to attack. Hence, before the other attacks you, attack the other. Before your wife starts dominating you, you dominate her, or before your husband starts dominating you, you dominate him.

A young man was going to get married. He asked his father, "Is there any advice for me?" And the father whispered something into his ear. The young man laughed and said, "I will take care of it."

He went to the town to get married. As the couple were coming back to the village, the horse who was carrying them from the town stopped. The young man was very angry. He said to the horse, "This is the first time -- I can forgive you, but remember, I can forgive you only two times."

The horse moved, but again he stopped at another place and wouldn't budge. The young man said, "This is the second time -- now be alert!"
And when the horse stopped for the third time, the young man got down, took his pistol and shot the horse immediately then and there. The horse fell down.
The wife could not believe her eyes -- what cruelty! She said, "What are you doing?"
He said, "This is the first time.... Remember, you have only two more chances."
And from that day, it is said, his wife always followed him. What else to do?

This has been the way down the ages: either the husband dominates or the wife. In ninety-nine percent of the cases the wife dominates, because the husband is trying to dominate in the outside world, in the marketplace. He comes home so tired, he comes home so frustrated, he has no desire, will or power to fight with the woman. And the woman has been waiting the whole day, accumulating. Her energies are fresh and she has nowhere to go to dominate anybody else; only the husband is her dominion.
Man has imprisoned woman in the house at a great cost, because he has taken away all other possibilities of going on ego trips. Now only one outlet is left -- he himself -- and he is suffering a lot. In fact, the Women's Liberation movement is not only woman's liberation; if it really happens, it will be far more MAN'S liberation. Hence I don't see any intelligent man against it; all intelligent men are for it, because they know if the woman really becomes free they will be free too. It is going to be freedom for both.

It is one of the laws of life: either you both can be free or you both will be slaves. It is not possible that one should be the master and the other should be the slave. The law is that the master is always a slave of his own slave, because his mastery also depends on the slave. Without the slave he will not be a master at all.

The child finds all these people around, running in the same direction. The child is vulnerable, open, ready to be impressed. It is very difficult for the child to find a Buddha, to find a Jesus. He always finds these stupid people living their lives in absolute unawareness. He starts imitating them. By the time he is of age he is already structured, programmed, conditioned.

Unless you make a great effort to get out of this conditioning you will not be free. Unless you make a great, concentrated, determined decision that you have to get out of it -- even if life itself needs to be staked you are ready to stake your life for the freedom from all kinds of conditionings -- there is not much possibility. But you can make the decision.

This is what sannyas is: a determination, a decision, a commitment -- a commitment to yourself, a gift to yourself.

MASTER YOURSELF... because mastering yourself you enter into the kingdom of God, you enter into the real world of peace and bliss. You enter into your own treasures -- they are inexhaustible. You come to know for the first time the richness of your being, the beauty of your being and the ecstasy of your being.

MASTER YOURSELF ACCORDING TO THE LAW.

Now, there is a possibility you may misunderstand Buddha, because "according to the law" in the eyes of Christians and

Jews and Mohammedans means according to the law prescribed in their books: the Ten Commandments, the Koran, the Bible. That is not the meaning of Buddha. "According to the law" does not mean the law of the state or the law given by the priests. "According to the law" for Buddha means according to the ultimate law of life and existence.

There is a tremendous harmony -- anybody just a little bit sensitive, intelligent, can feel it -- life is a harmonious whole. It is not a chaos, it is a cosmos. Why is it not a chaos? -- because a law runs through and through it like a thread in a garland. That thread is invisible, you see only the flowers, but that thread is keeping them together. Existence is a garland; there is a thread, a SUTRA -- sutra means thread -- a very thin thread, almost invisible, running through the whole existence, that makes it a cosmos instead of a chaos.

"According to the law" in the words of Buddha means: Be in harmony with nature, existence. Don't fight with it, don't go against it. Don't try to go upstream, to flow upstream. To be in a let-go with existence is to follow the law. AES DHAMMO SANANTANO -- this is the inexhaustible law: that if you relax, if you allow the law to take you over, to possess you, you will be overflooded with it. You need not go on an ego trip. The river is already flowing to the ocean -- you simply flow with the river. No need to swim either -- float, and you will reach the ocean.

MASTER YOURSELF ACCORDING TO THE LAW. Buddha makes that condition, because the danger is that in trying to master yourself you may use the same strategy that you have been using in mastering others. That's what

so many monks have done in the past: just as they fight with others they start fighting with themselves, but the fight continues. The object changes, the enemy changes, but the fight continues.

And they fall into a far deeper mess, because when you fight with yourself you have to divide yourself in two, you have to become two parties. You have to condemn some part of your being as the enemy. It may be sex, it may be your body, it may be your mind, anything, but you have to divide yourself in two: the higher and the lower, the heavenly and the earthly, the material and the spiritual, the body and the soul... and then you start fighting. Then YOU are the soul, and fight the body. Again you have become an extrovert.

In fact, the introvert cannot fight; there is no possibility, because there is no other. With whom are you going to fight and who is going to fight, and for what? You alone are left; when you move inwards only your consciousness is there. There is no reason, no possibility to fight. And any effort to fight with yourself is bound to create a split in you -- and that's what has happened to the whole of humanity. The whole humanity has been reduced to a state of neurosis; it is schizophrenia. Everybody is split. And your so-called religious people are responsible for this great calamity. Man is not functioning as a whole, not as an integrated whole; he functions as a divided, split personality. That's why it is so difficult to trust man: one moment he says one thing, another moment just the opposite -- because one moment he may be talking from one side of his being -- his soul side -- another moment he may be talking from the other side -- the body side.

Howsoever you divide yourself, in reality you remain indivisible. You are not body and soul; you are bodysoul, you are psychosomatic, you are one individual, indivisible entity. Hence Buddha reminds you: don't start fighting with yourself in order to become a master.

That's what so many stupid people down the ages have been doing: fasting; torturing themselves; lying down on a bed of thorns; wounding their bodies; destroying their eyes; cutting off their sexual organs. Millions of people have done such stupid things. Studying them, they seem to be unbelievable.

In Russia there was a cult, a Christian cult, whose fundamental ritual was to cut off their sexual organs. Thousands of people used to do it. The women would cut off their breasts, the men would cut off their genital organs. And each year there was a particular day when they would gather by the thousands, and it would be done in mass madness. One person would do it, another would follow, and then there would be a frenzy. And thousands would start cutting off their sexual organs and the blood would be all over the place. They were just mad people, but they were worshipped.

Now there was a problem for the cult: how to increase their numbers. So they would purchase or steal children. That was the only way; otherwise they would never have a great religion with millions of followers. No religion wants to use methods of birth control for the simple reason that that reduces their numbers. Catholics are against it, Mohammedans are against it, Hindus are against it. Everybody is against birth control for the simple reason that it will reduce their numbers -- and numbers are power.

The more people follow your church, the more powerful you are. This is part of politics, power politics. They are not concerned about the future of humanity, they are not concerned with the misery of people, they are not concerned with poverty.

To give birth to a child now is almost a crime, because the world is already overpopulated. Half of humanity is starving, and by the end of this century the starvation is going to be so acute, so intolerable, that the earth is going to become a mad planet. Either suicide or murder will be the only possible ways for people to exist, and both are wrong.

And the Catholic pope and the Hindu shankaracharya and the Hindu priests, these will be the responsible persons, because they are all against birth control. They talk beautifully, they rationalize beautifully, that they are against birth control because birth control is against nature. If birth control is against nature then the pope of the Vatican should be against medicine, because that too is against nature. If a person is dying of cancer, let him die, don't give him medicine. On that point the pope is absolutely silent. In fact, Christians go on opening new hospitals.

If birth is natural, then death is natural. If you have disturbed the balance by preventing people from dying, then you have to accept the other part of it also. Allow people to die naturally; then let them give birth to as many children as they can. Then there will be no imbalance; nature balances itself.

Just fifty years ago in India, out of ten children nine were going to die within two years, only one was going to

survive. Now just the opposite is the case: nine are going to survive, only one is going to die. How has it happened within fifty years' time? Modern medicine has done the miracle; it has changed the whole balance. If you accept medicine and if you accept the hospitals and if you accept that people have to be saved from cancer and tuberculosis, then you have to use birth control. Otherwise how can the population be kept within normal, bearable limits?

Those Russian sects were always in difficulty -- where to get new people? And it was difficult to get converts because of their practices; so the only way was to purchase children from poor people or steal them. Both were practiced, stealing and purchasing -- human beings!

And these kinds of practices have been followed almost all over the world. There have been people who have destroyed their eyes, because eyes distract you towards beauty. They create sexuality, so destroy the eyes. But can you destroy sexuality by destroying your eyes? Do you think sexuality exists in the eyes? Do you think blind people don't have any sexuality? In fact, even if you cut off your sexual organs you cannot destroy sexuality, because sexuality exists somewhere deep down in your skull.

The sex center is not really the sex organ; that is its outermost part. Its innermost core is in the brain -- there is a center in the brain. Once that center is triggered, the sexual organ starts becoming alive, but the triggering has to happen first in the brain. That's why you can have beautiful sexual dreams, you can have an orgasm in your dreams -- just the mind! That's why pornography is possible; sex organs cannot understand pornography, it is the brain. Now they have found the exact center where it is, and if it is

touched by an electrode you immediately go into a sexual orgasm -- immediately!
The people who are working -- the behaviorists -- they are going to give man, sooner or later, a small, matchbox-sized thing you can keep in your pocket; nobody will ever be able to see it. You can just put your hand inside your pocket and push the button and you can have a sexual orgasm walking on the road. And even in India nobody can prevent you then! The police cannot, because nobody will be able to know why you are looking so happy, why there is such a great smile on your face!
But the danger is... and the danger is great; the behaviorists have become aware of it. They have been experimenting with rats. They had made a small machine, electrodes fixed in the head of the rats, and the rats were taught if they want a sexual orgasm they have to push a button. Those rats went berserk! They pushed the buttons so many times -- sixty thousand times one rat did it! He continued; he would not eat, he would not drink, he forgot everything, until he fell dead. He was so tired, but the joy was such... he risked all!
The eyes don't have sexuality, neither do the sexual organs have it; it is somewhere in the mind.

I have heard an ancient parable:
It seems that when the creator was making the world, he called man aside and bestowed upon him twenty years of normal sex life. Man was horrified: "Only twenty years?" But the creator did not budge. That was all he would give him.
Then he called the monkey and gave him twenty years.

"But I don't need twenty years," the monkey protested. "Ten is plenty!"
Man spoke up and said, "Can I have the other ten years?"
The monkey graciously agreed.
Then he called the lion and gave him twenty years. The lion too needed only ten. Again man said, "Can I have the other ten years?"
The lion roared, "Of course."
Then came the donkey. He was given twenty years, but like the others, ten years was enough for him. Man asked for the spare ten years and got them.
This explains why man has twenty years of normal sex life, ten years monkeying around, ten years of lion about it, and ten years of making an ass of himself.

Man seems to be the most stupid animal out of all of these. They say, "Ten is more than enough." Man seems to be the most in the grip of desire: more and more.... Whatsoever he has is not enough, is never enough. This creates his sorrow, this makes him a slave. The "more" is your master. To be aware of the trap that is created by this constant desire for more is to take a very necessary step towards self-mastery.

"Something the matter?" asked the bartender of the young, well-dressed customer who sat staring sullenly into his drink.
"Two months ago my grandfather died and left me eighty-five thousand dollars," said the man.
"That does not sound like anything to be upset about," said the bartender, polishing a glass. "It should happen to me!"

"Yeah," said the sour young man, "but last month an uncle on my mother's side passed away. He left me hundred and fifty thousand dollars."
"So why are you sitting there looking so unhappy?" asked the bartender.
"So far this month, not a cent!"

You cannot be satisfied by anything, because the mind is always asking for more. And the desire for more creates sorrow, makes you a slave. And the desire for more does not allow you to live according to the universal law. You start fighting for more. Whether it is something outward or inward does not matter; if you are fighting for something more you are going against the law of nature.
Trust nature, be relaxed with it. It takes care. It is always providing you with whatsoever is really needed, and if it does not provide you, that means it is not really needed.
Buddha says: MASTER YOURSELF ACCORDING TO THE LAW. THIS IS THE SIMPLE TEACHING OF THE AWAKENED. One thing to be noted: Buddha always says this, "of the awakened." He does not say, "This is the teaching of Gautama the Buddha." He simply says, "of the awakened" -- whosoever is awakened. He does not make it a personal statement, he makes it a universal thing: Whosoever is awakened, this is going to be his teaching. And this is very rare, this is unique. Awakening can happen to anybody: it has happened to Jesus, it has happened to Lao Tzu, it has happened to Basho -- it can happen to anybody. Buddha is saying that whosoever is awakened, this is going to be his teaching.

MASTER YOURSELF ACCORDING TO THE LAW. THIS IS THE SIMPLE TEACHING OF THE AWAKENED. He is absolutely nonpersonal, there is no person. He is only a presence, a vehicle of the universal law, speaking not on his own behalf but on God's behalf, allowing himself to be used by God as a medium.

THE RAIN COULD TURN TO GOLD
AND STILL YOUR THIRST WOULD NOT BE SLAKED.
DESIRE IS UNQUENCHABLE
OR IT ENDS IN TEARS, EVEN IN HEAVEN.

DESIRE IS UNQUENCHABLE. Why? -- because desire means desire for more; how can you quench it? By the time you have arrived it asks for more. You wanted ten thousand rupees; by the time you have ten thousand, the desire has moved ahead of you -- it is asking for one hundred thousand. By the time you achieve that, the desire has moved. It always moves ahead of you; the distance between you and your desire always remains the same.

The distance between a beggar and his desire, and the distance between Alexander the Great and his desire is the same. Both are poor in the same way. Alexander may have much, that does not make much difference -- he is not satisfied with what he has.

It is said that Diogenes once said to Alexander the Great, "Have you ever thought about one thing? -- meditate over it: you want to conquer the whole world, but are you aware that once you have conquered the whole world, then what? There is no other world. Then what will you do?"

And it is said, just by Diogenes saying it, Alexander became very sad, and he said, "Please don't mention such sad things -- let me first conquer the whole world, then we will see. But don't talk about such sad things to me; it makes me feel very sad."

He had not conquered the whole world yet, but the very idea that if you conquer the whole world, then what are you going to do? There is no other world, and you will feel stuck. The mind will ask for more.

The mind lives through more, and the more cannot be fulfilled; that is impossible. IT ENDS IN TEARS. Every desire ends in frustration, because every expectation is the beginning of frustration. Why does every desire end in frustration? There are only two alternatives: either you achieve your object of desire or you don't achieve it, but in both cases it will end in tears. If you achieve it you will see the utter futility of it all.

The rich man sees the futility of his riches -- how much he has labored, and how much he has worked for it! And now, whatsoever he has attained is absolutely useless, it fulfills nothing. You can have two houses or three houses, one in the city, one in the hills, one on the seashore, but you are the same person, as empty as before. You can live in a palace, but how can you change your inner meaninglessness? You will be as meaningless in a palace as you are in a hut.

In fact, you will be more meaningless in a palace, because while you are in a hut you can still hope that one day when you have managed to get into a palace, everything will be okay. You can hope, but the man who IS in the palace, he has no hope, he feels utterly hopeless. And he cannot say it

to others either, because that will be stupid of him. People will think that you worked hard....
Just think of Alexander the Great: he devoted his whole life to conquering the world. And when he had conquered it, if he had said to the world that "It was useless. I wasted my time and my life," people would have thought he was stupid. Could he not see it before?

There is an ancient story in India:
A henpecked husband asked somebody, "What to do? My wife is so dominating."
The friend suggested, "You should not have allowed it from the very beginning, but now it is difficult. Still it is not too late. Today you get drunk so that you can have courage. Then go and shout and knock on the door and enter into the house and throw things and let her feel that you are a man. And beat her, give her a good beating! Settle it once and for all."
So the man got drunk, although he was afraid that, "These things seem to be impossible -- I cannot do it. But maybe the drink will help."
He drank and he felt really great, puffed up, but as he approached the house, slowly slowly he became sober; the effect of the alcohol was disappearing. The fear was arising, but he kept himself courageous by repeating, "The man is a wise man, and at least if I can do it once it will be finished forever. And it is worth doing it."
So he knocked on the door, shouted, entered inside, started throwing things.
His wife was very angry. She was so angry she cut off the nose of the man with a knife. Now without a nose it was

very difficult to live in the town, so the man escaped from the town in the night -- that same night he escaped. But wherever he would go, people would ask, "What happened to your nose?"

So he became a SADHU, he became a monk, he renounced the world. He said he had renounced the world, the wife and all. And he had to find a rationalization for his nose, so he said, "This is the latest technique of attaining, of realizing God. The moment you cut off your nose... it is the nose that is the barrier!" And he philosophized about the nose and he said, "The nose represents the ego." And it is right -- the nose represents the ego. You can see the ego on the nose; nowhere else it is so apparent!

So he convinced a few people. And the method seemed so simple -- just cutting off the nose and you get the ultimate truth and the bliss -- and he used to look so blissful. He pretended, but what else to do? -- without a nose he had to save face somehow! And without a nose it is difficult, but he laughed, danced, and he was always ecstatic.

A few foolish people became ready to cut off their noses, so he would take one person into the forest, cut off his nose, and would ask him, "Can you see God?"

The man would say, "I can't see anything, and my nose is gone."

And the man would say, "Neither can I see, but now it is better that you don't tell anyone, because your nose is gone just the same way as mine is gone. Be part of the conspiracy now. "Tell others... become ecstatic and tell others that you have attained to God."

What else was there to do now? The nose couldn't be put back; in those days there was no plastic surgery possible.

This seemed to be the only rational way. So the man would go dancing in the town and would tell others, "That man is the greatest master -- I have seen God. What an experience! I am so blissful and the bliss goes on showering on me! Twenty-four hours I am ecstatic and God is with me." And he would talk of great things. And Indians are very much capable of talking of great things; for centuries they have talked and talked and talked.

A few more people became interested, and slowly slowly he had a gathering. The more people were with him without noses, the more his theory was gaining ground. Even the king became interested: "If there is such a simple method" -- almost like Transcendental Meditation! -- "Why not try?" But the prime minister was a little doubtful, skeptical. He said, "You wait, don't be in a hurry. Let me first inquire." So he got hold of this man, gave him a good beating, and told him, "Tell the truth, otherwise we will kill you!"

So he had to tell the truth: "It is because my wife had cut off my nose, and what else could I do? I had to find some way to save my face, and this seemed to be the most simple, attractive way. And I am perfectly happy now: I have a following, my needs are taken care of, and you will be surprised -- even my wife who knows perfectly well that she had cut off my nose, she has come to see me the other day and asked me, 'What is the matter?' And I said, 'Although you had cut off my nose... but the moment my nose dropped I saw God!' And she is contemplating becoming a follower and I am just waiting for her. I want to cut off her nose! Let me cut off her nose, then you can kill me or whatsoever you want to do to me. Let me take revenge first!"

And what a spiritual way to take revenge!

You go on following others, although you see them living in misery. You go on following the powerful, the rich, the wealthy, although you see their faces are sad, their eyes are dull. They don't seem to be intelligent either; they don't have any grace, any joy, any beauty.
If you succeed you will be in pain, because your success will bring the truth home: that your whole life has been sacrificed for nothing. Or if you fail you will be frustrated, because you will see that you have failed, that you are not worthy, that you have no worth. You will become self-condemnatory.
Buddha is right. He says: IT ENDS IN TEARS. Every desire, whether fulfilled or not fulfilled, ends in tears. And no desire simply ends; before it ends it gives birth to other desires. So it remains a continuum: one goes on from one desire to another desire, life after life.

HE WHO WISHES TO AWAKE
CONSUMES HIS DESIRES
JOYFULLY.

Either you will be consumed by your desires or you have to consume your desires. And what does Buddha mean by saying, "Consume your desires"? He simply means: witness, watch. The whole affair is stupid.
The intelligent person lives joyfully, contentedly, whatsoever situation he is in, whatsoever he has got. He lives joyfully, thankfully, gratefully. You can take his

possessions away from him but you cannot take his joy, because he knows how to live joyfully.
His joy is not dependent on anything, on any outer cause. His joy is his inner understanding: the understanding that from the outside one has never achieved joy, that from desires one has always come to tears. Seeing this nature of desire, his desire has disappeared; he lives without desire. And to live without desire is to live in contentment, it is to live without any hankering for more. Then whatsoever is, is more than enough.
Either you live in desire or you live in gratitude: remember this. The man who lives in desire cannot be grateful to God, he can only be complaining and complaining; he will always have some grudge against God. But the man who has no desires has only gratitude. Even that which is given to him is more -- more than he ever deserved. He is always thankful; in that thankfulness is beauty and benediction.

IN HIS FEAR A MAN MAY SHELTER
IN MOUNTAINS OR IN FORESTS,
IN GROVES OF SACRED TREES OR IN SHRINES.
BUT HOW CAN HE HIDE THERE FROM HIS SORROW?

You can escape to the caves, to the mountains, to the forests, but how can you escape from yourself? No escape is possible from yourself.
The only way out is to be transformed, to become awakened. To watch, to see, to witness your desires, slowly slowly brings awakening. HE WHO SHELTERS IN THE

WAY.... So don't go anywhere else. There is no other shelter except dhamma, except the way.

HE WHO SHELTERS IN THE WAY
AND TRAVELS WITH THOSE WHO FOLLOW IT
COMES TO SEE THE FOUR GREAT TRUTHS.

Buddha says, without giving any adjective to it, simply "the way." That's exactly the meaning of tao -- "the way." It is neither Hindu nor Mohammedan nor Christian nor Buddhist; it is simply "the way." Take shelter in "the way." DHAMMAM SHARANAM GACHCHHAMI -- I take shelter in the law, in the way. That's how those who were desirous of becoming initiates of Buddha used to pray to him. Three shelters: take shelter in the awakened master, take shelter in his commune, and take shelter in the law, the dhamma, the way. BUDDHAM SHARANAM GACHCHHAMI -- that is the first shelter -- I take shelter in the awakened one.
SANGHAM SHARANAM GACHCHHAMI -- I take shelter in the commune of the awakened one. And DHAMMAM SHARANAM GACHCHHAMI -- I take shelter in the law, in the way, in the ultimate harmony of existence. These three shelters are immensely important. The sutra says: HE WHO SHELTERS IN THE WAY AND TRAVELS WITH THOSE WHO FOLLOW IT.... Religion is something which cannot be taught but can only be caught. It is like an infection: you cannot teach it, but if you live with people who have already caught it, it is contagious. Then you will become slowly slowly attuned to it.

It is said in one of the ancient Taoist scriptures that if even a pebble is thrown into a heap of diamonds, sooner or later the pebble will become a diamond. It is true: not about the pebbles -- it is true about man.

If you are part of a commune where many people are moving towards the sun or moving towards the source of light, love, joy, how long can you lag behind? Sooner or later the spirit of the commune is going to overpower you, to overflood you.

If you listen to good music and you start feeling it deep down inside of you, a kind of synchronicity arises. If you see a dancer dancing you feel your feet are ready to dance; something has been transferred to your feet. It is not visible, it is not measurable, it is not material, but some vibe... you have caught the vibe; you would like to stand up and dance.

The same happens in the commune of a buddha. The presence of the buddha is a tremendously powerful magnet. It attracts all those who are courageous, it attracts all those who are real seekers, it attracts all those who are authentic human beings. And then a commune slowly slowly is created. If you become part of a commune you start moving with the commune into unknown territory. It is easier to move in the unknown territory when you find so many people going towards that ultimate goal.

HE WHO SHELTERS IN THE WAY AND TRAVELS WITH THOSE WHO FOLLOW IT COMES TO SEE THE FOUR GREAT TRUTHS.

CONCERNING SORROW,
THE BEGINNING OF SORROW,

THE EIGHTFOLD WAY,
AND THE END OF SORROW.

The whole teaching of Buddha can be divided into four parts. The four noble truths he calls ARYA SATYA -- noble truths. The first is that unexamined life is sorrow, unenlightened life is sorrow. That is the most fundamental truth, Buddha says. Those who follow the way, they become aware of it: that life can be lived in two ways, either consciously or unconsciously. If you live unconsciously you will live in sorrow, you will be at the mercy of blind instincts.

A wealthy American widow had a fantasy about marrying a man who had never had any previous sexual experience with a woman.
She made contact with a discreet, international detective agency, and within six months they found an Australian gentleman who seemed to be perfectly suited for the widow.
On the wedding night the widow was trembling with excitement as she completed her toilette and entered the bedroom to greet her husband. To her amazement, he had piled all of the furniture, including the bed, into the living room.
"Why did you get rid of the furniture?" she blurted in disbelief.
"Well," drawled her new spouse, "I have never slept with a woman before, but if it is anything like those kangaroos, we will need all the space we can get."

People go on living through fantasies, absurd fantasies. You look at your own fantasies and they will all be ridiculous. But you never see your own fantasies as ridiculous; it is easier to see others' fantasies as ridiculous. Watch your own fantasies. What do you want out of your life? What you are living for? What is your program, your schedule on this earth? Why do you want to still be alive tomorrow? Just look at your fantasies. If you are given only seven days to live, how are you going to fulfill those seven days? With what? Write down your fantasies, don't be cunning and don't be clever -- be utterly true. And you will find all your fantasies ridiculous. But this is how people are living.

This life, Buddha says, is nothing but sorrow. He agrees with Socrates. Socrates says: An unexamined life is not worth living. And Buddha says: An unexamined life is nothing but sorrow. That is the first noble truth.

And the second noble truth one becomes aware of if one follows the way is: THE BEGINNING OF SORROW... the cause of sorrow. The cause is desire -- desire for more. First one experiences that his whole life is full of sorrow, then one becomes aware that the cause is desire. Those who have escaped from the wheel of desire are not in sorrow, they are utterly blissful. But those who are caught in the wheel are crushed by so many desires.

The first truth is: life is sorrow. The second truth: the cause of sorrow is desire, desire for more. And the third truth is the eightfold way. Buddha says that his whole approach of transforming your being can be divided into eight steps; that is called the eightfold way. And all those steps are nothing but different dimensions of a single phenomenon:

right mindfulness, SAMMASATI. Whatsoever you are doing, do it absolutely consciously, alertly, do it with awareness. Those eight steps are nothing but applications of awareness into different aspects of life.

For example: if you are eating, Buddha says, eat with full awareness -- SAMYAK AHAR. Then whatsoever you eat is right -- just be aware. Now see the difference: other religions say, "Eat this, eat that. Don't eat this, don't eat that." Buddha never says what to eat, what not to eat. He says, "Whatsoever you are eating, eat with full awareness. And if your awareness says no, then don't eat it." Can you eat meat with awareness? It is impossible; you can eat meat only with unawareness.

In Africa a few days ago, one African dictator, Bokasso, who was trying to be another Napoleon, had been dethroned. The most strange thing that came to light was that in his house, in his freezer, human flesh was found. He was a man-eater.

Just think of a man eating another man's meat. Is it possible in consciousness? The whole thing is so disgusting! It is said that children were stolen just to prepare food for Bokasso. Of course, small children have delicious meat. Hundreds of children had disappeared and nobody could have ever thought that this man, who used to call himself emperor, was the cause behind the whole thing.

But so is the case when you eat animal meat, not much difference in it. The animals also have life just as you have. They are our brothers and our sisters.

Buddha never says what to eat, what not to eat; he never goes into details. And that's my approach too: just be aware.

And likewise he uses this method of awareness for other things in life: SAMYAK VYAYAM -- right effort. Don't make too much effort and don't make too little either. Right effort for everything, a balanced effort, effort which does not disturb your tranquility. Life is like walking on a tightrope: right effort is needed and awareness so that you cannot fall. Each moment there is danger: if you lean too much towards the left you will fall. Finding yourself leaning too much to the left you have to lean towards the right to keep balance. And when you lean towards the right a moment comes, you start feeling that now you will fall towards the right; then you start leaning towards the left just to balance. This is right effort: keeping balanced.
All those eight steps are nothing but applications of a single thing -- awareness. Buddha calls it right mindfulness. Don't do anything unconsciously.
And the fourth: AND THE END OF SORROW -- nirvana, cessation of sorrow. The man who follows the path finds four things: life is sorrow, the cause of sorrow is desire, the method to get rid of sorrow is the eightfold path, rooted basically, essentially, in the phenomenon of awareness.
And the fourth: that if you follow awareness you will attain to the cessation of sorrow, you will attain to nirvana.
Buddha says: These are the four noble truths.

THEN AT LAST HE IS SAFE.

And one who has moved through all these four and attained to the fourth, he is at last safe.

HE HAS SHAKEN OFF SORROW.

HE IS FREE.

To be free of sorrow is to be free. If you remain in sorrow you are not free. If you remain sad, howsoever great a saint you may be, you are not free; you are still far away from the goal.

And our so-called saints are very sad-looking people. People think the sadder they are, the greater they are. They are not free from sorrow, in fact they are more in sorrow than the ordinary, worldly people. The worldly people sometimes laugh too, enjoy too, dance too, sing too, but the so-called saint looks at these laughing, singing, dancing people with condemnation. He thinks them just superficial. Their laughter is not laughter to him, their joy is not joy to him. He has a great condemnation of all this, because he has renounced all these things without understanding, without going through these four noble truths. He has simply renounced; he has followed a tradition, a convention, of renunciation. He is an escapist. He has to condemn all laughter, because he cannot laugh. He has become dry, dry like a rock; he cannot bloom into flowers. He has to condemn all springs and he has to condemn all rosebushes. And he finds ways and means to condemn you. If you go to a so-called saint, he looks at you as if you are not a human being. He looks at you as doomed, as doomed to hell, bound towards hell, already falling into the bottomless pit of hell. He looks at you with condemnation, with pity. But pity is not compassion, and condemnation simply shows that he has not known anything at all.

He is just the same type of person as you are, only standing on his head. You are greedy for money, he is afraid of

money. You are related to money through greed, he is related to it through fear. But both are related to money, both are obsessed with money.
It is said that if you take money to Vinoba Bhave he immediately closes his eyes -- he can't see money. Now this looks ridiculous -- there must be great fear. Just a ten-rupee note... why should you be so afraid of it that you have to close your eyes? But because he closes his eyes -- he never touches money, he does not want to see money -- he is revered as a great saint. But this fear of money, this antagonism, is a kind of relationship. He is not free of money, otherwise why close his eyes? And a ten-rupee note is nothing but a piece of paper. You don't close your eyes when you look at other pieces of paper -- why give so much importance to this piece of paper? There must be greed deep down which is standing on its head.
There are people who are running after women or after men, and then there are people who are running away from men or away from women. But both are obsessed with the other sex. This obsession does not show understanding. Understanding brings you freedom from all obsessions -- of fear, of greed. The real understanding simply makes you free from all kinds of desires and anti-desires. It makes you free of the world and the other world too. It simply makes you free.

THE AWAKENED ARE FEW AND HARD TO FIND.
HAPPY IS THE HOUSE WHERE A MAN AWAKES.

Buddha repeats this again and again, and it is worth repeating so that you become alert about the phenomenon;

it is very rare -- THE AWAKENED ARE FEW AND HARD TO FIND. Yes, you will find many pseudo people pretending; and it is very difficult to judge who is pseudo and who is real. But a few things can be remembered. The pseudo will always be against the world; he has replaced fear with greed. The pseudo will always be an escapist. The pseudo will be always sad, he cannot laugh; laughter seems too mundane, almost sacrilegious to him.

The really awakened is neither for the world nor against the world. He lives in the world and is absolutely free of it. He lives in the world but the world does not live in him. He is in the world but not of it. He is never an escapist. Once you become awakened there is nowhere to escape, there is no need either; in fact, there is nobody TO escape.

The unawakened, the pseudo person, who is pretending to be a master or a buddha, is bound to create a division between God and the world, and he will tell you to renounce the world if you want to get to God. In fact, that is the same as: Cut off your nose if you want to see God. Neither the nose prevents you from seeing God nor can the world prevent you from seeing God. In fact, if you have poor eyes the nose will help you -- otherwise where are you going to put your specs? Without a nose it will be very difficult! The nose is not a hindrance, it can be a help sometimes. Neither is the world a hindrance. It is a help, a challenge, a sharpening of your intelligence, an opportunity to grow, to be mature, to be alert.

The world is full of pitfalls, but those pitfalls are helpful because they keep you alert. If there are no pitfalls you will tend to fall asleep; when there is great danger you are bound to be awake.

A great Zen story:
A prince came to a Zen master; he wanted to learn meditation. He was in a hurry too, because his father was old and his father had sent him to this Zen master to learn meditation, because the father said, "In my life I have wasted much time unnecessarily, and only later on I became aware that the only worthwhile, only meaningful thing in life is meditation. So don't waste your time," he told his son, the prince. "You go to this master and learn meditation before I leave my body. I will be happier leaving my body if you have learned meditation. I cannot give you anything else. This whole kingdom is worthless; this is not your true heritage. I will not be happy giving you only this kingdom; I will be happy if I can help you to meditate."
So the prince came to the Zen master and he said, "I am in a hurry. My father is old, he can die any moment."
The master said, "The first principle of meditation is not to be in a hurry. Impatience won't do. Get lost, get out! Never come here again! Try to find some pseudo master who will give you a mantra to chant and will console you with 'Go on chanting fifteen minutes in the morning and fifteen in the evening and you will become enlightened.'
"But if you want to be here, forget time, because meditation is a search for eternity. And forget all about your old father -- nobody ever dies, believe me. One day you will see that what I am saying is true. Neither anybody ever gets old nor ever dies. Don't be worried. I know your father, because he has learned meditation from me. He is not going to die -- his body may die. But you will have to forget all about your

father and your kingdom if you want to learn meditation. It needs one-pointed devotion."
The master was such, his impact was such, the young man decided to stay.
Three years passed. The master never said a single word about meditation. The young man served the master in every possible way, waited and waited, and he was afraid to mention the subject because he might say, "Get lost -- you are in a hurry!" So he could not say even that.
But three years is too much. Finally one day he said in the morning -- the master was sitting under a tree taking a sunbath -- he said, "Sir, three years have passed. Are you aware? And you have not even told me what to do, what is meditation."
The master looked at him and said, "So you are still in a hurry! Okay, today I will start teaching you meditation."
And he started teaching in a very strange way. The young man was cleaning the floor of the temple and the master would come from the back and hit him hard with a wooden sword -- really hard he would hit him! The young man would be reading the Buddhist sutras, and he would come from behind. And he was such a silent man that you would not even be able to hear his footsteps. And suddenly, out of nowhere, the hit -- the wooden sword would descend on him.
The young man thought, "What kind of meditation is this?"
In seven days he was feeling so tired and wounded and scratched. He asked, "What are you doing? You go on hitting me!"

The master said, "This is my way of teaching. Be alert, be very conscious, so before I hit you, you can dodge -- that's the only way."

There was no other escape, so the young man had to be very alert. He was reading the book but he was alert, conscious. Slowly slowly, within two, three weeks, he started hearing the footsteps of the master -- and his walk was almost like a cat's. When the cat goes to catch the rat she walks so silently. The master was really an old cat!

But the young man became alert enough; he started hearing his footsteps. Within three months the master was unable to hit him even a single time. Twenty-four hours a day he would try, but the young man would dodge and jump, whatsoever he was doing.

Then the master said, "The first lesson is over. Now begins the second lesson: now be alert in your sleep. Leave your doors open, because I may come any time."

Now this was a harder thing! Initially he would come and hit him hard. The old man did not need much sleep either; two hours was enough for him. And this was a young man, he needed eight hours sleep, and the whole night it was a struggle. Many times he would come and hit him, but the young man was now certain that if the first lesson had been of such value... he became so alert and so peaceful that he was no longer inquiring, "What are you doing? This is nonsense!"

The master himself said, "Don't be worried. Just keep alert even in your sleep. And the harder I hit you, the better, because then you will be really alert. The situation has to be created."

Within three months he would jump from his sleep. He would immediately open his eyes and say, "Wait! There is no need -- I am alert."
After three months the master said, "You have passed the second lesson. Now the third and the last."
The young man said, "What can be the third, because there are only two states -- waking, sleep. Now what are you going to do?"
He said, "Now I will hit with a real sword -- that is the third lesson."
It is one thing to be hit by a wooden sword -- you know that at the most you may be hurt but you cannot be killed. And he brought out a real sword. He took it out of the sheath, and the young man thought, "This is the end -- I am finished! This is a dangerous game. Now he can hit with a real sword. Even if I miss once I have missed forever!"
But he did not miss even once. When the danger is such, you rise to face that danger. After three months, not even a single time had the master been able to hit him with the real sword. The master said, "Your third lesson is complete -- you have become a meditator. Now tomorrow morning you can leave. You can go and tell your father that I am absolutely contented with you."
The next morning he would leave. It is evening; the sun is setting. The master is reading a sutra under a tree in the last rays of the sunlight. And the young man thinks -- he is sitting somewhere back -- "Before I leave" -- the idea had come to him many times -- "one time I have to hit this old man! Now this is the last day; tomorrow morning I will leave."

So he prepares. He takes a wooden sword, hides behind a tree. The master says, "Stop!" He does not look at him at all. "Come here! I am an old man, and such desires are not good -- the desire to hit your own master!"
The young man is puzzled. He says, "But I have not said anything."
The master says, "One day when you become really alert, even that which is not said is heard. Just as one day you were not hearing my footsteps and one day you became aware and started hearing them; just like one day you were not able to hear my footsteps in your sleep... but the day came when you started hearing my footsteps, even in your sleep -- exactly like that, one day you will know. When the mind is absolutely silent you can hear words that have not been spoken. You can read unexpressed thoughts. You can read intentions. You can read feelings. Not that you make any effort -- you become a mirror, you reflect."

Rare and few are the buddhas to find. And Buddha says: HAPPY IS THE HOUSE WHERE A MAN AWAKES. By "the house" he means the body. Happy is the body where a man awakes, where the flame of awareness has arisen. You become a temple.

BLESSED IS HIS BIRTH.
BLESSED IS THE TEACHING OF THE WAY.
BLESSED IS THE UNDERSTANDING AMONG THOSE WHO FOLLOW IT.
AND BLESSED IS THEIR DETERMINATION.

AND BLESSED ARE THEY WHO REVERE

THE MAN WHO AWAKES AND FOLLOWS THE WAY.

THEY ARE FREE FROM FEAR.
THEY ARE FREE.

THEY HAVE CROSSED OVER THE RIVER OF SORROW.

To meet a buddha is rare. To take refuge in a buddha is even more rare. To follow, to live out the teachings of a buddha is even more rare. Hence Buddha says: BLESSED IS HIS BIRTH. BLESSED IS THE TEACHING OF THE WAY. A man who one day becomes a buddha, even his birth is blessed. His coming into the world is a blessing to the world, to himself and to others too. BLESSED IS THE TEACHING OF THE WAY. And then spontaneously he starts teaching; it is a sharing. He has come home and he starts calling others who are still wandering in the darkness. BLESSED IS THE UNDERSTANDING AMONG THOSE WHO FOLLOW IT. And not only the buddha is blessed: blessed are those too who follow it. AND BLESSED IS THEIR DETERMINATION. And blessed is the commitment, the involvement of following the way, the dhamma.
AND BLESSED ARE THEY WHO REVERE THE MAN WHO AWAKES AND FOLLOWS THE WAY. THEY ARE FREE FROM FEAR. THEY ARE FREE.
To be free from fear is to be free. To be free from fear you need to be free from desire. Desire keeps you afraid. Desire keeps you always wavering: "Whether it is going to happen

or not? Whether I am going to make it this time or not?" If you succeed you are afraid -- somebody will take it away from you. If you succeed in accumulating riches you are worried, afraid: you can be robbed, they can be stolen. If you don't succeed you are constantly in fear that "I am not of any worth." You fall in your own eyes, you are trembling. To be free from desire is to be free from fear. Then one lives in the moment; neither the past is one's concern nor the future. How can there be any fear? And Buddha defines freedom as freedom from fear.
THEY HAVE CROSSED OVER THE RIVER OF SORROW. Life unexamined, unobserved, unenlightened, is nothing but a river of sorrow -- and we are all drowning in it. There is only one boat to get to the other shore. The name of the boat is awareness.
Enough for today.
The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 6
Chapter #4
Chapter title: This too will pass
24 October 1979 am in Buddha Hall

The first question:
Question 1
BELOVED MASTER,
IN SPITE OF DREADFUL POLITICAL CATASTROPHES, POLITICAL ACTION SEEMS TO BE THE ONLY MEANS TO FIGHT AGAINST INJUSTICE IN THE WORLD. DOES THE SEARCH YOU ARE INSPIRING EXCLUDE POLITICAL ACTION?

Jean-Francois Held, I am in love with life in its totality. My love excludes nothing; it includes all. Yes, political action too is included in it. That's the worst thing to include, but I can't help it! But everything that is included in my vision of life is included with a difference.

In the past, man has lived without awareness in all the aspects of life. He has loved without awareness and failed in it, and love has brought only misery and nothing else. He has done all kinds of things in the past, but everything has proved a hell. So has been the case with political action. Each revolution turns into antirevolution. It is time we should understand how this happens, why this happens at all -- that each revolution, each struggle against injustice, finally turns into injustice itself, becomes antirevolutionary. In this century it has happened again and again -- I am not talking about a faraway past. It happened in Russia, it happened in China. It is going to happen if we continue to function in the same old way. Unawareness cannot bring more than that.

When you are powerless, it is easy to fight against injustice; the moment you become powerful, you forget all about injustice. Then repressed desires to dominate assert themselves. Then your unconscious takes over, and you start doing the same things that were done before by the enemies against whom you had been struggling. You had staked your very life for it!

Lord Acton says that power corrupts. It is true only in a sense, and in another sense it is absolutely untrue. It is true if you look at the surface of things: power certainly corrupts, whosoever becomes powerful becomes corrupted.

Factually it is true, but if you dive deep into the phenomenon then it is not true.

Power does not corrupt: it is the corrupted people who become attracted towards power. It is the people who would like to do things which they cannot do while they are not in power. The moment they are in power, their whole repressed mind asserts itself. Now there is nothing to bar them, nothing to prevent them; they have the power. Power does not corrupt them, it only brings their corruption to the surface. Corruption was there as a seed; now it has sprouted. The power has proved only the right season for it to sprout. Power is only the spring for the poisonous flowers of corruption and injustice in their being.

Power is not the cause of corruption, but only the opportunity for its expression. Hence I say: basically, fundamentally, Lord Acton is wrong.

Who becomes interested in politics? Yes, with beautiful slogans people go into it, but what happens to those people? Joseph Stalin was fighting against the injustice of the czar. What happened? He himself became the greatest czar the world has ever known, worse than Ivan the Terrible! Hitler used to talk about socialism. He had named his party the Nationalist Socialist Party. What happened to socialism when he came into power? All that disappeared. The same thing had happened in India. Mahatma Gandhi and his followers were talking about nonviolence, love, peace -- all the great values cherished down the ages. And when power came he escaped. Mahatma Gandhi himself escaped because he became aware that if he took power in his hands he would no longer be the mahatma, the sage. And the followers who came into power were all proved as

corrupted as anywhere else -- and they were all good people before they were in power, great servants of the people. They had sacrificed much. They were not bad people in any way; in every possible way they were good people. But even good people turn into bad people -- that is something fundamental to be understood.

I would like my sannyasins to live life in its totality, but with an absolute condition, categorical condition: and that condition is awareness, meditation. Go first deep into meditation, so you can cleanse your unconscious of all poisonous seeds, so there is nothing to be corrupted and there is nothing inside you which power can bring forth. And then do whatsoever you feel like doing.

If you want to become a painter, become a painter. Your painting will have a difference; it won't be like Picasso. Picasso's paintings are insane -- he IS insane! In fact, if he had been prevented from painting he would have been in a madhouse. Through his paintings he is catharting, throwing out his insanity onto the canvas, getting rid of it. Yes, he feels better -- it is a kind of vomiting! After vomiting you feel better, but what about others who look at your vomit! But the world is so stupid that if Picasso vomits, people say, "What a great painting -- something never seen before, something unique!"

Vincent van Gogh really went insane, had to be hospitalized for one year, and then he committed suicide. And he was not more than thirty-seven. Now, what kind of paintings had this man been doing? Certainly he had the art, the skill, but the art and the skill were in the hands of a madman, suicidal. Watching his paintings you will feel

restless, uneasy. Keep a Picasso painting in your bedroom and you will have nightmares!

A meditator can become a painter, but then something totally different will come out of him -- something of the beyond, because he will be capable to receive God. He can become a dancer; his dance will have a new quality to it: it will allow the divine to be expressed. He can become a musician... or he can go into political action, but his political action will be rooted in meditation. Hence there will be no fear of a Joseph Stalin or Adolf Hitler or Mao Zedong coming out of it; that is impossible.

I don't tell anybody to go in a certain direction; I leave my disciples totally free. I simply teach them meditation. I teach them being more alert, more aware, and then it is up to them. Whatsoever their natural potential is they will find it, but it is going to be with awareness. Then there is no danger.

Jean-Francois Held, I am not against political action -- I am not against anything. I am not life-negative; I affirm life, I am in absolute love with life!

And of course, when millions of people are on the earth, there is going to be some kind of politics or other. Politics cannot just disappear. It will be like dissolving the police, the post office, the railway -- it will create a chaos.

And I am not an anarchist and I am not in favor of chaos. I want the world to be more beautiful, more harmonious, more of a cosmos than of a chaos. Sometimes I praise chaos, only in order to destroy that which is rotten. I praise destructiveness also, only in order to create. Yes, sometimes I am very negative -- I am against conventions, conformities, traditions -- only to make you free so that you

can create new visions, new worlds, so that you need not remain imprisoned with the past, so that you can have a future and a present. But I am not destructive. My whole effort is to help you to be creative.

A few people out of my sannyasins are bound to go into political action, but I will allow them only when they have fulfilled the basic condition: when they are more alert, aware, when their inner being is full of light. Then do whatsoever you want to do -- you can't bring harm to the world. You will bring something good, something beautiful; you will be a blessing to the world. Without it, without that awareness, even if you do something good, it is going to turn into something harmful.

Just a few days ago, Mother Teresa of Calcutta had received the Nobel Prize. Now this is something utterly stupid! The Nobel Prize Award Committee has never done anything so foolish before -- but on the surface it looks beautiful. It is being praised all over the world, that they have done something great.

J. Krishnamurti has not received a Nobel Prize -- and he is one of those rare human beings, those few of the buddhas, who are really laying the foundation for world peace. And Mother Teresa has received the Nobel Prize for world peace. Now, I don't understand what she has done for world peace! George Gurdjieff didn't receive a Nobel Prize, and he was working hard to transform the inner core of human beings; Raman Maharshi didn't receive the Nobel Prize -- because their work is invisible: their work is that of bringing more consciousness to people. When you bring bread to people it is visible, when you bring clothes to people it is visible, when you bring medicines to people it

is visible. When you bring God to people, it is absolutely invisible.

Mother Teresa is doing something good on the surface only: serving the poor of Calcutta, the ill, the diseased, the old, the orphans, the widows, the lepers, the crippled, the blind. It is so obvious that she is doing something good! But basically what she is doing is consoling these people. And giving consolation to the poor, to the blind, to the lepers, to the orphans, is an antirevolutionary act. To console them means to help them remain adjusted with the society that exists, to remain attuned with the status quo. What she is doing is antirevolutionary. But the governments are happy, the rich people are happy, the powerful people are happy, because she is really NOT serving the blind and the poor. She is serving the vested interests, she is serving the priests and the politicians and the powers; she is helping them to remain in their power. She is making, creating, an atmosphere in which the old can continue.

In India no revolution has ever happened against the powerful, the rich, the wealthy, for the simple reason that it is a so-called religious country; there are so many consolers. Fifty lakhs of Hindu monks consoling people, giving them explanations why they are poor, why they are blind, why they are crippled: because of their past karmas! They have done something bad in their past lives, hence they are suffering. "Suffer silently, don't react," they go and teach these people, "because if you react, if you do something again, again you will suffer in your next life. Don't miss this opportunity, let the accounts be closed. This time behave in a good way!" And of course, to be a

revolutionary is not something good! Be obedient -- that is good -- don't be disobedient. Disobedience is evil, it is sin. The Christians call it the original sin.

What was the sin of Adam and Eve? -- just because they had disobeyed God. There seems to be not much of a sin in it. Eating the fruit from the tree of knowledge is not a sin. Why should it be called the original sin? It is called the original sin because they disobeyed. To disobey is the greatest sin in the eyes of the priests.

For ten thousand years in India these priests and the monks have been teaching people, "Be obedient to the system that is in power. Don't disobey; otherwise you will suffer in your future." Hence no revolution has happened, and these monks and priests are praised very much.

Now Christian missionaries are doing the same all over the world: serving the poor, the crippled. They are telling these poor people, "Suffer silently -- it may be a test for you that God has created. You have to pass through this fire, only then will you become pure gold." Christian missionaries are antirevolutionary.

And why are they serving these poor people? -- because of greed! They want to get to paradise, and the only way to get to paradise is through service. Now sometimes I wonder what will happen if there is nobody who is crippled, blind, poor; what will happen to the Christian missionaries? How will they reach paradise? The very ladder will disappear! They will miss the boat, there will be no possibility to go to the other shore. These Christian missionaries would like the poverty to continue, they would like these poor people to remain on the earth. The more poor there are, the more

opportunities to serve, and of course, more people can get to heaven.
Giving the Nobel Prize to Mother Teresa is giving the Nobel Prize to antirevolutionary acts.
But that's how it has always been happening: you praise those people who somehow confirm the old, the dead, who help the society to remain as it is.
My work is invisible. In fact, I am teaching you, in an indirect way, the greatest revolution possible. I am teaching you rebellion, and this rebellion is multidimensional: wherever you will go, this rebellion will have its impact. If you go into poetry you will write rebellious poetry. If you go into music you will create a new kind of music. If you dance, your dance will have a different flavor. And if you go into politics, you will change the whole face of political action itself.
Jean-Francois Held, I am not against political action, but the way it has been up to now is utterly meaningless. Hence on the surface, nobody can see that I am involved in any political activity, nobody can see that I am involved in any kind of worldly activity.
I am teaching people to sit silently, watch their thoughts, get out of their minds. The stupid revolutionary will think that I am against political action, that I am a reactionary. Just the reverse is the case. Out of his stupidity -- although he may talk about revolution -- what he is going to do is going to be reactionary. He will drag the society backwards.
I am not doing anything that can be called political, social: I am not for social reform or political action. At least on the

surface I look like an escapist and I am helping people to escape. Yes, I am helping people to escape to themselves. Escape from all kinds of unintelligent activities. First sharpen your intelligence. Let a great joy arise in you. Become more watchful, so much so that not even a corner in your being is dark anymore. Let your unconscious be transformed into consciousness.
Then do whatsoever you want to do. Then if you want to go to hell, go with my blessings, because you will be able to transform hell itself.
It is not that meditators go to heaven, no: wherever they go they are in heaven and whatsoever they do is divine. But this is such a new approach that it will take time to be understood. I am using such a different language that it is natural that I will be misunderstood.

A beatnik ran through a red light. The cop pulled him over and said, "Did you not see the red light?"
The beatnik replied, "Like, man, I did not even see the house!"

There are different languages!

As Harry was shaving one morning he called out, "You know, sweetheart, I don't seem to get along too well with the other fellows at the office."
There was no response.
"Darling, the boys treat me like I am a little odd."
There was still no response.
He put the razor away and started to comb his hair.
"Lovey, the boys seem to think that I am queer."

Still getting no reply he finally shouted, "For heaven's sake, John, aren't you listening?"

I am talking one language, and people are accustomed to a totally different language.
Unless you meditate you will not be able to understand what is happening here, what I am saying and what I am doing.

Three men, English, Arabian and American, were standing on a street corner in Casablanca, when a spectacular oriental beauty walked haughtily by them.
"By Jove!" exclaimed the Englishman.
"By Allah!" sighed the Arabian.
"By tomorrow night!" said the American.

The second question:
Question 2
BELOVED MASTER,
TO MANY PEOPLE IN THE WEST, THE MASTER/DISCIPLE RELATIONSHIP IS OUTSIDE THEIR EXPERIENCE. WHAT DOES IT INVOLVE?

Chris Lister, Allen Jewhurst, Lesley Rogers, the East has contributed a few tremendously significant things to human consciousness. One of those beautiful things is the phenomenon of the master/disciple relationship. It is an Eastern contribution; just as science is a Western phenomenon, mysticism is Eastern. Science is extrovert, mysticism is introvert. Science is trying to know the

objective reality, and mysticism is an exploration of the subjective reality, of the interiority of your own being.
In the world of science the teacher/student relationship exists, because science can be taught -- hence the teacher/student relationship. But religion, mysticism, cannot be taught, it can only be caught. Hence in mysticism there is no relationship like the teacher/student relationship. A totally different kind of relationship exists: the master/disciple. The differences are tremendous, the differences are great.
Between a student and a teacher, doubt is the method. The teacher is there to help your doubts disappear, he is there to answer your questions; he is there to inform you, make you more knowledgeable. The student is there with all his questions, curiosities, doubts. In fact, the more intelligent he is, the more doubtful he will be. The best student is full of doubts, and the best teacher is one who helps the student with new answers, new knowledge, so that his doubts can be disposed of. Science uses doubt as the method; that's its fundamental method of inquiry.
In the world of religion just the opposite is the case: trust is the method, not doubt; love is the method, not logic; surrender is the method, not conquest of knowledge. The student, when he comes from the university, comes with great ego because he has accumulated much knowledge, he has learned much. But the disciple, when he comes from the master, comes as a nobody, egoless. He no longer exists as a separate entity from existence. He has not learned anything; on the contrary, he has unlearned whatsoever he used to know before.

A great philosopher had come to see Raman Maharshi -- a German philosopher. He asked Raman, "I have come from far far away, to learn much from you."

Raman laughed and he said, "Your journey has been an exercise in futility. Unnecessarily you traveled to me, because I am not here to teach you anything -- if you have come to learn, you have come to the wrong place -- I help people to UNlearn!"

The master helps you to UNlearn. The master helps you to become innocent again, childlike.

Jesus says: Unless you are like a child, unless you are reborn, you shall not enter into my kingdom of God. He is speaking an Eastern language. Jesus traveled to India; whatsoever he taught later on, he had imbibed that spirit in this country. In fact, it was one of the reasons that he was crucified. It was one of the basic reasons why his people could not understand him: he was bringing a totally new language, a new approach, a new vision.

The East has always been the source. Pythagoras came to the East, Jesus came to the East... and whatsoever the West has ever come to know about master-and-discipleship has been experienced through the East, directly or indirectly.

The master/disciple relationship is a love affair, the greatest love affair possible. The disciple surrenders his ego to the master. He bows down. He says: BUDDHAM SHARANAM GACHCHHAMI -- I bow down to the buddha, I surrender to the buddha, I take shelter at your feet. The moment he drops his ego he becomes part of the being of the master.

And the master is no more there as a person, he is only a presence. And when two presences meet, the greatest

orgasmic experience happens, the greatest ecstasy. That ecstasy is the goal of the master-and-disciple relationship. That ecstasy has been happening for centuries in a very mysterious way: the master says nothing about it, the disciple hears nothing about it, but sitting by the side of the master, silently waiting, patiently, prayerfully, one day the synchronicity.... One day, suddenly, the disciple starts breathing with the master. His heartbeat is no longer separate from the master's heartbeat. They disappear as two and become one.
That experience of oneness with the master is the opening of the door of the temple of God.

The third question:
Question 3
BELOVED MASTER,
WHAT IS PLATONIC LOVE?

Krishna Deva, love is simply love. It can't be Platonic or Hegelian or Kantian -- love is simply love! Platonic love is another name for homosexuality. Plato seems to be the first person who believed in homosexuality. Many must have practiced it before him, but he is the first proponent of it. The Greek idea of beauty was not that of feminine beauty -- but male beauty. You must have seen in the museums Greek painting, sculpture, and you must have observed: you never come across the paintings of a nude woman or statues of nude women. No, it is always man.
Platonic love is just a good name for homosexuality. It is better to call it what it actually is rather than giving it a beautiful label.

But love is neither homosexual nor heterosexual. Love is simply love! In fact, love has nothing to do with the object. Love is a state of your consciousness when you are joyous, when there is a dance in your being. Something starts vibrating, radiating, from your center; something starts pulsating around you. It starts reaching people: it can reach women, it can reach men, it can reach rocks and trees and stars.

When I am talking about love, I am talking about THIS love: a love that is not a relationship but a state of being. Always remember: whenever I use the word 'love' I use it as a state of being, not as a relationship. Relationship is only a very minor aspect of it. But your idea of love is basically that of relationship, as if that is all.

Relationship is needed only because you can't be alone, because you are not yet capable of meditation. Hence, meditation is a MUST before you can really love. One should be capable of being alone, utterly alone, and yet tremendously blissful. Then you can love. Then your love is no more a need but a sharing, no more a necessity. You will not become dependent on the people you love. You will share -- and sharing is beautiful.

But what ordinarily happens in the world is: you don't have love, the person you think you love has no love in his being either, and both are asking for love from each other. Two beggars begging each other! Hence, the fight, the conflict, the continuous quarrel between the lovers -- on trivia, on immaterial things, on stupid things! -- but they go on quarreling.

The basic quarrel is that the husband thinks he is not getting what is his right to get, the wife thinks she is not

getting what is her right to get. The wife thinks she has been deceived and the husband also thinks that he has been deceived. Where is the love? Nobody bothers to give, everybody wants to get. And when everybody is after getting, nobody gets it. And everybody feels at a loss, empty, tense.

The basic foundation is missing, and you have started making the temple without the foundation. It is going to fall and collapse any moment. And you know how many times your love has collapsed, and still you go on doing the same thing again and again.

You live in such unawareness! You don't see what you have been doing to your life and to others' lives. You go on mechanically, robotlike, repeating the old pattern, knowing perfectly well you have done this before. And you know what has always been the outcome, and deep down you are also alert that it is going to happen the same way again -- because there is no difference. You are preparing for the same conclusion, the same collapse.

If you can learn anything from the failure of love, then that thing is: become more aware, become more meditative. And by meditation I mean the capacity to be joyous alone. Very rare people are capable of being blissful for no reason at all -- just sitting silently and blissful! Others will think them mad, because the idea of happiness is that it has to come from somebody else. You meet a beautiful woman and you are happy or you meet a beautiful man and you are happy. Sitting silently in your room and so blissful, so blissed out? You must be crazy or something! People will suspect that you are on a drug, stoned.

Yes, meditation is the ultimate LSD! It is releasing your own psychedelic powers. It is releasing your own imprisoned splendor. And you become so joyous, such a celebration arises in your being, that you need not have any relationship. Still you can relate with people... and that's the difference between relating and relationship.
Relationship is a thing: you cling to it. Relating is a flow, a movement, a process. You meet a person, you are loving, because you have so much love to give -- and the more you give, the more you have. Once you have understood this strange arithmetic of love: that the more you give, the more you have.... This is just against the economic laws that operate in the outside world. Once you have known that, if you want to have more love and more joy, you give and share, then you simply share. And whosoever allows you to share your joy with him or with her, you feel grateful to him or her. But it is not a relationship; it is a riverlike flow. The river passes by the side of a tree, saying hello, nourishing the tree, giving water to the tree... and it moves on, dances on. It does not cling to the tree. And the tree does not say, "Where are you going? We are married! And before you can leave me you will need a divorce, at least a separation! Where are you going? And if you were to leave me, why had you danced so beautifully around me? Why in the first place did you nourish me?" No, the tree showers its flowers onto the river in deep gratefulness, and the river moves on. The wind comes and dances around the tree and moves on. And the tree gives its fragrance to the wind.
This is relating. If humanity is ever going to become grown-up, mature, this will be the way of love: people meeting, sharing, moving, a nonpossessive quality, a

nondominating quality. Otherwise love becomes a power trip.
Don't be worried, Krishna Deva, about what platonic love is. Meditate on: what is love?

Mrs. Green and her neighbor, Mrs. Kenyon, were having a chat one day.
"Mrs. Green," said Mrs. Kenyon, "maybe it is none of my business, but after all we have been friends a long time and I am concerned about your reputation. You are divorced, that's true, but people are talking about you. It just does not look right when an eighteen-year-old boy comes every night and visits you till such a late hour."
"Well," Mrs. Green smiled, "don't worry about it. It is purely a platonic relationship."
"How can it be platonic?" Mrs. Kenyon asked.
"Well," said Mrs. Green, "it is play for him and it is tonic for me!"

That's what platonic love is: play for one, tonic for the other! More than that I don't know anything about it!

The fourth question:
Question 4
BELOVED MASTER,
I AM A BUSINESSMAN. CAN I ALSO MEDITATE AND BECOME A SANNYASIN?

Ram Prasad, one has to do something in life. Somebody is a carpenter and somebody is a king, and somebody is a businessman and somebody is a warrior. These are ways of

livelihood, these are ways of getting bread and butter, a shelter. They can't change your inner being. Whether you are a warrior or a businessman does not make any difference: one has chosen one way to earn his livelihood, the other has chosen something else.

Meditation is life, not livelihood. It has nothing to do with what you do; it has everything to do with what you are.

Yes, business should not enter into your being, that is true. If your being also has become businesslike, then it is difficult to meditate and impossible to be a sannyasin... because if your being has become businesslike, then you have become too calculative. And a calculative person is a cowardly person: he thinks too much, he cannot take any jumps.

And meditation is a jump: from the head to the heart, and ultimately from the heart to the being. You will be going deeper and deeper, where calculations will have to be left behind, where all logic becomes irrelevant. You cannot carry your cleverness there.

In fact, cleverness is not true intelligence either; cleverness is a poor substitute for intelligence. People who are not intelligent learn how to be clever. People who are intelligent need not be clever; they are innocent, they need not be cunning. They function out of a state of not-knowing.

If you are a businessman, that's okay. If Jesus can become a meditator and a sannyasin, and ultimately a christ, a buddha... and he was the son of a carpenter, helping his father, bringing wood, cutting wood. If a carpenter's son can become a buddha, why not you?

Kabir was a weaver. He continued his work his whole life; even after his enlightenment he was still weaving; he loved it! Many times his disciples asked him, prayed to him with tears in their eyes, that "You need not work anymore -- we are here to take care of you! So many disciples, why go on in your old age spinning, weaving?"
And Kabir would say, "But do you know for whom I am weaving, for whom I am spinning? For God! -- because everyone is now a god to me. It is my way of prayer."
If Kabir can become a buddha and still remain a weaver, why can't you?
But business should not enter into your being. Business should be just an outside thing, just one of the ways of livelihood. When you close your shop, forget all about your business. When you come home, don't carry the shop in your head. When you are home with your wife, with your children, don't be a businessman. That is ugly: that means your being is becoming colored by your doing. Doing is a superficial thing. The being should remain transcendental to your doing and you should always be capable of putting your doing aside and entering into the world of your being. That's what meditation is all about.

A marriage broker was trying to arrange a match between a businessman and a beautiful young girl. But the businessman was very cagey. "Before I buy goods," the businessman said, "I look over samples, and before I get married I must also have a sample."
"But good heavens, man, you can't ask a respectable girl for a thing like that!" the broker replied.

"Sorry," insisted the other, "I am strictly business and I want it done in my way or not at all."
The broker went off in despair to talk with the girl. "I have got you a fine fellow," he said, "with lots of money. But strictly business he is, and he don't do nothing blind. He must have a sample."
"Listen," said the girl. "I am as smart in business as he is. Samples I won't give him -- references I will!"

If you are THAT kind of businessman, Ram Prasad, then it is going to be difficult to meditate and impossible to be a sannyasin.
But you have come here, you have been listening to me; even the desire to become a sannyasin has arisen in you. That is a good indication that business has not yet poisoned your soul totally. A part of you is still available for love, a part of you is still available for God. A part of you is still not businesslike -- otherwise you would not be here. Businesslike people can't come to me; it is impossible for them to have any communion with me. They can't understand a single word uttered here -- and what to say about the silence that is present here? They live in a totally different world, in a very mundane world.

It was quite a swanky bar in the best part of town. The new arrival ordered a bottle of beer. Paying with a dollar bill, he was surprised when the young bartender gave him ninety cents change. When questioned about it the bartender said that a dime was all he was charging.

The customer, being hungry and pleased with the apparently low prices of the place, ordered a ham and cheese sandwich on rye.
"That will be fifteen cents," said the barkeeper.
The customer's eyes widened: "I can't understand. How can you sell stuff so low?" he asked.
"Listen, buddy," said the bartender, "I just work here. I am not the boss. He is upstairs with my wife and I am doing the same thing to him down here!"

There is a certain mind which functions always in a businesslike way; in every dimension of life he is always a businessman. If you are that kind of businessman, then this is not the place for you.
This is the place for gamblers. This is the place for people who can risk -- who can risk all for nothing. Yes, exactly all for nothing, because meditation will bring you to nothingness. But those who arrive at the nothingness of meditation, immediately become aware that they have arrived at the fullness of God, too. Nothingness of you is the fullness of God, it is the other aspect. YOU become nothing, and suddenly a great plenitude descends in you -- you are overflowing with God. By becoming nothing you become spacious, you become a host to the great guest.
But if you are continuously calculating you cannot become nothing. How can you drop all for being nothing? You will always be calculating: you will move cautiously.
Then this is not the place for you. Then you go to some old, traditional, pseudo teachers. They will console you. They will tell you that you can remain a businessman and still can open a bank account in paradise. Be charitable, give

some charity: donate to the poor; donate to the temple, or the church, or the synagogue; to the hospital; to the school -- and you will be rewarded in your afterlife. Just do virtuous things which you can afford. If you exploit people, you can always give a portion back to them.

I have heard:
In a church the priest was telling the people, "The building is getting very old and we need money."
Nobody responded -- all businessmen! Everybody was looking at each other; everybody was waiting and expecting that somebody would be foolish enough.
And then a woman stood up -- the prostitute of the town! -- and she said, "I donate ten thousand dollars to the church."
The priest could not believe his ears, his eyes! For a moment he was in shock, and then he said, "But I cannot accept your money -- I cannot accept any wrong money."
One businessman stood up and said, "You don't worry, that is our money! It is only coming via her -- you can accept it!"

You can donate a little bit to the church, to some charitable institution, you can give some money to the poor people. These are the consolations. And a place for you will be reserved in heaven.
Don't be such a fool -- heaven is not so cheap. In fact, there is no place like heaven anywhere; it is something inside you. No charity can lead you there, but if you reach there your whole life becomes a charity; that is a totally different phenomenon. If you reach there, your whole life becomes compassion.

Remain a businessman, but for a few hours forget all about it. I am not here to tell you to escape from your ordinary life. I am here to tell you the ways and the means, the alchemy, to transform the ordinary into the extraordinary. Be a businessman in your shop and don't be a businessman at your home. And sometimes for a few hours forget even the home, the family, the wife, the children. For a few hours just be alone with yourself. Sink deeper and deeper into your own being. Enjoy yourself, love yourself.

And slowly slowly, you will become aware, a great joy is welling up, with no cause from the outside world, uncaused from the outside. It is your own flavor, it is your own flowering. This is meditation.
Sitting silently, doing nothing, the spring comes and the grass grows by itself. Sit silently, doing nothing, and wait for the spring. It comes, it always comes, and when it comes, the grass grows by itself. You will see great joy arising in you for no reason at all. Then share it, then give it to people! Then your charity will be inner. Then it will not be just a means to attain to some goal; then it will have intrinsic value.
And once you have become a meditator, sannyas is not far away! My sannyas particularly is nothing but living in the ordinary world, but living in such a way that you are not possessed by it; remaining transcendental, remaining in the world and yet a little above it. That is sannyas.
It is not the old sannyas, Ram Prasad: in that you have to escape from your wife, your children, your business, and go to the Himalayas. That kind of thing has not worked at all. Many went to the Himalayas, but they carried their stupid

minds with them. The Himalayas have not been of any help to them; on the contrary, they have destroyed the beauty of the Himalayas, that's all. How can the Himalayas help you? You can leave the world, but you cannot leave your mind here. The mind will go with you; it is inside you. And wherever you are, your same mind will create the same kind of world around you.

A great mystic was dying. He called his disciple, the chief disciple. The disciple rejoiced very much that the master is calling him. There is a great crowd and he is calling only him; he must be giving some secret key that he has not given to anybody up to now. "This is the way he is choosing me as his successor!" He came close.
The master said, "I have only one thing to tell you. I didn't listen to my master -- he had also told me when he was dying, but I was just a fool and I didn't listen, and I didn't even understand what he meant. But I am telling you from my own experience he is right, although it had looked very absurd when he said it to me."
The disciple asked, "What is it? Please tell me. I will try to follow it word by word."
The master said, "It is a very simple thing: never, never in your life keep a cat in your house!" And before the disciple could have asked why, the master died!
Now he was at a loss -- what a stupid kind of thing! And now whom to ask? He inquired of some old people in the village, "Is there any clue to this message? There must be something mysterious in this!"
One old man said, "Yes, I know, because his master -- your master's master -- had also told him, 'Never, never keep a

cat in your house!' but he didn't listen. I know the whole story."
The disciple said, "Please tell me so I can understand. What is the secret hidden behind it? I want it to be decoded for me so I can follow it."
The old man laughed. He said, "It is a simple thing, it is not absurd. Your master's master had given him a great message, but he never inquired, 'What is the meaning of it?' You are at least intelligent enough to inquire about it. He simply forgot about it. Your master was young when the message was given; he used to live in the forest. He had only just two clothes with him; that was all that he possessed. But there were big rats in the house and they would destroy his clothes, and again and again he would have to ask the villagers for new clothes.
"The villagers said, 'Why don't you keep a cat? You just keep a cat and the cat will eat the rats and there will be no problem. Otherwise -- we are poor people -- how can we go on supplying you new clothes every month?'
"It was so logical that he asked somebody for a cat. He got a cat, but then the problems started. The cat certainly saved his clothes, but the cat needed milk because once the rats were finished the cat was starving. And the poor man could not meditate because the cat was always there, crying, weeping, going round and round and round him.
"He went to the villagers and they said, 'This is a difficult thing -- now we will have to supply milk for you. We can give you a cow. You be finished, you keep the cow. You can drink, and your cat can also survive. That way you need not come every day for your food either.'

"The idea was perfectly right. He took the cow... now the world started. That's how the world starts. The cow needed grass, and the people said, 'We will come in the coming holidays and we will clear the forest, prepare the ground. You start growing a little wheat, other things, and leave a part for the grass.'

"And the villagers came according to their promise. They cleared the forest, they cleaned the soil, they planted wheat. But now it was such a problem: you have to water.... And the whole day the poor man was engaged in looking after the field. No time to meditate, no time to read the scriptures!

"He again went to the villagers. He said, 'I am getting deeper and deeper into difficulties. Now the question is, when to meditate -- no time is left.'

"They said, 'You wait. One woman has just become a widow, and she is young and we are afraid that she will tempt the young people in the town. You please take her with you. And she is healthy enough -- she will take care of your field, the cow, the cat, and she will prepare food for you, and she is very religious too. And don't be worried, she will not disturb you.'

"That's how things move to their logical conclusion. Now from the cat, how far the man had moved!

"And the woman came and she started looking after him, and he was very happy for a few days. And she would massage his feet... and slowly slowly, what was going to happen happened: they got married. And when you get married in India, at least one dozen children -- one dozen is the minimum! So all meditation, all sannyas, disappeared.

"He remembered only when he was dying. He remembered again that when HIS master was dying he had told him, 'Beware of the cats.' That's why he has told you. Now you be aware of the cats! Just one step in the wrong direction and you have to go the wrong way; and your mind is with you wherever you go."

I have moved in the Himalayas. Once I was in a deep part of the Himalayas with two of my friends. We entered an empty cave; it was so beautiful that we stayed the night there.
In the morning a monk came and he said, "Get out! This is MY cave!"
I said, "How can this cave be yours? I don't see -- this is a natural cave. You don't claim it, you can't claim it -- you have not made it. And you have renounced the world, your house, your wife, your children, your money, and everything, and now you are claiming, 'This is MY cave -- you get out of it!' This is nobody's cave!"
He was very angry. He said, "You don't know me -- I am a dangerous man! I can't leave it to you. I have been living in this cave for thirteen years!"
We provoked him as much as we could and he was all fire, ready to fight, ready to kill! And then I said to him, "Wait -- we will leave. We were just provoking you to show you that thirteen years have passed, but you have the same mind. Now this cave is 'yours', because you have lived here thirteen years so it is yours. You had not brought it with your birth and you will not take it away when you die. And we are not going to stay here forever, just an overnight stay. We are just travelers, we are not monks. I have just

come to see how many stupid people are living in these parts -- and you seem to be the tops!"

You can leave the world... you will be the same. You will again create the same world, because you carry the blueprint in your mind. It is not a question of leaving the world, it is a question of changing the mind, renouncing the mind. That's what meditation is and that's what sannyas is.

The last question:

Question 5
BELOVED MASTER,
WHAT IS UNAWARENESS?

Dinkar, to be in the mind, to be identified with the mind, is unawareness. To think that "I am the mind," is unawareness.
To know that mind is only a mechanism just as the body is, to know that the mind is separate.... The night comes, the morning comes: you don't get identified with the night. You don't say, "I am night," you don't say, "I am morning." The night comes, the morning comes, the day comes, again the night comes; the wheel goes on moving, but you remain alert that you are not these things. The same is the case with the mind.
Anger comes, but you forget -- you become anger. Greed comes, you forget -- you become greed. Hate comes, you forget -- you become hate. This is unawareness.
Awareness is watching that the mind is full of greed, full of anger, full of hate or full of lust, but you are simply a

watcher. Then you can see greed arising, becoming a great, dark cloud, then dispersing -- and you remain untouched. How long can it remain? Your anger is momentary, your greed is momentary, your lust is momentary. Just watch a little and you will be surprised: it comes and it goes. And you are remaining there unaffected, cool, calm.

A great king asked a Sufi mystic to give him something in writing -- a sutra, a small maxim which would help him in every possible situation, good, bad, which would help him in success, in failure, in life, in death.
The Sufi gave him his ring and told him, "There is a message. Whenever you are really in need, in a real emergency, just open the ring, take up the diamond, and inside you will find the message -- but not out of curiosity, only when there is real danger which you cannot face on your own and you need me, you can see the message."
Many times the king became curious what is in there, but he resisted his temptation: he had given his promise, his word. He was a man of his word.
After ten years he was attacked and defeated. He ran away into the forest, into the mountains, and the enemy was following him. He could hear the horses coming closer and closer -- it was death coming closer. They would kill him! But he was going as fast as he could on his horse. Tired he was, tired was his horse; wounded he was, wounded was his horse.
And then suddenly he came to a cul-de-sac. The way ended; there was an abyss. And there was no possibility of turning back because the enemy was closing in, at every moment coming closer. He could not take the jump into the

abyss; that was sure death. Except for waiting there was nothing to do.
Suddenly he remembered the ring. He opened the ring, removed the diamond. Inside there was a piece of paper; on the piece of paper just a simple, single sentence: "This too will pass away." And suddenly a great calmness descended on him: "This too will pass away."
And it happened exactly like that. He was hearing those noises coming closer; by and by he started hearing them going farther away. They had taken a wrong turn. He had passed a crossroad, they must have moved on some other road. Then he gathered his armies, fought the enemies again, won back his kingdom. He was received with great joy, garlanded, flowers showered, the whole capitol decorated for his welcome.
Suddenly he felt great ego arising in him. Again he remembered the message, "This too will pass away," and the ego disappeared. And all those garlands and all that welcome became just a child's play. In failure it helped, in success it helped.
That became his meditation, that became his mantra. So whatsoever would come he would repeat deep down -- not verbally, but the feeling would be there in his heart -- "This too will pass away."

If you can remember it, then whatsoever comes into your mind you remain simply a witness: "This too will pass away." That witnessing is awareness -- but we are identified. We become greed, we become anger, we become lust. Whatsoever comes in front of our

consciousness, we become identified with it. It is as foolish as when it happens to very small children.
Have you tried it? Just put a mirror before a very small child. He will look in the mirror very surprised, with wide open eyes he will look: "Who is this fellow?" He will try to catch hold, but he cannot catch hold of the person. And then, if the child is intelligent, he will try to go to the back of the mirror: "Maybe the child is hiding behind the mirror." He is not yet aware that it is only a mirror; there is no reality.
Mind is only a mirror: it reflects the clouds of the world, it reflects all that happens around in the world. Somebody insults and there is anger -- it is a reflection. Somebody beautiful passes by and it reflects -- it is lust. And you immediately become identified with it.
Keep a little distance... and slowly slowly, you will find that the distance goes on growing. One day the mind is so far far away, it does not affect you at all.
This is coming home, this is buddhahood. AES DHAMMO SANANTANO: this is the inexhaustible law of life. If you can be a witness you will be able to pass through a great transformation: you will know your real self.

The old maid sat stroking the head of her pet tomcat and worrying about what she had missed all her life, when all at once, a fairy appeared with her wand and told the old maid she was ready to give her any three wishes she might make. The fairy asked that she not get excited but take her time and decide on her wants carefully.
Her first wish was that she might have a beautiful body. The wand was waved and her wish granted. When she

examined the result in the mirror, her second wish was immediate: that she be given clothing to drape this wonderful figure. Her wish was again fulfilled with racks of beautiful clothes made to fit perfectly.
When asked for the third wish, she said she wanted a man. Said the fairy, "You have a beautiful cat there. How about making a man out of him for you?"
That was entirely agreeable, and the tomcat became a man. The old maid was very happy. When asked if she were entirely satisfied, she said she was. Then the fairy asked the man if he were entirely satisfied. "Yes," said he, "but she won't be."
"Why?"
"She forgot about that trip to the veterinarian!"

You go on doing things, unaware of what you are doing. You go on asking for things, unaware what you are asking for. If all your desires are fulfilled you will be the most miserable man in the world; it is good that they are not fulfilled.
The really religious person never asks anything from God. He says, "Thy will be done, thy kingdom come. Because what can I ask out of my unawareness? Whatsoever I ask is going to be wrong." He asks only one thing: "Thy will be done."
Be meditative, be prayerful. Remember these two sutras: "This too will pass away" -- that will help you to meditate -- and the second sutra, "Thy will be done"; that will help you to be prayerful. And when meditation and prayer meet, you are at the highest peak of consciousness possible.
Enough for today.

The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 6
Chapter #5
Chapter title: Live in joy
25 October 1979 am in Buddha Hall

LIVE IN JOY,
IN LOVE,
EVEN AMONG THOSE WHO HATE.

LIVE IN JOY,
IN HEALTH,
EVEN AMONG THE AFFLICTED.

LIVE IN JOY,
IN PEACE,
EVEN AMONG THE TROUBLED.

LIVE IN JOY,
WITHOUT POSSESSIONS,
LIKE THE SHINING ONES.

THE WINNER SOWS HATRED
BECAUSE THE LOSER SUFFERS.
LET GO OF WINNING AND LOSING
AND FIND JOY.

THERE IS NO FIRE LIKE PASSION,
NO CRIME LIKE HATRED,
NO SORROW LIKE SEPARATION,

NO SICKNESS LIKE HUNGER,
AND NO JOY LIKE THE JOY OF FREEDOM.

HEALTH, CONTENTMENT AND TRUST
ARE YOUR GREATEST POSSESSIONS,
AND FREEDOM YOUR GREATEST JOY.

LOOK WITHIN.
BE STILL.
FREE FROM FEAR AND ATTACHMENT
KNOW THE SWEET JOY OF THE WAY.

HOW JOYFUL TO LOOK UPON THE AWAKENED
AND TO KEEP COMPANY WITH THE WISE.

HOW LONG THE ROAD TO THE MAN
WHO TRAVELS WITH A FOOL.
BUT WHOEVER FOLLOWS THOSE WHO FOLLOW THE WAY
DISCOVERS HIS FAMILY, AND IS FILLED WITH JOY.

FOLLOW THEN THE SHINING ONES,
THE WISE, THE AWAKENED, THE LOVING,
FOR THEY KNOW HOW TO WORK AND FORBEAR.

FOLLOW THEM
AS THE MOON FOLLOWS THE PATH OF THE STARS.

It is a pleasant surprise to meditate on these sutras of today. They go against the idea that prevails all over the world about Gautama the Buddha. He is represented by his enemies and even by his friends and followers as the pessimist PAR EXCELLENCE. He is not a pessimist at all; he is one of the most joyous persons ever. These sutras will give you immense insight into the heart of this awakened man:

LIVE IN JOY,
IN LOVE,
EVEN AMONG THOSE WHO HATE.

Joy is the keyword of all these sutras. Joy is not happiness, because happiness is always mixed with unhappiness. It is never found in purity, it is always polluted. It always has a long shadow of misery behind it. Just as day is followed by night, happiness is followed by unhappiness.
Then what is joy? Joy is a state of transcendence. One is neither happy nor unhappy, but utterly peaceful, quiet, in absolute equilibrium; so silent and so alive that his silence is a song, that his song is nothing but his silence. Joy is forever; happiness is momentary. Happiness is caused by the outside, hence can be taken away from the outside -- you have to depend on others. And any dependence is ugly, any dependence is a bondage. Joy arises within, it has nothing to do with the outside. It is not caused by others, it is not caused at all. It is the spontaneous flow of your own energy.
If your energy is stagnant there is no joy. If your energy becomes a flow, a movement, a river, there is great joy --

for no other reason, just because you become more fluid, more flowing, more alive. A song is born in your heart, a great ecstasy arises.

It is a surprise when it arises, because you cannot find any cause for it. It is the most mysterious experience in life: something uncaused, something beyond the law of cause and effect. It need not be caused because it is your intrinsic nature, you are born with it. It is something inborn, it is YOU in your totality, flowing.

Whenever you are flowing, you are flowing towards the ocean. That is the joy: the dance of the river moving towards the ocean to meet the ultimate beloved. When your life is a stagnant pool you are simply dying. You are not moving anywhere -- no ocean, no hope. But when you are flowing, the ocean is coming closer every moment, and the closer the river comes, the more dance there is, the more ecstasy there is.

Your consciousness is a river. Buddha has called it a continuum. It is a continuity, an eternal continuity, an eternal flow. Buddha has never thought about you and your being as something static. In his vision, the word 'being' is not right. According to him, being is nothing but becoming. He denies being; he accepts becoming, because being gives you a static idea of something inside you like a rock. Becoming gives you a totally different idea: like a river, like a lotus opening, like a sunrise. Something is constantly happening. You are not sitting there like a rock, you are growing.

Buddha changes the whole metaphysics: he replaces being by becoming, he replaces things by processes, he replaces nouns by verbs.

LIVE IN JOY.... Live in your own innermost nature, with absolute acceptance of whosoever you are. Don't try to manipulate yourself according to others' ideas. Just BE yourself, your authentic nature... and joy is bound to arise; it wells up within you.

When the tree is taken care of, watered, looked after, it naturally blooms one day. When the spring comes there is great flowering. So is it with man. Take care of yourself. Find a right soil for your being, find a right climate, and go deeper and deeper into yourself. Don't explore the world; explore your nature. Because by exploring the world you may have many possessions, but you will not be a master. But by exploring yourself you may not have many possessions, but you will be a master. It is better to be a master of yourself than to be a master of the whole world.

LIVE IN JOY, IN LOVE.... And one who lives in joy naturally lives in love. Love is the fragrance of the flower of joy. Inside there is joy; you cannot contain it. It is so much, it is unbearable. If you try to be miserly about it, you will feel pain. Joy can be so much that if you don't share it, it can become suffering, it can become pain.

Joy has to be shared; by sharing it you are unburdened, by sharing it new sources open up within you, new streams, new springs. That sharing of your joy is love. Hence one thing has to be remembered: you cannot love unless you have attained to joy.

And millions of people go on doing that: they want to love and they don't know anything about what joy is. Then their love is hollow, empty, meaningless. Then their love brings despair, misery, anguish; it creates hell. Unless you have joy you can't be in love. You have nothing to give, you are

a beggar yourself. First you need to be a king -- and your joy will make you a king.

When you are radiating joy.... Buddha says: When you have become the shining one, when your hidden secrets are no longer secrets but are flowering in the wind, in the rain, in the sun; when your imprisoned splendor is released, when your mystery has become an open phenomenon, when it is vibrating around you, pulsating around you, when it is in your breath, in your heartbeat -- then you can love. Then you touch dust and the dust is transformed into the divine. Then whatsoever you touch becomes gold. Ordinary pebbles in your hand will be transmuted into diamonds, emeralds. Ordinary pebbles... people touched by you will not be ordinary anymore.

A man who has attained to joy becomes a source of great transformation for many people. His flame has been lit, now he can help others. The unlit flames coming closer to the one who has become afire with joy, can also become lit. That's what SATSANG is, that's what communion with a master is: coming closer to his fire, coming closer to his splendor, coming closer to his glory, coming closer to what has happened to him. And just by coming closer the flame jumps into you and you are never the same again.

Love is possible only when your flame is lit. Otherwise you are a dark continent -- and you are pretending to give light to others? Love is light, hate is darkness. You are dark within and trying to give light to others? You will only succeed in giving them more darkness -- and they are already in darkness. You will multiply their darkness, you will make them more miserable. Don't try to do that, because it is impossible, it is not according to the nature of

things. It can't happen. You can hope, but all your hope is in vain. First be filled with joy.
LIVE IN JOY, IN LOVE, EVEN AMONG THOSE WHO HATE. And then it is not a question of what others do to you. Then one can love even those who hate him. Then one can live in love and joy even amongst enemies.

A disciple of Buddha became enlightened, and Buddha said to him, "Now that you have entered the temple, go and spread the message, because there are many who need a little help, there are many who are drowning in the river of sorrow. Now that you have learned how to swim -- help others. Now you have the boat, you can take them to the other shore. Remember the way I helped you; now you go and help others."
The disciple said, "Whatever you say I will do; I will go. It hurts to leave you. It hurts, it is painful to go away from you, but if you say so, I will go. If you had told me before...." See the love of a disciple, of a devotee! He says, "If you had told me before, I would not have tried for enlightenment at all, because to be with you is far more significant. I would have risked enlightenment, I would have dropped the very project, if I had known before that I would have to leave. But now it is too late. If you say so, I will go."
Buddha said to him, "You can choose the direction, the place, where you would like to go."
In Bihar there was one part where no disciple of Buddha had ever gone: Suka was the name of the place. The disciple said, "I will go to Suka."

Buddha looked a little surprised. The disciple was young, very young, not only in age but young also in his enlightenment. He did not know the ways of the world.
Buddha said, "You are not aware, it seems, that the people of Suka are very dangerous people, murderers, thieves, robbers. That's why no one has chosen to go there yet."
The young man said, "But that's why I am choosing to go there, because they also need your message. They also need you, and more so than others. Bless me so that I can go and help a few people there."
Buddha said, "Then you will have to answer three questions. The first is: those people are so mischievous -- I know them -- if you go there they won't listen to you. They will insult you, they will try to humiliate you, they are going to be very nasty to you. When they will insult you and be nasty to you, how are you going to respond?"
The young man said, "There is no need to ask me -- you know how I am going to respond. I will thank them, will be grateful to them, because they are good people. They only insult me, they only humiliate me. They could have beaten me and they are not beating me. They could have thrown stones at me and they are not throwing stones at me. They are good people! I will be grateful to them that they are not harming my body."
Buddha said, "And if they start hitting you, beating you, wounding you, throwing stones at you, then what will your response be?"
And the young man said, "I will still be tremendously grateful to them that they are only throwing stones at me, beating me, but are still leaving me alive, are not killing me. They could have killed me!"

Buddha said, "Now the last question. If they kill you, by the time you are dying, in those last moments when you are dying, what will be your response?"
The young man said, "I will still be grateful to them because they have only killed my body; they cannot kill me. And sooner or later my body is going to go anyway. And I will also be grateful that they have destroyed my body and now they have taken from me all opportunities of committing any error. I will not be able to commit any error, I will not be able to go astray. I will be thankful, I will die with great gratitude."
Buddha said, "Now you can go anywhere. You can go to Suka or wherever you choose, you are ready. If this is your response, you have become a buddha -- you are the shining one."

It is not a question of loving those who love you. That is very ordinary, that is businesslike, a bargain. The real love is to love those who hate you. Right now even to love those who love you is not possible, because you don't know what joy is. But when you know joy, the miracle happens, the magic. Then you are capable of loving those who hate you. In fact, it is no longer a question of loving somebody or not loving somebody, because YOU become love; you don't have anything else left.

In the Koran, I have heard, there is a statement, "Hate the Devil." A great Sufi mystic woman, Rabiya, canceled that line from HER Koran. Hassan, another famous mystic, was staying with Rabiya; he saw Rabiya doing it. He said, "What are you doing? The Koran cannot be corrected --

that is blasphemy. You cannot cut any statement from the Koran; it is perfect as it is. There is no possibility of any improvement. What are you doing?"
Rabiya said, "Hassan, I have to do it! It is not a question of the Koran, it is something totally different: since I have known God I cannot hate. It is not a question of the Devil, I simply cannot hate. Even if the Devil comes in front of me I will love him, because now I can only love; I am incapable of hate -- that has disappeared. If one is full of light he can give you only light; whether you are a friend or an enemy does not matter.
"From where," Rabiya says, "can I bring darkness to throw on the Devil? It is no longer anywhere -- I am light. My light will fall on the Devil as much as on God. Now, for me, there is no God and no Devil, I cannot even make a distinction. My whole being is transformed into love; nothing is left.
"I am not correcting the Koran -- who am I to correct it? -- but this statement is no longer relevant to me. And this is MY copy; I am not correcting anybody else's Koran. I have the right to put my copy right according to myself. This statement hits me hard whenever I come across it. I cannot make any sense out of it; hence I am crossing it out."

A man who is full of joy and love can't help it. He loves friends, he loves enemies. It is not a question of decision on his part; love is now his nature, like breathing. Will you stop breathing if an enemy comes to see you? Will you say, "How can I breathe in front of my enemy?" Will you say, "How can I breathe because my enemy is also breathing and his air which has passed through his lungs may enter

into me? I can't breathe." You will suffocate, you will die. It will be suicide and utterly stupid.
On the way a moment comes when love is just like breathing -- the breathing of your soul. You go on loving. In this light you can understand Jesus' statement: Love your enemies as yourself. If you ask Buddha, he will say: There is no need to do such a thing, because you can't do otherwise. You have to love. In fact YOU ARE LOVE, so wherever you are -- in flowers, in thorns, in the dark night, in the full noontide, in misery surrounding you like an ocean or in great success -- it does not matter. You remain love; everything else becomes immaterial. Your love becomes something of the eternal, it continues. One may accept it, one may not accept it, but you can't hate; you have to be your true nature.

LIVE IN JOY, Buddha repeats,
IN HEALTH,
EVEN AMONG THE AFFLICTED.

By health Buddha means wholeness. Health comes from the same root as 'healing'. A healed person is a healthy person, a healed person is a whole person. By "health" Buddha does not mean the ordinary, medical meaning of the term; his meaning is not medicinal, it is meditational -- although you will be surprised to know that the words 'meditation' and 'medicine' both come from the same root. Medicine heals you physically, meditation heals you spiritually. Both are healing processes, both bring health. But Buddha is not talking about the health of the body; he is talking about the health of your soul. Be whole, be total.

Don't be fragmentary, don't be divided. Be an individual, literally: indivisible, one piece.

People are not one piece; they are many fragments, somehow holding themselves together. They can fall apart at any moment. They are all Humpty-Dumpties, just bundles of many things. Any new situation, any new danger, any insecurity, and they can fall apart. Your wife dies or you go bankrupt or you are unemployed -- any small thing can prove the last straw on the camel's back. The difference is only of degrees. Somebody is boiling at ninety-eight degrees, somebody at ninety-nine; somebody may be ninety-nine point nine degrees, but the difference is only of degrees, and any small thing can change the balance. You can go insane at any moment, because inside you are already a crowd.

So many desires, so many dreams, so many people are living in you. If you watch carefully, you will not find one person there but many faces, changing every moment. It is as if you are just a marketplace where so many people are going and coming, so much noise, and nothing makes sense.

Just the other day, Subhash asked a question: "Beloved Master, do you ever dream?"

You can dream only if you are many. You can dream only if you have many desires. I have none. Dreams are a by-product of desiring: what you desire in the day, you dream in the night. Dreaming is a hangover; something has remained incomplete in the day that has to be completed. The mind is a perfectionist; it wants to try, in every possible way, to complete things.

On the road you saw a beautiful restaurant, but you were in a hurry. You were going for some work and you could not enter into the restaurant. And the smell of the food was so enchanting and the color of the food.... You wanted to go in but you could not. You will dream about the restaurant; you will have to dream just to complete the whole process, so that it drops and no longer goes on hanging onto you. But your dreams will reflect your insanity.

A sane person cannot dream -- but by a "sane person" I mean a shining one, a buddha. I don't mean by "sane" what YOU mean by the word. To you, the insane people are in the insane asylums and everybody outside is sane. That is not so. Just the wall of the asylum does not divide the sane from the insane. There are insane people inside and there are insane people outside. The people who are outside have not yet been caught or maybe they are still within the boundary of normal behavior. At least on the surface they can manage; in their innermost core they may be insane.

I cannot dream even if I want to; it is impossible. Whenever I am sitting I am simply sitting -- there is no thought. And when I am sleeping I am simply sleeping -- there is no dream. But Subhash must be suffering from dreams. Everybody is suffering, day in, day out.

"I am worried. Last night I dreamed I was alone with a hundred beautiful blondes, a hundred beautiful brunettes and a hundred beautiful redheads. It was horrible!"

"Good heavens, man! What is so horrible about that?" asked the psychiatrist of the patient.

"I dreamed that I was a girl, too!"

Your dreams will reflect you. Who else can they reflect? Your dreams are keys; through your dreams much can be known about you.

The whole of psychoanalysis depends on your dreams for clues. When you are awake you are not trustworthy; what you say about yourself is deceptive. In your dreams you are more innocent, because there is nobody to control and repress. The conscience is fast asleep, morality is gone; you are more natural, more normal. In your dreams you are purer. Hence psychoanalysis has to depend on your dreams and through your dreams it comes to conclusions about you.

This is a very sad state of affairs: that you cannot be trusted at all, because you say one thing and you are totally something else. And it is not that you deliberately try to deceive; deception has almost become your second nature. That's why you immediately forget your dreams; it is a strategy of the mind. Within five seconds of waking up... when you wake up there is a little lingering, a little memory -- just a few fragments, the last parts of your dreams. But within five seconds they are gone. By the time you are out of bed all your dreams have disappeared, you have forgotten all about them. Unless you make a very conscious effort you will not be able to remember them. This is a strategy of the mind, it simply closes the door, because your dreams can be a disturbance to you.

If you come to know that in your dream you killed your father it will be heavy on you, you may feel guilty. If you are a very very moralistic, puritanical person and you see that in your dream you had eloped, escaped with the wife of your neighbor and you were enjoying it, you will be

disturbed. You will become suspicious about your morality, about your purity. It will hang over you like a dark cloud. The mind simply cuts you off from your dreams. It has created two kinds of worlds: one, the dreaming world, totally separate, and one, the so-called waking world, totally separate. You live in compartments. When you enter into dreaming you forget all about waking; when you enter into waking you forget all about dreaming.
The buddha is awake even while he is asleep. He has no compartments in his being. He is not many, he is one. Because he is one and he has no clinging to memories and no desires for the future, the present is enough for him. Then he lives moment to moment in its totality; he does not go on living partially. Your dreams simply show that you live partially, and the unlived parts have to be lived in your dreams. If you live totally each moment, then there is no possibility of any dreams.

Once it happened:
A Sufi came to me, a very beautiful person, and doing Sufi meditation -- ZIKR -- he had become capable of reading other people's thoughts. Some of his disciples, who were known to me, wanted him to come and read my thoughts. I said, "Okay, bring him."
The man was really capable. He would simply close his eyes and he would start saying what thoughts are passing within you. For half an hour he remained with closed eyes, very puzzled. Then he finally gave up. He said, "But I don't see anything, just utter emptiness." He said, "This is the first time that I can't read. What have you done to me?"

I had not done anything to him. I said to him, "I have not done anything. I am simply sitting here, not doing anything to you or to anybody else. But how can you read if there are no thoughts? It is not that I have stopped your capacity to read."
He was thinking that I had done some damage to his thought reading. I said, "I have not done anything. If you want, I can start bringing up a few thoughts. It will be an effort. Just the way I speak outside I will start speaking inside. I will have to think of my sannyasins and I will have to speak to them -- then you can read. Your capacity is intact. But I was just sitting silently, the way I always sit when I am alone. Neither in the daytime am I thinking, nor in the night am I dreaming. All dreams disappeared the day desires disappeared. All thoughts became meaningless the day I came to know that I am not the mind. But I understand your difficulties, I understand your confusion...."

A wealthy tycoon went for a cruise on his fancy yacht, taking with him five buddies, six gorgeous girls and a sailor to man the ship. They encountered a serious storm and the boat went down with the tycoon and his buddies, but the women and the sailor managed to make it to a desert island along with a waterproof bag of limited provisions.
All went well for almost a week. Our sailor friend had his Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday well taken care of. The only problem was that they were running out of food.

On Sunday a voluptuous native woman approached bearing gifts of bananas, coconuts and other edibles. The gorgeous girls were overjoyed. "We are saved!" they cried.
But the sailor muttered resignedly to himself, "There go my Sundays!"

You are living inside in a very confused state. And not only young people; even when they become old the same state continues -- not only continues, it becomes more and more confusing because, as you accumulate experience, your confusion becomes greater.

Interviewing the sixty-five-year-old rodeo champion in Amarillo, Texas, the New York newspaperman remarked, "You are really an extraordinary man to be a rodeo champion at your age."
"Heck," said the cowboy, "I am not nearly the man my pa is. He was just signed to play guard for a pro football team, and he is eighty-eight."
"Amazing!" gasped the journalist. "I would like to meet your father."
"Can't right now. He is in Fort Worth standing up for grandpa. Grandpa is getting married tomorrow; he is one hundred and fourteen."
"Your family is simply unbelievable!" said the newspaperman. "Here you are, a rodeo champion at sixty-five. Your father is a football player at eighty-eight. And now your grandpa wants to get married at one hundred and fourteen."
"Hell, mister, you got that wrong," said the Texan, "Grandpa does not want to get married -- he has to!"

You go on accumulating. Your childhood is the closest to buddhahood. As you grow old you grow insane. As you grow old, you go farther and farther away from buddhahood. It is really a very strange state; it should not be so. One should grow TOWARDS buddhahood, but people grow in just the opposite direction.
Buddha says: LIVE IN JOY, IN HEALTH, EVEN AMONG THE AFFLICTED.
This is a very important sutra to be remembered -- more so because the Christians are creating a totally wrong approach to life. They say: When there is so much misery in the world, how can you be joyous? Sometimes they come to me and they say, "People are starving and people are poor. How can you teach people to dance and sing and be joyous? There are so many people afflicted with so many diseases, and you teach people meditation? This is selfishness!"
But that's exactly what Buddha is saying. He is saying: LIVE IN JOY, IN HEALTH, EVEN AMONG THE AFFLICTED.

LIVE IN JOY,
IN PEACE,
EVEN AMONG THE TROUBLED.

You cannot change the whole world. You have a small lifespan, it will be gone soon. You cannot make it a condition that "I will rejoice only when the whole world has changed and everybody is happy." That is never going to happen and it is not within your capacity to do it either.

People have decided to be miserable; that is their decision, otherwise nobody is forcing them to be miserable. Poverty is their decision, maybe taken unconsciously, but poverty is their decision. You can see it happening.

Just three hundred years ago the native people of America were as poor as one can imagine. They had the land -- the same land -- but they had chosen a life-style which kept them poor. Now America has become the richest country. It is the same country, but with a different type of people. And you will be surprised that the first people who arrived in America were not very virtuous, religious types of people -- no. In fact the virtuous and the religious remain miserable. The people, who reached America and Australia, the pioneers, were more down-to-earth people who believed in "Eat, drink and be merry." These were the people who transformed the whole fate of the American continent; they transformed a poor country into the richest ever.

Now the same can happen to this country, but it has taken a wrong style of life. And it has lived with this style of life for so many centuries that it seems it is the only way to live. And it worships people who support its style, because they fit with its ideology.

The people of this country cannot agree with me because I am trying to change the very style of life, the very pattern, the very structure of their thought, their mind, their being. They can become as rich as any country in the world, maybe the richest, but first they will have to change their whole style of thinking, living, being. They worship poverty -- how can they become rich? They condemn richness -- how can they become rich? They condemn all

joys of the earth, they are all for renunciation, they are anti-life. How can life shower upon them its grace, its bliss, its joys? They are not receptive; they are completely blind and deaf.

If the only way you can be happy is to have everybody else happy, then you are never going to be happy. Buddha is stating a simple fact. He is saying: LIVE IN JOY, IN HEALTH, EVEN AMONG THE AFFLICTED. He is not saying don't help them, but by being ill yourself you cannot help them. By being poor yourself you cannot help the poor, although the poor will worship you because they will see how great a saint you are. They worshipped Mahatma Gandhi for the sheer reason that he tried to live like a poor man. But just by living like a poor man you are not going to help the poor. If the doctor also falls ill to help his patients, will you call him a saint? You will call him just stupid, because this is the time he needs all his health so that he can be helpful to people.

This is strange logic, but it has prevailed down the centuries: that if you want to help the poor, be poor, live a poor life, live just like the poor. Of course the poor people will give you great respect and honor, but that is not going to help the poor, it will only fulfill your ego. And any ego fulfilled creates misery for you, not joy.

LIVE IN JOY, IN HEALTH, EVEN AMONG THE AFFLICTED. LIVE IN JOY, IN PEACE, EVEN AMONG THE TROUBLED. That is the only way to help, the only way to serve. First be selfish, first transform yourself. Your life in peace, in joy, in health, can be a great source of nourishment for people who are starving for spiritual food.

People are not really starving for material things. Material richness is very simple: just a little more technology, a little more science, and people can be rich. The real problem is how to be inwardly rich. And when you are outwardly rich you will be surprised -- for the first time you become more acutely, more keenly aware of your inner poverty. For the first time all meaning in life disappears when you are outwardly rich, because in contrast, the inner poverty can be seen more clearly. Outside there is light all around and inside you are a dark island.
The rich man knows his poverty more than the poor person, because the poor person has no contrast. Outside there is darkness, inside there is darkness; he knows darkness is what life is. But when there is light outside you become desirous of a new phenomenon: you long for inner light. When you see that richness is possible outside, why can't you be rich inside?

LIVE IN JOY,
WITHOUT POSSESSIONS,
LIKE THE SHINING ONES.

Buddha says: Enjoy the world, enjoy the sun, the moon, the stars, the flowers, the sky, the earth. Live in joy and peace, without possessiveness. Don't possess. Use, but don't possess -- because the possessor cannot use. The possessor really becomes possessed by his own possessions. That's why so many rich people become very miserable, they live a poor life. They have all the money in the world, but they live in a poor way.

The richest man in the world, just fifty years ago, was the nizam of Hyderabad -- the richest man in the world. In fact, his riches were so great that nobody has ever been able to estimate how much he had. His treasuries were full of diamonds; everything was made of diamonds. Even his paperweight was the biggest diamond in the world; even the Kohinoor is only one third the size of his paperweight. When he died, his paperweight was found in his shoe. The diamonds were not counted because there were so many. They were weighed, not counted -- how many kilos, not how many diamonds -- who could count?

Each year the diamonds were brought out of the basements. He had the biggest palace in India, but all the roofs were not enough, because his diamonds were spread on the roofs of his palace just to give them a little sunlight every year. But the man lived a life of such misery, you cannot believe it; even beggars live far better. He used to collect cigarettes which others had already smoked and thrown away -- just cigarette ends. He would not purchase cigarettes for himself, he would collect these cigarettes and smoke them. Such a miser! For fifty years he used only one single cap -- it was so dirty and stinking! He died in the same cap. He never used to change his clothes. And it is said that he used to purchase his clothes from the secondhand marketplace where old, rotten things, used things, are sold. His shoes must have been the dirtiest in the world, but he would only send them once in a while for repair, he would not purchase new shoes.

Now, the richest man in the world living in such misery and miserliness -- what had happened to this man?

Possessiveness! Possessiveness was his disease, his mania.

He wanted to possess everything. He would purchase diamonds all over the world; wherever there were diamonds his agent was there to purchase them. Just have more and more! But you cannot eat diamonds -- and he was eating the poorest kind of food. He was so afraid that he was unable to sleep at all -- constant fear that somebody might steal from him.

That's how the paperweight -- the costliest diamond that he had, three times more in weight than the Kohinoor -- was found in his shoe. When he was dying he had hidden it in his shoe so nobody could steal it -- otherwise the paperweight would be too visible, too much in the eyes of people. Even dying he was more concerned with the diamond than with his own life. He could never give anything to anybody.

This happens to people who become possessive: they don't use things, they are used by things. They are not masters, they are servants of their own things. They go on accumulating and they die without ever having enjoyed all that they had.

Buddha says: LIVE IN JOY, WITHOUT POSSESSIONS, LIKE THE SHINING ONES. Live like the buddhas, who don't possess a thing but can use everything. The world has to be used, not possessed. We come empty-handed and we go empty-handed, so there is no point in possessing anything. To be possessive is ugly -- but use everything! While you are, use the world, enjoy everything that the world makes available, and then go without looking back, without clinging to things.

This is the way of the buddhas. AES DHAMMO SANANTANO: this is the inexhaustible law of the

buddhas. Then a buddha can be a beggar if he chooses to be so -- if that is his way -- or a buddha can be an emperor. There have been emperors who were buddhas.
In India there has been one man, Janaka, the father of Sita, Rama's wife, who was a buddha. He lived in the palace with all the richness of a great king and yet he was absolutely nonpossessive, he possessed nothing. It was just as if you are staying in a hotel; you don't possess anything. You stay for a few days and then you are gone. You use. The intelligent person uses life and uses it beautifully, aesthetically, sensitively. Then the world has many treasures for him. He never becomes attached, because the moment you become attached you have fallen asleep.

THE WINNER SOWS HATRED
BECAUSE THE LOSER SUFFERS.
LET GO OF WINNING AND LOSING
AND FIND JOY.

How to find joy? Let your ambition disappear; ambition is the barrier. Ambition means an ego trip: "I want to be this, I want to be that -- more money, more power, more prestige." But remember, Buddha says: THE WINNER SOWS HATRED BECAUSE THE LOSER SUFFERS. LET GO OF WINNING AND LOSING AND FIND JOY. If you want to find joy, forget about winning and losing. Life is a play, a game. Play it beautifully, forget all about losing and winning. The real sportsman's spirit is not that of winning or losing, it is not his real question. He enjoys playing; that is the real player. If you are playing to win, you will play with tension, anxiety. You are not concerned

with the play itself, its joy and its mystery; you are more concerned with the outcome. This is not the right way to live in the world.
Live in the world without any idea of what is going to happen. Whether you are going to be a winner or a loser, it doesn't matter. Death takes everything away. Whether you lose or win is immaterial. The only thing that matters, and has always been, is how you played the game. Did you enjoy it? -- the game itself -- then each moment is of joy. You never sacrifice the moment for the future.

THERE IS NO FIRE LIKE PASSION....

Buddha says: Beware of lust. Love is beautiful, but lust is just fire. It burns you and burns you badly. It wounds you.

A marine regiment was sent back for rest after a rough tour of duty at the front. At the base they discovered a contingent of WACS billeted and awaiting assignment to various posts.
The marine colonel addressed himself to the WAC commander, warning her that his men had been in the front lines a long time and might not be too careful abut their attitudes towards the WACS. "Keep them locked up," he told the WAC commander, "if you don't want any trouble."
"Trouble?" said she. "There will be no trouble. My girls have it up here." She tapped her forehead significantly.
"Madam," barked the marine, "it makes no difference where they have it -- my boys will find it. Keep them locked up!"

Lust is madness, lust is fire, lust is poison. It keeps people blind to the truth. It keeps them foolish, it keeps them unaware, it keeps them drunk.

It was sundown, and the young athlete was doing push-ups on the beach when a drunk appeared. The drunk weaved his way to within a few yards of the perspiring young man, sat down on the sand, and laughed and laughed. "What in the devil are you laughing about?" asked the annoyed young man.
The drunk laughed and laughed and then sputtered, "Don't look now, but somebody stole your girl!"

A man who lives through lust lives absolutely unconsciously. Whatsoever he is going to do is going to be wrong. Whatsoever he is going to say and see is going to be wrong. He can't see, he is blind. He can't hear, he is deaf. Nothing makes people more ugly and animallike than lust. Hence Buddha says: THERE IS NO FIRE LIKE PASSION....

NO CRIME LIKE HATRED....

Why NO CRIME LIKE HATRED? -- because everything else, other crimes, arise out of it; it is the very source. And there is no virtue like friendliness, love, because all other virtues arise out of it. Love is the greatest virtue and hatred the greatest sin.

NO SORROW LIKE SEPARATION....

Buddha says: The only thing that is making you so sad is the separation from existence. In your unconsciousness you have believed that you are separate. You have started living a life of the ego. You are not following the ultimate law, the dhamma. You are not flowing with the river; you are resisting, fighting.

Do not resist, do not fight. Flow with the river. Go with the dhamma, the law. Be in harmony with the whole. Don't think yourself separate -- you are not. No man is an island; we are all parts of a vast continent of consciousness: NO SORROW LIKE SEPARATION.... And a very significant statement:

NO SICKNESS LIKE HUNGER.

Now, how can Buddha support poverty? He cannot. If hunger is the worst sickness in the world, then poverty is the cause of it. All kinds of crimes, immoralities, sins, vices, arise out of poverty.

I have no respect for poverty; I have absolute condemnation for it. It is the ugliest wound on the human soul. It has to disappear. We have to make the earth rich, and now it can be done. It was not possible in the past, now it is possible. If it is not happening it is only because of our old, stupid ideas.

Now in India, which is one of the poorest countries, those stupid ideas are so dominant that people still believe that by spinning your own clothes you are doing something spiritual. The spinning wheel has become a symbol of saintliness. All the Indian politicians, once in a while, pose

for photographs with their spinning wheels. Once a year they go to Mahatma Gandhi's samadhi, and then they sit there for one hour or so at the spinning wheels so that photographs can be taken.

Why this spinning wheel and why so much praise for clothes made by your own hands? If you try to wear only clothes made by your own hands then the whole world is going to remain poor. The machines can do it in a far better way. Machines can become a great liberation to man, but they have to be used rightly. If you don't use them rightly they can be dangerous; they can pollute all of nature, they can destroy the whole balance -- the ecology can be disturbed by them. But if you use them consciously, meditatively, then all slavery can disappear from the world, because machines can do the work that man has been doing for ages. It can provide food, clothes, shelter.

Hence I am all for science, I am not against science. And I am all for religion too, because I can see a possibility of a great synthesis arising in the future. It has to arise now. If it does not arise, then man is doomed and finished and man has no future, no hope. The world can be made rich outwardly with technology and science, and the inner world can be made rich by meditation, by prayer, by love, by joy. We can create a new human being, fulfilled both within and without.

NO SICKNESS LIKE HUNGER....

AND NO JOY LIKE THE JOY OF FREEDOM.

Buddha says the greatest joy in life is freedom: freedom from all prejudices, freedom from all scriptures, freedom

from all concepts and ideologies, freedom from all desires, freedom from all possessiveness and jealousy, freedom from all hatred, anger, rage, lust... in short, freedom from everything, so that you are just a pure consciousness, unbounded, unlimited.
That is the greatest joy, and it is possible -- it is within everybody's grasp. You just have to grope for it a little. The groping will be in the dark, but it is not far away. If you try, if you make an effort, you are bound to find it. It is your birthright.

HEALTH, CONTENTMENT AND TRUST
ARE YOUR GREATEST POSSESSIONS,
AND FREEDOM YOUR GREATEST JOY.

The whole: that is health. Be contented: that is desirelessness. And trust: that is drop your separation, your fight with nature. These three things are to be remembered: be whole, be one, be contented, desireless. Whatsoever is, is beautiful -- enjoy it to its totality, squeeze all the juice out of it. Each moment drink of reality as totally as possible, so you need not look back, you need not ever think that you missed that moment.
And never plan for the future, because when the future will come, it will come. You just go on living each moment as totally as possible, so when the future becomes present you can live that, too -- totally. Don't plan for it, because it is unpredictable. All your planning is going to be irrelevant. And once you have planned for something and it doesn't happen, then you are frustrated. And it never happens.

There is a proverb: Man proposes and God disposes. Yes, that's how it is felt, but the reality is not that God is sitting there and disposing whatsoever you propose. The fault is not of God; the fault is yours because you propose. And out of your unawareness what can you propose? Whatsoever you project out of your mind is going to be something different than the whole. It is still a fight with the whole. Hence trust, no need to fight. We are part of the whole. We arise out of the ocean of the whole as a wave and we disappear back into the ocean. Enjoy the sunlight and the wind for the moment, and then disappear. Appear beautifully, joyously, dancing, and disappear beautifully, joyously, dancing. Live with immense joy and die with immense joy. This is how a sannyasin has to be: he knows the art of living and he knows the art and ecstasy of dying.

LOOK WITHIN.
BE STILL.
FREE FROM FEAR AND ATTACHMENT
KNOW THE SWEET JOY OF THE WAY.

LOOK WITHIN. The sutras are simple; intellectually very simple, but existentially arduous, because we have become so accustomed to looking outward. We have forgotten completely that there is something like the within too. LOOK WITHIN. BE STILL. And the way to look within is: be still. Learn to sit silently, at least for a few hours, doing nothing, just being, breathing, watching your thoughts. That too without a strain -- in a very relaxed way as if you are not much concerned with what is passing by;

an indifferent watchfulness, aloof, unconcerned, cool. Go on seeing the traffic of the mind.
Slowly slowly, as your coolness deepens, as your indifference becomes bigger, more crystallized, the thoughts will be coming less and less. And one day you are simply sitting there with no thought at all. You look around: no thought, the mind is empty. In that moment of inner emptiness all fear disappears, all attachment disappears, and one comes to KNOW THE SWEET JOY OF THE WAY.

HOW JOYFUL TO LOOK UPON THE AWAKENED AND TO KEEP COMPANY WITH THE WISE.

And if you are fortunate to keep company with the awakened, with the wise, with the shining ones, then nothing better than that can ever happen to you. Because it is only in the company of the buddhas, the awakened ones, the wise, that there is a possibility of your change, of your transformation.

HOW LONG THE ROAD TO THE MAN
WHO TRAVELS WITH A FOOL.

And we are not traveling with one fool or two fools. We are traveling with a whole load of fools; a whole crowd of fools surrounds you. By the fools Buddha means those who are not yet awakened. Even if they want to do good they are bound to do something evil; they can't do good. A fool is a fool; he lives in unconsciousness. But you trust the fools, you trust them more than you trust the buddhas, for

the simple reason that the fool speaks your language, because the fool seems just like you.

A new superintendent came to the mad asylum and the old one was retiring. So they had a ceremony to say goodbye to the old and welcome the new. They really rejoiced, they danced.
The old superintendent was a little bit surprised. In his entire time there he had never seen them so joyous. He asked them, "Why are you so joyous?"
Those mad people said, "It is simple. You are not one of us, but this man looks just like one of us. The new superintendent looks more crazy than we are, that's why we are rejoicing. You never really belonged to us, you were an outsider, but this man is an insider. Just in the two, three days he has been here he has become a friend. We can understand him, he can understand us."

The mad people are happy with another mad person. The fools are happy with other fools. And when you are with fools you feel very good, because they are not superior to you, your ego is not hurt. But when you live with a buddha, sometimes you feel very disturbed because he is so superior to you, and if you start feeling hurt you will have to escape from him or you will have to kill him.
I receive letters and telegrams from all over the world. Just the other day Laxmi brought a telegram from Milan, Italy. This is the third from the same man, who goes on sending a message that "I want to kill you!" Now Milan is so far away, why he is so worried about me? And he means

business -- three times in a month he has telegrammed. I hope that he comes sometime.

So many letters come, saying, "We would like to kill you." Why are people offended -- and offended by a man who never leaves his room? Why am I disturbing people in Milan and Berlin and New York and Delhi and Calcutta? Why? -- for the simple reason that they feel hurt.

Now it depends on your interpretation. You can rejoice in the presence of a buddha; then you start growing. You can feel hurt in the presence of a buddha; then you start feeling offended, humiliated, you become angry. And it has happened many times: Jesus is crucified, Socrates is poisoned, Mansoor is butchered. The same men, the same people, have been doing the same thing again and again.

One is fortunate if one can feel joyful just by looking at the way a buddha is, and more fortunate of course are those who can keep company with him.

Your mind will suggest to you many ways to escape. Your mind is cunning, very devious: it will find such beautiful reasons -- you could not even conceive of them. Unless you are very alert, you are bound to be deceived by your own mind. To keep company with your mind is to keep company with a fool.

HOW LONG THE ROAD TO THE MAN WHO TRAVELS WITH A FOOL -- and you are traveling with fools on the outside and you are traveling with the fool -- the real fool -- inside: your own mind.

BUT WHOEVER FOLLOWS THOSE WHO FOLLOW THE WAY

DISCOVERS HIS FAMILY, AND IS FILLED WITH JOY.

That's why I say: to be a sannyasin is to come back home, to find your family. BUT WHOEVER FOLLOWS THOSE WHO FOLLOW THE WAY DISCOVERS HIS FAMILY.... Your real family is not your father, your mother, your brothers, your sisters, your wife, your husband, your children; they are just accidental. Your real family is the family of a buddha.
If you are fortunate enough to feel joyful in the company of a buddha, then dissolve into that company -- you have found your family. Don't miss the chance, because the chance is very rare. Only once in a while somebody becomes enlightened.

FOLLOW THEN THE SHINING ONES,
THE WISE, THE AWAKENED, THE LOVING,
FOR THEY KNOW HOW TO WORK AND FORBEAR.

Be with the buddhas, the shining ones, the wise, the awakened, the loving, because they know how to work on you and they know how to be patient with you. They know how to transform you. They have been to the highest peak. They come back to the dark valley just to call you forth, to take you with them to the highest peak of life, freedom.

FOLLOW THEM
AS THE MOON FOLLOWS THE PATH OF THE STARS.

Be courageous, be adventurous. Risk all, because less than that won't do. Risk all and trust. And if you want to be with a buddha, then the only way is: become more meditative so that you can start understanding his ways, his methods. Become more loving so that you can understand his love -- because his love is totally different than you have known. His love is cool; it is not hot passion, it is a very cool breeze. Those who don't understand, for them it will look cold. Those who understand, they will rejoice in its coolness. They will be rejuvenated by its coolness, they will be refreshed, they will be reborn.
Enough for today.
The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 6
Chapter #6
Chapter title: No going back
26 October 1979 am in Buddha Hall

The first question:
Question 1
BELOVED MASTER,
UNIMAGINED ECSTASY, UNIMAGINED PAIN.

Yoga Sudha, it is natural. Ecstasy and great pain happen together, because it is a new birth: the joy of being born, the joy of entering into the unknown, the great adventure into God. But pain is also there, great pain: the pain of leaving the old, the familiar, the known; the pain of leaving the secure, the safe; the pain of dying -- dying as the ego. If the ecstasy is true, it is bound to happen that there will be

great pain. This is one of the criteria by which to judge whether the ecstasy is true or not.

It is like uprooting a tree from its known soil and transplanting it into a new climate, into a new country. The tree will have to learn to live again from ABC; it is hard to unlearn and it is hard to learn again. There is bound to be pain. Great pain and agony precede great ecstasy. It can continue for months, for years too -- it all depends on you. Now, don't look back. That which is gone is gone, and gone forever, never to return again. Whatsoever you do, you cannot bring it back.

The child cannot enter into the womb again, howsoever pleasant it was, comfortable, convenient, secure, safe. The child may have great nostalgia for the womb, for those beautiful, eternal nine months. Yes, I say eternal, because the child feels them as eternity, not as nine months. He has no idea of calculating time -- those long long nine months of such warmth, of such protection, of such unworried existence, of such tremendous rest and relaxation. The nostalgia hangs around. The child would like to go back to the womb, but it is not possible.

Going back is not possible at all; it is not in the nature of things. One always has to go forward. And when you look forward everything is so unfamiliar that great fear arises. One never knows where one is. One loses one's identity, one passes through a great crisis of identity. The known is no longer there to cling to, and the unknown seems to be ungraspable.

But don't look back; that which can't happen can't happen. Look forward! And don't interpret the new and the unknown as unsafe. Interpret it in terms of adventure,

exploration. Interpret it as great freedom. Buddha talks again and again about freedom. It is freedom from the past, freedom from the mother, freedom from the parents, freedom from the society, freedom from the church, the state.

What I am giving to you is absolute freedom. Yes, fear can arise, but fear arises because of your interpretation. Deep down somewhere in the unconscious you still would like to go back, to close your eyes to the new sunrise. You would like to go back even though there was nothing very valuable, nothing significant, but at least one was safe. The territory was familiar; one lived surrounded by walls. We call it a prison, but you used to call it your home; and I have taken you out of your home because it was not your real home, it was only make-believe. This freedom, this ecstasy that is arising, is your real home.

Now, if you cling to the past, which is no longer possible, and you don't allow the future to happen smoothly, the pain can continue, the agony can continue, for months, for years. And you will be split: a part of you clinging to the no-more and a part of you longing for the not-yet.

Now be courageous. Take the quantum leap! Just as the snake slips out of the old skin, slip out of the old. It has fulfilled its function, it has brought you to the new. Gratefully say goodbye to it and plunge into this exploration that is becoming valuable to you. Plunge into this insecurity, into this danger, because life is where insecurity is; life is where danger is. There is no way to live totally unless you learn to live dangerously -- more danger, more aliveness; less danger, less aliveness.

And I am making peaks upon peaks available to you. This is an unending chain. You will reach one peak thinking that this is the end and now you can rest, but by the time you have rested a little bit you will become aware of a higher peak challenging you, calling you forth. A new pilgrimage starts. And this goes on and on.

Life is an eternal pilgrimage. There is no goal to it, it is a pure journey. Hence the joy of it. If there was a goal to it, that would mean a full stop to your life. Then what are you going to do? After the full stop there is nothing, nothing more. Life knows nothing of full stops. Life is a continuum, a song that never ends, a story that goes on unfolding. Each moment something new is ready to happen if you are available.

Your observation is true. You say, "Unimagined ecstasy, unimagined pain."

That's how it has always been. I don't talk much about the pain, because that will make you so afraid that you will not take the jump. I talk about ecstasy to persuade you, to seduce you into taking the jump. Once you have taken the jump you will know that there is great pain too, but that pain is a blessing in disguise. That pain is the pain the gold passes through when it goes through the fire: it purifies, it makes you more and more integrated, it gives you centering, it creates a soul in you. Without this pain there is no soul, and without this pain no ecstasy is possible. You would like to bypass the pain and reach the ecstasy, but that cannot be done.

AES DHAMMO SANANTANO: this is the law and the law has to be followed; you can't go against the law. But once you have known the ecstasy, it is worth going through

all the pain. You can sacrifice everything for the ecstasy, because ecstasy is another name for God approaching closer to you. Your melting into God is what ecstasy is all about.

The word 'ecstasy' is beautiful; it simply means "standing out." Out of what? Standing out of your ego, your personality, your mind; getting out of the whole structure in which you have lived -- not only lived but with which you have become identified. Standing out of all this, just a pure witness, a watcher on the hills -- and everything is left deep down in the valley.

Drop the nostalgia. Drop this dreaming about the valley. You have lived in the valley long enough, and what have you gained? For many many lives you have lived in the valley, in all those chains, thinking that they were ornaments. Maybe they were made of silver and gold, maybe they were studded with diamonds and emeralds; but whether a chain is made of iron or gold, it makes no difference. In fact, a golden chain is far more difficult to break because you become more attached to it.

You have lived in the valley so long, for so many lives -- now try to live on the peaks. And be totally with the peaks. Forget all about the valleys, because that will be a disturbance. That disturbance is creating pain. You are looking back again and again: there is still some desire, some longing, some hope that you may get back to your old structures again.

But let me make it absolutely clear to you: there is no going back. Now you have crossed that point from where a person can still go back, so it is an exercise in futility to feel pain for something which is no more. But it will keep

you occupied and you will miss the joys of the peak, the fresh air of the peak, the unpolluted atmosphere of the peak, the closeness of the sun and the clouds. Now is the time to whisper with the clouds and with the sun and the stars! It is a beautiful moment.

Decide in favor of ecstasy, and whatever pain happens through that decision, accept it with joy, with thankfulness. The more gratefully you accept it as part of growth, the sooner it will disappear -- and it will not leave even a trace on you; you will be unscratched by it. If you cling to it too long, it will leave wounds. Even if they heal, the marks will remain.

In these moments, when one passes from one stage of being to another stage of being, one is very vulnerable. In these moments one is very soft, impressionable. Don't give much attention to pain.

And that's what you have been doing for a few months. I have been watching silently. Many times I have to be just a silent watcher, because I hate to interfere. Even though I know you are in need, still I respect your freedom so much that, unless you ask, I will keep quiet, I will not say a word. I will feel great compassion for you -- I am perfectly aware of your tears and the anguish that you are passing through -- but I have been keeping myself aloof deliberately, because this is the only way to give the disciple a chance to grow.

If I go on interfering at every stage, helping, supporting, you will start depending on me too much. Then you will never be able to walk on your own feet; you will always need crutches. And I don't want to give you crutches, I

don't want you to be dependent on me. The only gift that I can give to you is that of total freedom, of independence. Hence I have been silent, waiting for the day when you would ask the question. Today you have asked the question. Now I can speak, I can share my understanding with you, but still the decision always remains with you. You can go on crying and weeping over spilled milk, or you can gather yourself and take a plunge into the new world that I have made available to you.

Don't waste time. Time is really precious, far more precious than money, far more precious than anything in the world, because it is through time that you can contact eternity. And these moments are rare: if you miss them once, you never know when they will come back again. Maybe after lives you will come across a buddha again... and there is every possibility you will repeat the same mistakes, because mind wants to repeat. Mind is repetition -- even after lives it repeats the same mistakes.

It happened once: a young prince asked Buddha to initiate him as a BHIKKHU, as a sannyasin. Buddha was a little reluctant. This was very rare -- buddhas are never reluctant, or very rarely; they are always happy if somebody is asking for initiation.

Ananda, Buddha's chief disciple, immediately became aware that Buddha was a little hesitant. He said, "Bhagwan, why are you hesitating? I have never seen you hesitate. You persuade people, you help people, you do everything possible to bring them to the way -- and this man himself is asking! And not an ordinary man -- a great prince, with

great potential. If he becomes a disciple, many more will follow. Why are you hesitating?"

Buddha said to Ananda, "Because this young man has been initiated in the past by other buddhas at least seven times, and he has committed the same mistake again and again. And mind is repetitive. I know I can give him initiation, but he is bound to repeat the same mistake. But if you say so, I will initiate him. Now watch what happens."

The young man was initiated... and of course this whole dialogue with Ananda had happened in front of him, so he was very conscious not to repeat anything. But he did not remember anything of his past lives, and when you don't remember, how can you avoid repetition? If you remember, you can avoid.

He asked Buddha many times, "Please tell me, what is my mistake that I have been repeating again and again? And you say I have lived with seven other buddhas? I don't want to miss this opportunity."

Buddha said, "That won't help very much, because you have asked the sixth buddha the same question and the fifth also, and they answered. I am not going to do it. I will tell you only when the time arrives."

And the time arrived within a few days. They traveled to another city; they were staying in a small caravanserai -- ten thousand sannyasins -- there was no space. It must have been as overcrowded as it is here! Now when I look at you, I completely forget whether you are sannyasins or sardines. I have to go on reminding myself, "No, these are my sannyasins."

The older sannyasins of Buddha were given a little better space, a little more space -- they were old, senior. This

young man was the latest addition to the Buddha's SANGHA -- his order; he got the place at the outermost circumference, just in the porch where people used to put their shoes. He had to sleep there. A prince, sleeping in a porch where people keep their shoes? He was very hurt.
In the night he could not sleep, for the same reasons that you suffer -- mosquitoes! They are the ancientmost enemies of meditators. If you are not meditating they will not take any notice of you; once you start meditating, they suddenly become interested in you. The blood of a meditator has a certain sweetness.
And there were mosquitoes and he was unable to sleep; and the serai was so overcrowded, and people were coming and going the whole night -- somebody was coming, somebody was leaving. How can you sleep in a porch? In the middle of the night he said, "This is stupid, this is just nonsense! I have not become a sannyasin for all this. I had a beautiful palace, every facility. Tomorrow morning I will say goodbye to Buddha."
In fact he wanted to leave at that very moment, but that would not be right. At least he had to say to Buddha, "I am finished."
But before morning, Buddha came to him and said, "Now the time has come. I can answer your question. This has happened to you again and again: you have been initiated seven times, but just for small things you always became so much disturbed that you went away. You can go -- this is your old habit. Because of this habit I was hesitant."
He had brought Ananda with him and he said, "Look! What do you say now? This man wants to leave tomorrow morning."

The young man had not said a single word. He fell at Buddha's feet. He said, "How did you come to know in the middle of the night?"
Buddha said, "That is not your business. That's what makes me a master. In the morning you want to go; you can go, but go with this awareness: that this is how you have been losing the track again and again."
The young man never left. It was difficult -- Buddha gave him many many uncomfortable situations -- but he was a man of integrity; he belonged to a very famous family, ancient, noble; he belonged to the warrior race. It was against his whole upbringing to leave the Buddha. And now that Buddha had told him what the cause had been in the past... and as meditation deepened he started remembering his past associations with other buddhas. Slowly slowly he became aware that yes, for small things he had left buddhas; for such small things he had lost the way many times.

Yes, Sudha, the pain is there, and it is not only for you; others will also pass through the pain. Many have passed through it, many will have to pass through it. Pass through it joyously. Keep your eye on the ecstasy. Don't focus yourself on the pain -- that is the wrong approach. Focus yourself on the ecstasy, and think that the pain is the price we pay for the ecstasy. Soon the pain will disappear. And the energy released from the pain will bring you to even higher realms of ecstasy, will bring you to greater altitudes of ecstasy.
Be watchful....

The second question:
Question 2
BELOVED MASTER,
ARE YOU A BLACK MAGICIAN OR A WHITE MAGICIAN?

Prem Tussir, I am an orange one.

The third question:
Question 3
BELOVED MASTER,
HOW TO BECOME MORE AWARE?

Pankaj, by becoming more aware, one BECOMES more aware. There is no other method to it. It is a simple process. Whatsoever you are doing, do it with such consciousness as if it is a question of life and death; as if a sword is hanging over you.

There is an ancient story in India:
A great sage sent his chief disciple to the court of King Janak to learn something which was missing in the young man.
The young man said, "If you can't teach me, how can this man, this Janak, teach it to me? You are a great sage, he is only a king. What does he know about meditation and awareness?"
The great sage said, "You simply follow my instructions. Go to him, bow down to him; don't be egoistic, thinking that you are a sannyasin and he is only an ordinary householder. He lives in the world, he is worldly and you

are spiritual. Forget all about it. I'm sending you to him to learn something; so for this moment, he is your master. And I know, I have tried here, but you cannot understand -- because you need a different context to understand it. And the court of Janak and his palace will give you the right context. You simply go, bow down to him. For these few days, he will represent me."

Very reluctantly, the young man went. He was a brahmin of high caste, and what was this Janak? He was rich, he had a great kingdom, but what could he teach a brahmin? Brahmins always think that they can teach people. And Janak was not a brahmin, he was a KSHATRIYA, the warrior race in India. They are thought to be second to brahmins; the brahmins are the first, the foremost, the highest caste. To bow down to this man? This has never been done. A brahmin bowing down to a kshatriya is against the Indian mind.

But the master had said it so it had to be done. Reluctantly he went, and reluctantly he bowed down. And when he bowed down, he was really feeling very angry with his master, because the situation in which he had to bow down to Janak was so ugly in his eyes.

A beautiful woman was dancing in the court and people were drinking wine. And Janak was sitting in this group. The young man had such condemnation, but still he bowed down. Janak laughed and said, "You need not bow down to me when you are carrying such condemnation in you. And don't be so prejudiced before you have experienced me. Your master knows me well, that's why he has sent you here. He has sent you to learn something, but this is not the way to learn."

The young man said, "I don't care. He has sent me, I have come. But by the morning I will go back, because I can't see that I can learn anything here. In fact, if I learn anything from you, my whole life will be wasted. I have not come to learn drinking wine and seeing a beautiful woman dance and all this indulgence."

Janak still smiled and he said, "You can go in the morning. But since you have come and you are so tired... at least rest for the night, and in the morning you can go. And who knows -- the night may become the context of the learning for which your master has sent you to me."

Now, this was very mysterious. How could the night teach him anything? But okay, he had to be here for the night, so don't make much fuss about it. He remained. The king arranged for him to have the most beautiful room in the palace, the most luxurious. He went with the young man, took every care about his food, his sleep and when he had gone to bed, Janak left.

But the young man could not sleep the whole night, because as he looked up, he could see a naked sword hanging with a thin thread just above his head. Now, it was so dangerous that at any moment the sword could fall and kill the young man. So he remained awake the whole night, watchful, so he could avoid the catastrophe if it was going to happen.

In the morning, the king asked, "Was the bed comfortable, the room comfortable?"

The young man said, "Comfortable? Everything was comfortable -- but what about the sword? And why did you play such a trick? It was so cruel! I was tired, I had come on foot from the faraway ashram of my master in the forest,

and you played such a cruel joke. What kind of thing is this, to hang a naked sword with so thin a thread that I was afraid that a small breeze... and I am gone, and I am finished. And I have not come here to commit suicide."
The king said, "I want to ask only one thing: you were so tired, you could have fallen asleep very easily, but you could not fall asleep. What happened? The danger was great, it was a question of life and death. Hence you were aware, alert. This is my teaching too. You can go, or if you want, you can stay a few more days to watch me.
"Although I was sitting there in the court, where a beautiful woman was dancing, I was alert to the naked sword above my head. It is invisible; its name is death. I was not looking at the young woman. Just as you could not enjoy the luxury of the room, I was not drinking wine. I was just aware of death which could come any moment. I am constantly aware of death. Hence, I live in the palace and yet I am a hermit. Your master knows me, understands me. He understands my understanding too. That's why he has sent you here. If you live here for a few days, you can watch on your own."

You asked me, Pankaj, how to become more aware. Become more aware of the precariousness of life. Death can happen any moment. The next moment, it may knock on your door. You can remain unaware if you think you are going to live forever. How can you live unaware if death is always close by? Impossible! If life is momentary, a soap bubble -- just a pin prick and it is gone forever -- how can you remain unaware?

Bring awareness to each act. Walking on the road, walk fully alert; eating, eat with awareness. Whatsoever you are doing, don't let the past and the future interfere. Be in the present. That's what awareness is all about. Taking a shower, just take the shower. Don't let the mind go far away, into the past, into the future. Don't allow the mind these faraway excursions, these journeys. Taking a shower, just take the shower.

Bokuju, a great Zen master, was asked, "What is your fundamental teaching? What is your fundamental practice? How did you become enlightened?"
He said, "My teaching is simple: When hungry, eat; when sleepy, sleep."
The man was puzzled. He said, "I have never heard of such a practice. I am asking about the fundamental practice and you are talking about 'When hungry, eat and when sleepy, sleep.' What kind of teaching is this?"
Bokuju said, "That I don't know, but that's how I became enlightened, and that's how many of my disciples are becoming enlightened. You can go and ask them."
But the man said, "That's what we all do. Hungry, we eat. Sleepy, we sleep."
Bokuju said, "No, there is a difference and a great difference. When I am eating, I am simply eating and doing nothing else. When you are eating, you are doing a thousand and one things in your head -- except eating; you are doing everything else. Eating is done mechanically. When you are sleeping, are you really asleep? How can you be asleep when you are dreaming? Dreaming so many dreams, the whole night; waves upon waves of dreams go

on coming. Only for a few minutes, here and there, dreaming stops and you fall into deep sleep; otherwise, dreaming continues. Dreaming is a sleep distraction: you are distracted by a thousand and one things. But you are not asleep. You are not doing one thing only."

To be aware, Pankaj, one needs to do one thing at a time. And do it with full awareness, watchfulness.

A progressive kindergarten teacher wanted her charges to learn about life through firsthand experiences. So after much red tape, she was able to persuade her superiors to let her take the class of all boys to a horse racing track to learn about the pitfalls of gambling.
After they had been there a while, several of the children asked to go to the boys' room. She escorted them there under the guidance of a track employee who guarded the door for them. She saw to it that the boys had no problems and in some cases had to help them unbutton their trousers. As she moved helpfully down the line, she suddenly saw something that made her do a double take. "Are you only five years old?" she gasped.
The object of her contentions replied, "What do you mean, lady? I am riding Dandy Charger in the third race."

People go on doing things almost in a sleep. Just become a little more alert. Do whatsoever you are doing, but bring the quality of consciousness to your actions -- there is no other method. And you can bring that quality to small things and that is helpful. Sitting, just watch your breathing. The breath goes in, watch; the breath goes out, watch. Just

go on watching your breathing. And it is of great help because if you watch your breathing, thinking stops.
This is something to be understood. Either you can think or you can watch your breathing. You can't do both together. Breathing and thinking are such processes that only one can exist in you -- in awareness. In unawareness, both can continue: you can go on breathing and you can go on thinking. But if you become aware, either you can think or you can breathe; and when you breathe with awareness, thinking disappears. Your whole consciousness becomes focused on breathing. And breathing is such a simple process: you need not do it, it is already happening. You can just bring your consciousness to it.
Buddha became enlightened through this simple method. He calls it vipassana, insight. Breathing brings great insight and when you are aware of breathing, the whole thought process simply comes to a stop -- and great stillness arises.
After watching your breathing, it will be easy to watch your thinking directly, because breathing is a little gross. Thinking is more subtle. Thoughts have no weight, they are weightless; they can't be measured, they are immeasurable. That's why the materialists cannot accept them. Matter means measure -- that which can be measured is matter. So thought is not matter because it cannot be measured. It is, and yet it cannot be measured; hence it is an epiphenomenon. The materialist says, "It is only a by-product, a side effect, a shadow phenomenon" -- just as you walk in the sun, a shadow follows you. But the shadow is nothing. You walk in life and thinking arises, but it is only a shadow. If you watch this shadow, this epiphenomenon, these thoughts and the processes of thought... it is going to

be a more subtle phenomenon because it is not as gross as breathing.
But first, learn the process of awareness through breathing and then move to thinking. And you will be surprised: the more you watch your thinking... again, either you can watch or you can think. Both cannot be done simultaneously. If you watch, thinking disappears.
If thinking appears, watching disappears. When you have become alert enough to watch your thoughts and let them disappear through watching, then move to feeling -- which is even more subtle. And these are the three steps of vipassana. First breathing, second thinking, third feeling. And when all these three have disappeared, what is left is your being.
To know it is to know all. To conquer it is to conquer all.

The fourth question:
Question 4
BELOVED MASTER,
IF BUDDHA DID NOT REALLY NEED TO LEAVE HIS WIFE AND CHILDREN IN ORDER TO ATTAIN ENLIGHTENMENT, THEN CAN ENLIGHTENMENT HAPPEN ANYWHERE? WHY DO I FEEL THAT I NEED TO BE IN YOUR BUDDHAFIELD?

Deva Surati, Buddha also realized it only when he became a buddha -- that it could have happened anywhere. He had not realized it when he was not a buddha. Then he had to go, leave the palace, the children, the wife, the parents and move to faraway caves in the mountains, into faraway

jungles, to live alone with nature, so that the society and all its conditionings could be left behind.

Yes, when he became a buddha then he knew that it could have happened anywhere. But when you have become a buddha, it is a totally different perspective. It is very easy to say things like that when you have attained.

And that is one of the greatest problems: what the buddhas say, they are saying after they have attained, to people who have not yet attained. Communion becomes difficult, very difficult. The buddhas say, "You are already buddhas"; and when you hear that "We are already buddhas," you say, "Then why be worried about it? Then why meditate? And why be a sannyasin?" Then you have missed the whole point! And Buddha is not saying anything wrong -- he is absolutely correct -- and yet before you can realize the truth of his statement you will have to experience it on your own. One day you will have become a buddha. Then you will also be able to say that there was no need to leave anything. Then you will say, "There was no need to be in the buddhafield of a master." But right now it is a need, an absolute need.

A buddhafield facilitates many processes which can happen without the buddhafield, but it would take long long, arduous effort. It is the same as when the wind is blowing and going towards the other shore: you need not row your boat; you can simply leave the boat and the winds will take it to the other shore. In a buddhafield the winds are blowing towards the other shore; you can simply surrender to the winds and with no effort you will reach the other shore. You can reach the other shore alone too, but then you will

have to row the boat. Then you will have to take the risk of being alone in the uncharted sea.
In a buddhafield you are not alone, there are many who are moving. A few are ahead of you, a few are behind you; and you know that people are moving, that people are gaining new insights, that people are evolving, that people are reaching closer to the other shore. And those who are ahead of you can always assure you, "Don't be worried. Go on. Come on! The other shore is visible from our state; soon it will be visible to you too." And you can say many things to those who are behind you. Those are the people who need great assurance. Moving into the unknown is not an easy process; a buddhafield becomes a chain.
Yes, Surati, fundamentally it is true -- you can be a buddha anywhere -- but being in a buddhafield things will be far easier. Being with a master in deep love and trust things start happening, just as the spring comes and flowers start blossoming. Out of season you can also manage to bring flowers to the plants, but then it takes great effort, unnecessary effort. When the spring is there, things happen of their own accord. Once it has happened, then it looks easy for everybody.
When Copernicus discovered some laws, people said, "We could have found them; they are so simple." But nobody had found them before him.

When Columbus reached America, discovered America and came back, people started saying, "This is not such a great thing. Don't make such a fuss about it. The earth is round. Anybody could have reached there!"

The queen of Spain invited Columbus for a dinner; the whole court was invited. And everybody was jealous of Columbus, so they were saying, "This is not something big that the earth is round."

Columbus said, "But just three years ago when I was saying the earth is round, nobody was ready to listen to me. In fact, I was surprised when the queen agreed to help me."

It has happened many times: when the man has not been able to understand something of the unknown, the woman has been able to understand. Man goes with a slow, logical process towards a conclusion. Woman is intuitive: she does not go by a slow process, she simply jumps to the conclusion. That's why it is so difficult to talk with a woman, to argue with a woman. Man always finds himself at a loss, because he goes with very skillful logic, prepares the whole ground and the process step by step. He "logics" to the conclusion, and the woman suddenly jumps with no premise, with no process -- she simply arrives at the conclusion. They live in totally different worlds.

The queen of Spain agreed. She said, "Okay, go ahead, and I will bear the expenses."

Everybody had laughed at the foolish queen, and people had said, "A woman is after all a woman -- mad, crazy! What does she understand about geography, astronomy? This man has befooled the queen."

Now everybody was saying that it was so easy. Columbus did one thing: he took one egg from the plate and told the people of the court, "Can anyone make it stand upright on the table?"

Everybody tried, but it would fall down; it would not stand upright. They said, "This is impossible. This can't be done.

How can you make the egg stand? It is so round shaped, it is bound to fall down."
When everybody had tried and agreed that this was impossible, Columbus took the egg in his hand, hit it hard on the table so the bottom became flat, and the egg was standing. They all said, "This is cheating! Why didn't you say so before? We could have done it!"
Columbus said, "It is always easy when a thing has been done. I have not prevented you, I have not said you can't do it, but none of you ever imagined doing it. Now it is simple, now everybody can do it, now it is nothing much."

When you become a buddha you will be surprised how simple the whole phenomenon is. You will be puzzled... why did it not happen before, why did it take so long, so many lives? In India they say millions of lives, and they are right. "Why did it take millions of lives? And the process was so simple!" One simply laughs at human stupidity and ridiculousness.
And yes, buddhas are bound to say things which can be dangerous to those who are not yet awakened.
For example, YOU listening to this -- that Buddha could have become enlightened anywhere -- you may find a rationalization to go away from here. That will be a trick of your mind. And I am not saying that you cannot become a buddha -- you can become a buddha anywhere, even in California -- but it is going to be more and more difficult. If it cannot happen here it will be very very difficult for it to happen anywhere else, although I don't say that it is absolutely impossible. It is not absolutely impossible -- it is possible -- but whatsoever is possible is not necessarily

going to happen. Even the possible can be missed if you don't have the right context.
In fact the very idea of buddhahood, of becoming a buddha, has arisen in you because you are here. In the West people worship Christ, but nobody thinks that he is going to become a christ. That is blasphemy. There is only one Christ, the only begotten Son of God! It is enough to be a Christian; the very idea of becoming a christ looks crazy.
It is an Eastern contribution to human consciousness that you can become the Buddha, that you can become the Christ, that you can become the Krishna, that you can reach the highest peak that anybody has ever reached, that you carry the transcendental within your being like a seed. But the seed also needs a right soil, a gardener. The master is a gardener, and his field of energy is the right soil.
Beware of the mind's tricks! It can always find consolations, rationalizations. And those who are following the path have to be aware of rationalizations and consolations.

A farmer drove to town with some produce to sell. Afterwards he decided to have a good time for himself by going to see a burlesque show. The show inspired him so much that afterwards he decided to buy himself a complete new set of clothes, including a suit, hat and shoes, to surprise his wife. He put them under the driver's seat and set off for home.
When he got to a river, he got out and threw all of his old clothes in. Returning to his car he looked under the seat -- the new clothes were gone. "Well, what the heck," he said to himself as he drove off, "I will surprise her anyway!"

The mind can always console you. "If it does not happen there," the mind can say, "who knows? -- it may not have happened anywhere else either. If it happens here," the mind can say, "it could have happened anywhere else." But I cannot deny the ultimate truth -- although the ultimate truth is not yet your territory. The ultimate truth is that you are already buddhas. It is not a question of it happening, so where it happens does not matter. It can happen in the home; it can happen in the forest; it can happen in the marketplace; it can happen in a monastery. It can happen with a master; it can happen without a master. It can happen to the sinner; it can happen even to the saint. Yes, I know a few saints to whom it has happened -- believe me! So the ultimate possibility is there, but to make the ultimately possible immediately actual is a totally different process. How to make it immediately actual?

A master is of tremendous help, and if the master also has a buddhafield.... A master may be moving alone, not creating a buddhafield. To create a buddhafield, the master has to create thousands of disciples. He has to create a multidimensional energy in which all kinds of people contribute, pour their energies. He has to make an ocean of energy, so tremendously powerful that whosoever enters the ocean is bound to be transformed -- sometimes even in spite of himself; sometimes not even knowing what is happening.

It is easier for it to happen with a master. It is even easier for it to happen with a master who has a buddhafield. And my effort is not only to create the buddhafield here but to create small oases all over the world. I would not like to

confine this tremendous possibility to this small commune only. This commune will be the source, but it will have branches all over the world. It will be the root, but it is going to become a big tree. It is going to reach every country, it is going to reach every potential person. We will create small oases; we have started creating small communes, centers, all over the world.

Almost two hundred small families are functioning all over the world, but this is only the beginning. Thousands of communes are bound to happen once this commune has become really and totally established. It is going to create such an impetus, it is going to create such a longing all over the world, that we will have many many communes all over the world. And wherever my sannyasins are together, I am there. Wherever they will sit in meditation, my presence will be felt.

So first we have to create the root, and then the branches. The whole world cannot come here, but we can send our messengers, our apostles; we can send our branches far and wide. We can cover the whole earth. We ARE going to cover the whole earth!

This is of such immense importance today that if it doesn't happen, humanity has no future. The "old man" is already dead: you are carrying a corpse. The new man is absolutely needed -- only then can this earth go on living; only then can this planet remain alive.

And man has the capacity to renew himself -- to die to the past and to be reborn. Man has the capacity for resurrection. But the earth is almost like a desert today and small oases are needed everywhere, so those who are thirsty cannot say, "What can we do? The water is not

available. How can we quench our thirst?" We have to make God available to every possible seeker all over the world.

Yes, even in countries like China, Soviet Russia, and other communist countries, my effort is to create small oases there too. They have started: they are underground there -- they have to be underground there. You will be surprised, but in one Russian town we have twenty-five sannyasins -- of course not in orange. They have made their own malas, and when they meet in some underground basement they wear orange clothes, listen to the tapes, meditate, study books. They have translated a few books into Russian; now those translations are going around.

Just a few days ago I received a letter from the woman who has organized that underground group saying, "We are ready to become sannyasins. Just a hint from you and we will assert ourselves, whatsoever the cost." And of course, in Russia it can be dangerous. It can only mean imprisonment or a lifelong sentence in Siberia. So I have given her a message saying, "There is no need right now. And if you want to make orange clothes, don't make them orange, make them red -- let them look communist! I can function through the red as much as through the orange; don't be worried. I don't like unnecessary suffering. I don't want to create unnecessary martyrs, for no reason at all. And continue to work -- work is more important."

This is going to spread. Soon you will see communes sprouting everywhere, and then it will be possible for me to function on a wider scale. But the root commune has to be here, and the root commune needs at least ten thousand

sannyasins. That is the minimum to create enough energy to pulsate the whole earth!
You can become a buddha anywhere, but to become a buddha here will be easier, will be possible in THIS life. To become a buddha somewhere else, nothing can be said -- one life, two lives, three lives or many lives. You will be working alone; you will not have any help.
There are a few people who are loners, they would like to go alone. If you feel like that, I will be absolutely happy -- you can go on your own. But you are not that type. That's why you say, "Why do I feel that I need to be in your buddhafield?" -- because you DO need to be here! Because you are not a loner. Because you love the same type of energy pulsating around you. Because your path is love and not meditation. And love is possible only where you can find lovers of high quality. You can find lovers everywhere in the world, but that love will be only lust.
Here you will find lovers whose love is not lust, whose love is a sharing of joy, whose love is a help to you -- a hand stretched out to you so that you can be pulled out of your mud.

The fifth question:
Question 5
BELOVED MASTER,
I AM IN LOVE WITH A WOMAN, BUT I WANT TO BE ABSOLUTELY SURE THAT SHE HAS NEVER LOVED ANYONE BEFORE. WHY AM I SO MUCH WORRIED ABOUT IT?

Ramprem, just the old male chauvinist attitude. You are not worried about yourself, whether you have loved any woman before or not. About that you are not worried, that's okay; boys are boys and everything is forgiven them. Why are you worried about the woman you love? In fact, the very desire that the woman should not have loved anybody before is unintelligent, because a woman who has not loved anybody before will be inexperienced. And life -- even with an experienced woman -- is hell. So what to say about an inexperienced woman?

If you want a driver for your car, you don't look for one who has never driven a car. If you want a typist, you don't advertise for somebody who has never been a typist. If you want a cook you ask for somebody who is experienced. Then why do you have a different logic about love? It is stupid.

The woman who has loved a few people is far more understanding; she will understand you better, she will create less trouble for you, she will help you in every possible way to come out of your own ego, unintelligence, mediocrity.

In fact, there are a few primitive societies where an experienced woman is much in demand. In India there are a few primitive tribes in Bastar where a woman will not get a husband if she has not been known to be a great lover of many many people.

A woman who has not been loved by anybody simply shows that either she is ugly or something is basically wrong with her. She must be unattractive, because nobody ever felt attracted towards her. A woman who has been

loved by many people simply shows that she has some beauty, some magnetic force, some grace.
But the male chauvinist mind has for centuries desired that... for a single reason, which has now become irrelevant. The reason was that "My property should belong to my son, not to somebody else's son." That was the real fear. People were not interested in the woman, they were more interested in their inheritors; hence they were very much worried: if the woman has been in some love affair before, who knows, she may be carrying somebody else's child.

Two young men were pacing up and down in the corridor of a maternity home. The one said to the other, "You look so worried, what is the matter?"
He said, "Worried? I am in a mess! This is my vacation and this is the time my wife has chosen to give birth to a child. My whole vacation is destroyed."
The other said, "Hoo! That's nothing, this is my honeymoon! And my wife is giving birth to a child. I should be worried, not you!"

A young man was asking the doctor, "Does it happen often? My wife is giving birth to a child and we have been married only seven months."
The doctor must have been a wise old man, that type of doctor has disappeared. Now there are specialists, the ENT specialist and the dental surgeon; and somebody knows about one part and somebody else knows about another part and nobody knows about the whole man. The old physician was a wise man.

The old man said, "Yes, the first time it often happens, but never again."

People have always been very anxious, the fear is that the wife may be carrying somebody else's son. What difference does it make? In fact, when you make love to a woman, millions of living cells are released; millions, and you will not be able to recognize which is yours and which is not yours. They are so tiny, you cannot even see them with the naked eye, you will need some mechanical device, a microscope or something to see them.

Those millions of living cells start the first race of life; they struggle, they start running towards the woman's egg, which is deep down inside the womb. And one of these fellows -- who is going to win the race, who is going to reach first -- will enter the egg. And once one fellow has entered the egg, then the egg closes. Sometimes it happens that twins are born and sometimes three, four, five, six, seven, eight children also, but it happens very rarely.

You don't know which, but out of these millions of people only one is going to be your child. All other cells will die within two hours, and you will never be aware who those others were. A woman may give birth to twelve children in her whole life or eighteen at the most, but a man has the potential of creating as many children as there are people on the earth today. A single male has so many living cells, he can populate the whole earth. If all his cells can find an egg, attain to life and are born -- then one person, just one person, is enough to fill the whole earth.

You will never know how many of your children have died, millions and millions of your children have died. And what

is the difference whether it comes from some other body or your own body? It comes from God.
But this foolishness has persisted. Ramprem, you should drop it.

"Darling," he breathed passionately, "am I the first man to make love to you?"
"Of course you are," she snapped, "I don't know why you men always ask the same silly question."

You are not alone, feel good! The whole earth is full of such silly people.

He held her close against him, a warm glow of satisfaction covering them both.
"Am I the first man you ever made love to?" he asked.
She studied him reflectively. "You might be, your face looks very familiar."

The last question:
Question 6
BELOVED MASTER,
I HAVE HEARD IT SAID MANY TIMES THAT LOVE IS GOD, EXISTENCE IS GOD, GOD IS EXISTENCE, GOD CREATED THE WORLD AND THAT GOD IS A SUPERNATURAL POWER WHO ADMINISTERS THE WORLD.
I HAVE TRIED TO FEEL ALL THIS, BUT COULD NOT. ALL THESE STATEMENTS ARE MORE AND MORE CONFUSING.

KINDLY TELL ME WHAT IS GOD. AND WHEN YOU USE THE WORD 'GOD' IN YOUR LECTURES, WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

Bal Krishna Bharti, don't try to imitate what others say. They may be saying a profound truth, but by imitating them you will never reach to that truth; because they never reached to that truth by imitation. They reached to that truth by being original.

Jesus says: God is love. I say that love is God. My statement is far more penetrating than what Jesus says. Jesus says: God is love; that means God may have many other qualities, one of the qualities is love. I say love is God, there is no other quality, love is the only quality that is divine.

And you listen to these things and you try... but what are you going to do? Do you know what love is? You become worried about God -- first you will have to know what love is, and the love that you know is nothing but lust. We are not talking about lust, neither Jesus nor I, we are talking about love. And love is something so mysterious that nobody has ever been able to define it precisely, only fingers pointing to the moon.

Now what can you do? Hearing that love is God you jump into so-called love, whatsoever you think love is, and that is just unconscious sexuality; lust parading as love. And you will not find God; on the contrary, you may encounter the Devil -- and then you are puzzled.

Imitation has to be avoided. Understanding should be the only law, never imitation.

So the first thing, Bal Krishna, stop imitating. Listen to me and to others -- to Krishna, to Jesus, to Buddha, to Zarathustra -- just to understand, but don't start imitating. Don't be in a hurry, let the understanding soak into you; in a hurry you are going to do something wrong.

The traveling salesman, when marooned in the country by bad weather, was permitted to share a bedroom with the farmer's son. In due time the two of them retired. The boy dropped on his knees beside the bed, his head in his hands in prayerful attitude.
The salesman thought of the quotation, "And the little child shall lead them." He felt bad, having failed to say his prayers for many months; he dropped out on the other side of the bed and knelt.
The boy raised his head and said, "What are you doing, mister?"
"Same thing as you are, son," he replied.
"Well, mama is going to give you hell then, because the pot is on this side."

You missed it.
I will wait, so you can get it....
Get it a little more!
Imitation is not going to help, imitation will create troubles for you. Understand! Why be in such a hurry to practice? Let understanding soak so deep that it transforms your being. That is the only way of arriving at truth; imitating is never the way.
And that's what you have been doing. You say, "I have tried to feel all this, but could not."

How can you feel all this? -- it is not a question of feeling, it is not a question of thinking; it is a question of being. And being is arrived at through understanding. Just listen silently, attentively, as open as you can be. Be open to me. Let there be no hindrance, no obstruction.

Now this constant idea of practicing, of doing something immediately, is becoming a hindrance between me and you. There is no hurry. I say understanding is liberation. You need not do anything at all. If you allow me to penetrate to your very core, if you let me touch your heart, I will give you my dance, I will give you my song, I will give you my music.

You need not do anything, being with a master is enough. Doing is needed if you go into scriptures; then you have to do something, because understanding can never arise out of scriptures. But by being with a master, understanding can arise. Just a little more open heart is needed.

And you ask me what I mean by the word 'God'. I don't mean a person, I simply mean a quality, a presence. By "God" I mean godliness; the whole existence is full of godliness. And when you will come to know, you will not see a god standing before you, you will see the trees as divine, the rocks as divine, the people as divine, the animals as divine. God is spread all over the place, from the pebble to the star, from the blade of grass to the sun -- it is all divine.

Whenever I use the word 'God' it is never meant to be a person; it simply means a presence, a silent absolute presence of intelligence in existence. But first you have to become aware of this intelligence in you, only then can you know this intelligence in others.

Enough for today.
The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 6
Chapter #7
Chapter title: Forgetfulness, the only sin
27 October 1979 am in Buddha Hall

DO NOT LET PLEASURE DISTRACT YOU
FROM MEDITATION, FROM THE WAY.

FREE YOURSELF FROM PLEASURE AND PAIN.
FOR IN CRAVING PLEASURE OR IN NURSING PAIN
THERE IS ONLY SORROW.

LIKE NOTHING LEST YOU LOSE IT,
LEST IT BRING YOU GRIEF AND FEAR.
GO BEYOND LIKES AND DISLIKES.

FROM PASSION AND DESIRE,
SENSUOUSNESS AND LUST,
ARISE GRIEF AND FEAR.
FREE YOURSELF FROM ATTACHMENT.

HE IS PURE, AND SEES.
HE SPEAKS THE TRUTH, AND LIVES IT.
HE DOES HIS OWN WORK,
SO HE IS ADMIRED AND LOVED.

WITH A DETERMINED MIND AND UNDESIRING HEART
HE LONGS FOR FREEDOM.

HE IS CALLED UDDHAMSOTO --
"HE WHO GOES UPSTREAM."

WHEN A TRAVELER AT LAST COMES HOME
FROM A FAR JOURNEY,
WITH WHAT GLADNESS
HIS FAMILY AND HIS FRIENDS RECEIVE HIM!

EVEN SO SHALL YOUR GOOD DEEDS
WELCOME YOU LIKE FRIENDS
AND WITH WHAT REJOICING
WHEN YOU PASS FROM THIS LIFE TO THE NEXT!

inmate at the insane asylum was being examined for possible release. The first question the examining doctor asked him was, "What are you going to do when you leave this institution?"
"I am gonna get me a slingshot," said the patient, "and I am gonna come back here and break every goddamn window in the place!"
After six more months of treatment, the patient was again brought before the examining doctor for possible dismissal, and the same question was put to him.
"Well, I am going to get a job," the patient replied.
"Fine," said the doctor. "Then what?"
"I am going to rent an apartment."
"Very good."
"Then I am going to meet a beautiful girl."
"Excellent."
"I am going to take the beautiful girl up to my apartment and I am going to pull up her skirt."

"Normal, perfectly normal."
"Then I am gonna steal her garter, make a slingshot out of it and come back here and break every goddamn window in the place!"

Man moves almost in the same circles. Man as he is, is not sane, cannot be called sane. But because insanity is so widespread, it is so normal that we don't become aware of it.... Once YOU become awakened then you are surprised how people are living, what they are doing to themselves and to others. Their whole life is nothing but sheer madness. Somebody is mad after money, somebody is mad after power, somebody is mad after fame -- and all these things are futile.
Death comes, and the whole edifice that you have built with such labor collapses. Death comes and takes you away, and all that you have created has been in vain.
The sane person is one who creates something which even death cannot destroy. Let this be the definition of the sane: one who knows something of immortality, deathlessness, eternity -- he is sane, he is a buddha. To be a buddha simply means to be sane. One who is not aware of immortality and lives in time and thinks only in terms of this world is insane. He is not aware of himself, how can he be sane?
We have not yet been able to create a sane society for the simple reason that we have not been able to create many buddhas. The more buddhas there are in the world, the more is the possibility of humanity rising to higher altitudes of being, understanding, love, compassion. Otherwise you go on moving from one nightmare into another.

A big businessman was praying in the synagogue, pleading to God to help him get a fifty-thousand-dollar deal. Just then a very poor man entered and began praying to God for two dollars.
Angrily the big businessman pulled out two dollar bills, pushed them over to the poor fellow and whispered to him, "Here, take them and get out of here, you fool. Just stop distracting him from my business!"

The poor and the rich, the ignorant and the knowledgeable, the famous and the anonymous, are all in the same boat. Whether you ask God for two dollars or fifty thousand dollars does not make any difference. To go to God desiring is not to go to him at all, because it is only nondesiring that becomes a bridge. To desire is to create a wall between you and the total.
The moment you desire something you are saying that "I am wiser than the whole." You are saying that "You don't know what has to be done and I have come to advise you." You are telling the whole that "The way things are is not right: they should be according to me."
Prayer is just the opposite of desire. Prayer means, "The way things are is absolutely perfect, they are as they should be. Hence, I have nothing except a deep gratitude." Real prayer is bowing to existence in tremendous thankfulness because whatsoever is, the way it is, is the most perfect way it can ever be. A prayerful heart knows that the universe is perfect each moment; it is moving from perfection to more perfection.

The world is not moving from imperfection to perfection, remember: it is moving from perfection to more perfection. That's the understanding of the prayerful heart. But we are full of desires.
And if you go to the synagogue and the church and the temple you will find the same people, with the same mind, with no difference at all. They function with the same mind in the marketplace, they go to the temple with the same mind. And how can you go to the temple with a mind that functions perfectly well in the marketplace? The marketplace is an insane asylum! You will have to learn a different language. But people go on repeating the same kind of stupidity. You cannot even shake them, shock them, out of their sleep, because they become very angry.

Mulla Nasruddin was complaining of seeing striped camels whenever he tried to sleep.
"Have you ever seen a psychiatrist?" I asked him.
"No, never," he said, "just striped camels."

People go on living in their own small worlds, their own ideas, prejudices. They go on functioning in every situation in the same way. In the temple also, they speak the language they speak in the marketplace. In love also, they are always businesslike.

I asked Mulla Nasruddin, "Nasruddin, I hear you just had an accident?"
He said, "Yes, it was pretty bad, but I collected twenty thousand rupees, and my wife who was in the accident with me, got five thousand rupees."

I asked him, "Did she get hurt?"
Nasruddin laughed and said, "No, but I had the presence of mind to kick her in the face during the confusion!"

Now, even in an accident the mind goes on doing its thing! All the buddhas have been trying to pull you out of your mind. The way is simple. In these sutras Buddha is talking about the way to get out of this stupid mind.

DO NOT LET PLEASURE DISTRACT YOU
FROM MEDITATION, FROM THE WAY.

Pleasure is a momentary titillation of the body. It is not joy, it is not bliss. Pleasure is getting intoxicated for the moment with the physical, getting identified with the physical.
When you become identified with the body and when you start listening to the body and its instincts, a certain kind of titillation, a momentary state of intoxication, arises in you. The intoxication is created within your own body chemistry.
One can take drugs from the outside, get intoxicated and forget all the worries, anxieties, burdens, and responsibilities of the world. One can completely forget the world; it is too much sometimes, it is too heavy. And just slipping out through alcohol, mescaline, marijuana, LSD, gives you a sense of pleasure. It is not real pleasure; it is only absence of pain.
Let this be understood clearly: what you call pleasure is only a state of intoxication where you become so unconscious that you can't be aware of the pain. This can

happen by taking some drug from the outside; this can also happen by releasing some drugs in your inner body chemistry. That's what happens when you are sexually intoxicated: your body secretes its own drugs. It is not much different.

Your body is also outside of you. You are not your body, you are consciousness inside your body; your body is only a resting place, a house. One day you enter into it and one day you will have to leave it: a caravanserai, an overnight stay. You are not your body... your pilgrimage is eternal. But being in the body one can become identified, one can start thinking, "I am the body." And this is happening more today than ever before.

For centuries man has been aware that he is not the body, but within these two, three centuries, a scientific approach about everything has destroyed that long, long-cherished understanding. Science is a good method to know about matter, but it is absolutely impotent as far as the world of consciousness is concerned. Because science can only know matter it is bound to deny consciousness; it is beyond its grasp.

If you are trying to see light through your ears you will not be able to see it, and the ears will say, "There is no light." If you try to listen to music through your eyes you will not be able to listen, because your very method excludes it. Eyes can't hear music, ears can't see light, your hands cannot smell, your nose cannot taste. Every sense has its own limitation. It is perfectly valid within its own circumference; beyond it, it is utterly irrelevant.

Such is the case with science and such is the case with religion. In the past, religion denied -- absolutely denied --

the existence of the body, matter and the world. The mystics used to call the world illusory, MAYA, a dream. That is one extreme -- I am not in support of it. That is going beyond the religious approach, saying something which does not come into its vision. Now the same thing is being done by science, the same extreme: that consciousness is an illusion and the body is the only truth. As I see it, both attitudes are half-truths -- and half-truths are far worse than absolute lies: because of that half-truthfulness they can deceive many many people. For thousands of years man was deceived by one half-truth: that consciousness, God, Brahman, is the only reality, and everything else is just dream stuff. Now the pendulum has turned entirely to the other extreme. Science says: Consciousness is illusion, body is the only reality. Both are fallacies.

The whole truth is: the body has its own reality, and consciousness has its own reality. And the miracle is, the mystery is, that these two separate realities are together, that these two separate realities are functioning in deep synchronicity. This is the mystery: matter dancing in tune with consciousness, consciousness dancing in tune with matter. This mystery I call God, this mystery I call truth, the whole truth.

But if one has to choose between two fallacies -- the religious fallacy and the scientific fallacy -- if there is no other way and you have to choose one out of these two, then I will say: choose the religious fallacy, because at least it will take you to the other shore, to eternity.

But for three centuries we have decided to choose the scientific fallacy, which makes you more and more

confined to the body. And when you are confined to the body, then "Eat, drink and be merry," becomes the very goal. Just think of yourself as a being whose whole life is nothing but "Eat, drink and be merry." It will be meaningless, it will be without any significance, it will be utterly mediocre. It will not have any ecstasy. Yes, there will be pleasures when you get lost into the body chemistry and there will be pains when you have to come out of that forgetfulness. So you will go on moving between pain and pleasure.

Pleasure is getting lost, getting unconscious into the body; and pain is again becoming aware of the nonbody reality, again becoming aware of the world that surrounds you. So pleasure means forgetfulness and pain means remembrance. Have you observed that you remember only when there is pain? If you have a headache you become aware of the head, otherwise who thinks of the head? Only a headache makes you remember the head. If your shoe pinches, then you become aware of the feet; if the shoe is not pinching, you remain unaware of the feet. When your stomach is disturbed, you become aware of the stomach. When everything is going well, smoothly, you don't become aware.

Pain brings awareness; awareness makes you aware of pain. Losing awareness gives you a false idea that there is no pain anymore. And many people have found many ways of how to become unconscious; those are all ways of getting drugged. You have found many anesthesias -- chemical, physical, religious -- yes, religious too.

If a person goes on chanting a certain mantra -- what you have come to know as Transcendental Meditation -- it is a

drug, psychologically produced. If you repeat a certain word again and again and again it goes on hitting your psychic sources and the continuous repetition creates a state of unconsciousness. It becomes like a lullaby; you start falling into deep sleep. It is soothing, it is restful, but it is not meditation. It is just the opposite of meditation; it is a psychological drug.

Buddha says: DO NOT LET PLEASURE DISTRACT YOU FROM MEDITATION, FROM THE WAY. Beware that pleasure can distract you: it can distract you from meditation and it can distract you from the way. And what is meditation in Buddha's vision? Meditation is awareness, so anything that makes you unaware is a distraction; where it comes from does not matter. Whether you create it inside yourself by chanting a mantra or by ingesting some drug, by smoking, by injecting... how you manage it does not matter. If it distracts you from awareness... it may create beautiful dreams, but you are no longer conscious. You may feel the world becoming golden, the trees are greener, the roses are rosier, and everything seems to be tremendously beautiful, psychedelic -- but YOU are unconscious, you are no longer in your consciousness. This is the distraction.

A buddha is against drugs... or if I am against drugs, it is only for this reason. It is not because it is against the so-called morality, it is not because it is against the priests and the puritans, it is not because tradition says so. Buddhas are against drugs not because drugs are sin but only because they take you away from yourself, they distract you.

You will be surprised to know that the root which the word 'sin' comes from means forgetfulness -- the root means

forgetfulness. If you can remind yourself that to forget is to sin, then you will have a very right approach: then to remember is virtue. George Gurdjieff used to call it self-remembering. Buddha calls it SAMMASATI -- right mindfulness. Krishnamurti calls it awareness. But all these words mean only one thing: Don't be distracted from your innermost core; remain rooted there, remain consciously there.

DO NOT LET PLEASURE DISTRACT YOU FROM MEDITATION, FROM THE WAY.

And meditation IS the way: there is no other way to God, there is no other way to truth. Truth is not something ready-made. Truth is something that you have to discover by becoming more and more aware. And you have to discover it not somewhere else, but within your own being. You are truth covered by unconsciousness, covered by forgetfulness, so anything that distracts, anything that takes you away from yourself, is irreligious, is unspiritual.

FREE YOURSELF FROM PLEASURE AND PAIN.

You will be surprised... because who wants pain? Nobody wants it -- at least apparently, nobody wants pain. But that is not true. There are two kinds of people: those who want pleasure or those who want pain. Those who want pleasure are called the worldly, and those who start wanting pain, they are called the otherworldly, the saints, the ascetics, the holy people. Pain becomes their pleasure; they start enjoying torturing themselves.

The whole history of humanity is full of these stupid people, and they have been worshipped. Who has been

worshipping them? -- the people who desire pleasure! For them, these people look as if they are from some other world, because they desire pleasure and these people escape from pleasure. On the contrary they inflict pain upon themselves: they go on fasting, they go on sitting naked when it is ice-cold or they may sit by the side of a fire when the sun is already showering fire all over the place. These masochists, these self-torturers, are pathological.

Ninety-nine point nine percent of your saints are simply pathological -- and because of these pathological people religion has remained ill; it has not been possible to make religion healthy. Buddhas have been trying, but up to now they have failed, because nobody listens to them.

Man's mind has a strategy: it moves to its opposite very easily. You are running after money, then one day you see the whole stupidity of it and you start escaping from money. Now this is again remaining obsessed with the same money; money still remains the center of your focus. First you were moving towards it, now you are moving away from it, but it is your reference; your whole life still has that context. You still think in terms of money -- how much you have or how much you have renounced, but you go on counting.

Once a man came to Ramakrishna with a bag full of golden coins. He poured those golden coins onto the feet of Ramakrishna. There were many people sitting around; they were all surprised by how much money this man had brought, and he was pouring it onto the feet of Ramakrishna. What devotion!

But Ramakrishna was not happy. He said, "You are pouring it in such a way that it seems you want to impress people. You are performing! Fill the bag again with the money and go to the Ganges" -- and the Ganges was just behind Ramakrishna's temple -- "and throw all the money into the Ganges. You have given it to me, I give it to the Ganges." The man was very much puzzled, worried -- throwing so many gold coins into the Ganges! And he had come with great expectations that Ramakrishna would say, "You are a great religious man. What renunciation! How pure you are, how holy!" ... And Ramakrishna has not taken any note. On the contrary, he says, "Go and throw all this rubbish into the Ganges." He did not want to do it, but now he could not say no to Ramakrishna. And once he has offered, how could he say no? So reluctantly he went to the Ganges. Hours passed and he was not back. Ramakrishna asked, "Where is he?" Ramakrishna went to see. The man had gathered a big crowd. On the bank on a rock, first he would toss a coin, make much noise, look at the coin, and then throw it into the Ganges. And many people would jump into the Ganges to find the coin. He was making a great show of it. Hundreds of people had gathered and he was counting, "One, two, three, four...."
Ramakrishna went there and said, "You fool! When one collects money one counts, but when one is throwing it into the Ganges what is the point of counting? For two and half hours you have been doing it. Why waste your time? Throw the whole bag! What is the point of counting?"

But this is how human mind functions: even if it renounces it counts. It is the same mind which was accumulating; now

it is renouncing. One is after power, prestige, then one day one escapes to the mountains as far away from the capital as one can go. But the capital remains the point of reference.
Hence Buddha says: FREE YOURSELF FROM PLEASURE AND PAIN -- both. He is not saying, "Free yourself from pleasure," because if he says only that then he knows perfectly well -- he is perfectly alert about you -- you will choose pain, and you will be in the same trap again from the back door; because pleasure is of the body and pain is of the body. Whether you enjoy eating or you enjoy fasting it makes no difference -- eating and fasting are both physical activities. There are people who enjoy eating and there are people who enjoy fasting, but both are rooted in the physical. They have not yet raised their eyes towards the beyond. Hence to remind you, he says: FREE YOURSELF FROM PLEASURE AND PAIN....

FOR IN CRAVING PLEASURE OR IN NURSING PAIN THERE IS ONLY SORROW.

Yes, people go on doing both. There are people who go on wounding themselves.
You will be surprised to know that there was a Christian sect, thought to be very ascetic and pious, whose followers would wear belts with nails in them. The nails would go on wounding their bodies continuously. These people would wear shoes and inside the shoes there would be nails, and they would keep their feet always bleeding. They were thought to be great ascetics. People would count how many

nails this saint had in his shoes; the more nails you had, the greater you were.

There have been Christian saints whose only prayer was to whip themselves early in the morning, and thousands would gather to see them whipping themselves. Their entire bodies would bleed. And when thousands are watching you whipping yourself, of course you will do the best you can, the most you can. People would faint; but until they fainted they would go on hitting themselves. And these people were thought to be spiritual people!

These are the people who are against me because I am teaching you a healthy religion, a religion which does not believe in any nonsense.

If you crave pleasure you will be in sorrow; if you nurse pain you will be in sorrow. And to be in sorrow is to be irreligious. Hence Buddha says again and again: Joy is the quality of the really spiritual man. Jesus says: Rejoice! Neither pain nor pleasure, but joy. Joy is something spiritual; it does not come from your body. One can be joyous even when the body is ill, one can rejoice even while dying. Joy is something inner. Pain and pleasure are both body-oriented; joy is being-oriented.

LIKE NOTHING LEST YOU LOSE IT,
LEST IT BRING YOU GRIEF AND FEAR.
GO BEYOND LIKES AND DISLIKES.

Likes and dislikes simply say that you think yourself separate from existence. A man who has dropped his ego has no likes and no dislikes. Then whatsoever is the case he rejoices in it. If he finds himself in poverty he rejoices in

poverty, because there are beauties, a few beauties, which can be found only in poverty. If this man finds himself rich he rejoices in richness, because there are a few beautiful things which can be found only when you are rich. If this man finds himself young and healthy he rejoices in it, because a few things are possible only when you are young. And this man rejoices in old age too, because there are a few things which only old age can impart to you. One thing is certain: that he has no preferences, he does not hanker that this should be such and such. He makes no conditions on existence. He lives unconditionally, rejoicing in whatsoever happens.

To carry likes and dislikes is to carry prejudices, and everybody goes on carrying prejudices. That's why nothing ever makes you contented.

Even Buddha's father was not happy. He was unhappy because his son had moved on a wrong path; meditation to him was a wrong thing. He was desiring that his son become a great emperor; that was his deep ambition. Buddha was his only son, and one day Buddha escaped. I have every suspicion that the reason for his escape must have been his father. When you have only one son and then too, he is born when you are very old.... Buddha's father was very old when he was born. That was the last chance; one or two years more and there would have been no son at all. And his mother died immediately upon giving birth to Buddha; she was also getting old and this birth must have been too much.

Buddhists have made a beautiful story out of it. They say that whenever a buddha is born his mother is bound to die. That's how people create stupid stories. There have been

many buddhas. Mahavira's mother did not die, but if you ask the Buddhists they will say, "That simply proves that Mahavira is not a buddha." Jesus' mother did not die, Lao Tzu's mother did not die -- but to the prejudiced mind that simply proves that these were not buddhas. Whenever there is a buddha the mother has to die; that has become the definition.

The real reason was: the mother was old, the father was old; this was the last chance. And they had lived a very miserable life because they had no son. And they had created a big kingdom: "Now to whom is this kingdom going to belong?" And when you have a child in your old age you cling to the child too much. The father must have been too possessive: that's MY feeling of why Buddha had to escape. The father must have been the cause, he must have been too much of a bondage. He had made great palaces for Buddha and he wouldn't allow him to leave them. He had made every arrangement in the palaces, all kinds of pleasures. In fact he made too many arrangements and Buddha got fed up very quickly; he was only twenty-nine when he left the palace.

People usually become fed up by the end of their lives; it takes time to experience life. Buddha's father managed to provide him with all possible pleasures. Beautiful women -- all the beautiful women in his kingdom were brought to the palaces to serve Buddha. The best wine, the most beautiful women, marble palaces, musicians, poets, dancers... a continuous merry-go-round. Twenty-four hours a day Buddha was drowned in pleasures. Anybody who has any intelligence would escape. It became too tiring, it became

too boring, it became such an ugly scene. He was fed up with it, so he escaped.
Buddha's father was angry, very wounded. He wanted him to become a king and he became a buddha. He was not happy. In his own mind, to be a king was a greater thing than to be a buddha. To have more money and more fame -- worldly fame -- was more important to him than to be a meditator and attain to samadhi. These words must have looked like nonsense to him; he must have been a down-to-earth materialist.
But this is not only so with Buddha; people are never contented with anything. If your son turns out to be a thief you are angry, if he turns out to be a buddha you are angry. It seems it is not possible for you to be happy. If your wife is too faithful you are fed up, if your wife is not faithful you are angry. If your husband is absolutely obedient you are finished with him; if your husband is continuously quarreling, fighting, you are finished with him, too. It seems man's mind has such likes and dislikes that it is impossible for him to be in a contented state.

An old woman died and went to heaven. When she arrived there Saint Peter asked her where she would like to stay. She said, "I would like to be near the Virgin Mary."
So Saint Peter put her into the same apartment house as the Virgin Mary. One day she walked over to the Virgin Mary and said, "There is one thing I have always wanted to say to you."
Mary said, "Yes, what is it?"

The old woman said, "It must have been wonderful to have given birth to a man who is proclaimed a god throughout the world!"
Mary said, "Well, I would have liked it better if he had been a doctor."

Yes, that's how man is -- nothing seems to satisfy. Nothing ever seems to give you joy, because you are already carrying some likes and dislikes -- and existence has no obligation to fulfill them. It has never promised to fulfill your likes and dislikes.
If you really want to be blissful you have to drop likes and dislikes. Then you have to learn a different language to commune with existence. Whatsoever happens, enjoy it. Don't bring your likes and dislikes. Your life can be a continuous dance, a celebration; otherwise you will live in hell.
LIKE NOTHING LEST YOU LOSE IT, LEST IT BRING YOU GRIEF AND FEAR. One thing: if you like something and you get it, there is bound to be great fear -- the fear of losing it. And nothing is permanent in this life; everything that you have is bound to be lost. So the fear arises, and when you lose it you are in deep grief.

GO BEYOND LIKES AND DISLIKES.

FROM PASSION AND DESIRE,
SENSUOUSNESS AND LUST,
ARISE GRIEF AND FEAR.
FREE YOURSELF FROM ATTACHMENT.

Why do people live in such misery? -- for the simple reason that they cling to things. The moment you cling you are creating misery for yourself, because nothing is going to be permanent here. Life is a river; it goes on moving, changing. You can't even predict the next moment. So if you cling to something and the next moment you find it slipping out of your hands, you will be in great pain, great misery.

And the irony is: if you don't lose it and it remains with you, fulfilling your desire, then too, one day you are going to be very fed up... because the mind always requires the new to remain distracted. The mind is always searching for novelty, for something new. You love a woman, but still, once in a while an ordinary woman, who may not even be as beautiful as your own woman, attracts you. You seem puzzled: "Why does it happen?" Just that the mind always wants something new.

The mind cannot remain with one thing for long, so if you lose it you are in grief, if you don't lose it you are in grief. Either way grief happens.

Buddha says: FREE YOURSELF FROM ATTACHMENT.

Nadine, a pretty maid, was alone in the apartment where she worked and decided to lie down and rest for a while on the couch. After a few minutes, there was a knock on the door.

"Who is there?" she asked.

"The grocer," was the reply.

"What do you have for me?"

"Some staples."

"Leave them in the hall, will you?"

A few minutes later there was another knock. "Yes?" she asked.
"It is the egg man."
"Oh, what do you have for me?"
"Four dozen eggs."
"Please leave them with the groceries."
A few minutes after, still another knock. "Now what is it?"
"The superintendent."
"What do you have for me?"
"I've got an urge."
"Well, come in then. That won't keep."

And there are urges and urges; you are exploding with urges, desires. You don't have one desire, you have many desires. Not only that you have many desires, you have contradictory desires. If one is fulfilled, the other, which is its contradiction, remains unfulfilled and you are in misery. If the other is fulfilled, then something else remains unfulfilled.

A politician came to see me; he wanted peace of mind. I said, "Then get out of politics."
He said, "That is difficult. I am just coming closer and closer to be the chief minister of my state. For twenty years I have worked hard. Now I am the education minister and within two or three years I will be the chief minister -- I am the next man in the cabinet, so I cannot leave politics now."
Then I said, "Drop this idea of peace of mind, because being a politician, it is impossible to have peace of mind."
He said, "In fact, that's why I need it, that's why I have come to you, because it is becoming so much of a burden

on me that I am falling apart. I am afraid that before I become the chief minister I may go mad. That's why I have come to you. Help me, teach me some method so I can be a little more peaceful, at ease, relaxed. But I cannot leave politics."
Now, this man wants two contradictory things together: he wants peace and he is ambitious. It is impossible. If you are ambitious, then your mind is bound to remain restless. If you want peace, then the first requirement is to drop all ambition. Unless you drop ambition you cannot be at ease, at peace, you cannot be relaxed. He could see the contradiction, but he said, "I will think it over."
I said, "If you can see the contradiction right now, what you are going to think about it? Your thinking is not going to make any difference."

It has made one difference: he has stopped coming to me. Since then I have not seen him. I have heard now that he goes to Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, because Mahesh Yogi says both can be fulfilled together. The more meditative you become, the more is the possibility of fulfilling your ambitions. Now this is utter nonsense. The more meditative you become, the less ambitious you will be. There is no question of fulfilling ambitions; ambition will start disappearing from your consciousness.
But if you look around your mind you will find many contradictory things -- one part going to the south, another to the north. It is a miracle how you go on managing yourself. Otherwise a part of you will be in Tokyo, a part in Timbuktu -- you will be all over the earth in fragments! It is really a miracle how you go on managing to keep yourself

together. It is really only apparently together; deep down you are divided and split.

Buddha says: If you really want to transform your being into a peaceful consciousness, into serenity, into bliss, then you will have to GO BEYOND LIKES AND DISLIKES. FROM PASSION AND DESIRE, SENSUOUSNESS AND LUST, ARISE GRIEF AND FEAR. FREE YOURSELF FROM ATTACHMENT.

A few distinctions have to be made: when Buddha says "sensuousness" he does not mean sensitivity. In fact, a sensuous person is a gross person; the sensitive person is subtle. Sensitiveness is beautiful, sensuousness is ugly. Love is beautiful, lust is ugly. Love is sensitivity, lust is sensuousness. Love gives what you have, lust tries to snatch away something from the other. The sensuous person exploits the other, and the sensitive person shares himself with the other.

Be sensitive but don't be sensuous. Be loving but get out of lust. Lust and sensuousness are animal; love and sensitivity are human.

And there is still a world above the human -- the divine -- where even sensitiveness, love, and all these things disappear. There remains only one thing: a witnessing consciousness. That is the state of buddhahood, christhood. One becomes just a pure mirror of existence. Then stars are reflected and the flowers are reflected. Then you see God in his original face -- this whole existence is his original face. This mirrorlike consciousness, this witnessing self, is the goal.

Buddha says: In this state, HE IS PURE.... The seeker becomes pure.

HE IS PURE AND SEES.
HE SPEAKS THE TRUTH, AND LIVES IT.
HE DOES HIS OWN WORK,
SO HE IS ADMIRED AND LOVED.

Remember always the goal: the goal is to become a pure witness. By purity Buddha never means moral purity; by purity he means childlike innocence. There is a great difference between moral purity and childlike innocence. Moral purity is cunning, clever. It is not really purity, it is something imposed. It has a motivation. The moral person is trying to attain to heaven, to otherworldly joys; he wants to become immortal. The moral person is not desireless: his object of desire has changed and he is ready to sacrifice everything for his new object of desire. He imposes purity upon himself, but that purity is not even skin-deep. Deep down he is cunning, manipulating. In fact, he is trying to manipulate God according to his desires.
The moral person is so knowledgeable; he is too deep in the scriptures. He is not wise but only knowledgeable. He knows nothing -- because for knowing you need a childlike innocence, for knowing you need great wonder and awe. For knowing you need to drop all concepts, ideologies, scriptures. Only then will your eyes be utterly empty, nude, and when your eyes are nude they can see.
The knowledgeable person THINKS that he knows because he has heard or read beautiful words; but his knowledge is utterly superficial, borrowed. It has no roots in his being; it is in fact stupid. People cannot see that his knowledge is nothing but stupidity masquerading as knowledge, because

people are as blind as he is. But when he comes to a buddha, the buddha can see that what he is saying is not his own.

Once I was invited to a religious conference -- many saints were invited there. One Jaina monk spoke before me. He talked about the soul, freedom from all attachment, and the attainment of bliss, moksha, nirvana. All that he spoke of was beautiful, but I was sitting behind him and I could see through and through that that man was just a parrot. He was repeating scriptures, he knew nothing, but he was very much respected by the Jainas.

When he had finished I whispered in his ears that, "I have to tell you, even if it hurts, that whatsoever you have said is all borrowed, it is all stupid. You don't know a thing. You have never meditated, you have never tasted any bliss. You have never known what enlightenment is, but you were describing it beautifully, you were defining it beautifully. You are a clever person, but beware: this cleverness is not going to become the boat to the other shore."

He was shocked. In the afternoon a man came to me from him and said, "He wants to meet you, but in absolute privacy."

I said, "Why in privacy? I have got my people, he has got his people, and they both would like to listen to what transpires between the two of us. Let it be a public thing!"

But he insisted. Still, at least two hundred people had gathered, but he said, "I want absolute privacy." So we went into a room; he locked the door, started crying.

I said, "Why are you crying?"

He said, "You are the first person who has been so frank and truthful towards me. I cannot accept what you have said before the people because they respect me. You will destroy my whole life's attainment -- this is my attainment. But before you I can confess that you are right -- I have been simply repeating. Now what should I do?"
I said, "The first thing is, come out and confess before the people that 'You have been respecting a wrong person.'"
He said, "That is too much -- I cannot do that."
"Then," I said, "get lost! If you cannot drop your ego, then I cannot be of any help to you because that is the first requirement."
He said, "I will think it over."
He is still thinking... twenty years have passed! In these twenty years I have sent people many times to inquire, "Have you come to any conclusion yet or not?" Last time when I sent a man to him he told the man, "Tell him, don't torture me -- for twenty years he has been torturing me. I know he is right, but at this age" -- now he is almost seventy -- "I cannot risk my reputation. I have to continue this life; next life maybe I will listen to his advice."
But I know that next life also he will not listen. I will not be there; somebody else may be there, but he will not listen.

A little girl answered the knock on the door of the farmhouse. The caller, a rather troubled-looking, middle-aged man, asked to see her father.
"If you have come about the bull," she said, "he is fifty dollars. We have the papers and everything and he is guaranteed."
"Young lady," the man said, "I want to see your father."

"If that is too much," the little girl replied, "we got another bull for twenty-five dollars, and he is guaranteed too, but he does not have any papers."
"Young lady," the man repeated, "I want to see your father!"
"If that is too much," said the little girl, "we got another bull for only ten dollars, but he is not guaranteed."
"I am not here for the bull," said the man angrily. "I want to talk about your brother, Elmer. He has gotten my daughter in trouble!"
"Ah, I am sorry," said the little girl. "You will have to see Pa about that, because I don't know what he charges for Elmer."

The little girl is simply repeating what she has heard. The father charges fifty for one bull, twenty-five for another, ten for another. She does not know exactly what he charges for... what is going on, but she has heard. She is simply repeating.
And this is how your knowledgeable people are. They have heard about God, they have not seen. They have heard about truth, they have not experienced. They have heard about love, they have not lived. They can talk and they can argue and they can prove themselves great scholars -- but they are stupid people. Beware of them -- they are not pure. They can even impose a certain discipline upon themselves out of this borrowed knowledge, but their idea of purity will also be something foolish.
Somebody will eat only vegetarian food; that will be his idea of purity. Somebody will not even eat all vegetables but only fruits -- he will be a fruitarian -- and fruits only

when they become ripe and fall on their own so no harm is done to the tree. Now he will think that he is really pure. Somebody will think that just drinking milk is the purest thing.
In India milk is thought to be the purest food, SATTVIC, the most pure. Now that is strange, because milk is animal food. It is like eggs, it comes out of the animal's body. And certainly it is not for you -- it is for the kids of the animal. And it is dangerous too, because the cow gives milk for HER kid, and her kid is going to become a bull! Now in India people think that if you drink milk you will attain celibacy. That is utter foolishness -- you will become a bull! How can you attain celibacy? Milk is the most sexual food possible.
But people can go to extremes. I have come across a few people who are trying to live only on water.

Once I came across a man who was trying to live only on water. He was dying, not living, but one can live for at least three months on water too, because one has enough emergency flesh accumulated in the body so one can go on eating it for three months. In fact to live just on water is to eat your own meat, because every day one pound of your weight will disappear. "Where has it gone?" I asked the man. "Who has eaten it?"
He was very much disturbed. He said, "You are the first man who is disturbing me -- because everybody says that this is the best, the most sattvic, the most pure food -- water, and Ganges water, not ordinary water."
Now, the water of the Ganges is the most impure in India, because people throw dead bodies in the Ganges -- and in

no other river -- because if you throw a body in the Ganges, the person to whom the body belonged goes directly to heaven. So the Ganges carries all kinds of germs, dead bodies; they may have died from cancer, tuberculosis, this and that.
And he said, "I am drinking only Ganges water, and you are making me very afraid. You are saying that, 'You are eating your own meat.' Now I will not be at rest at all."
I said, "What can I do? -- you are eating it! Otherwise, where does your weight disappear to?"

But these are the ideas people go on carrying. Purity becomes something very foolish. Either you change your eating habits and you think you have become pure, or you change your clothes and you start living in rags and you think you have become pure. You leave your house and start living in a cave and you think you have become pure. Or you take an early bath and think you are pure, or you take four, five baths every day and that is your purity, or you don't sleep and that is your purity.... But these are all ideas you gather from others. You can impose them on yourself and you will be worshipped, but this is not what Buddha means.
When he says: HE IS PURE, he means he is innocent, he is not knowledgeable. He is functioning from the state of not-knowing. He is not bookish, he does not live according to the books.

Mr. Goldberg, a prosperous furrier, sent his daughter to Europe to get some culture and maybe meet a rich fellow.

A few months later she wrote and asked papa to send her a book on etiquette.
"Real fine people she is meeting," he thought to himself.
Five months later she wrote for another book on etiquette.
"Princes she is going with," said Goldberg and jumped for joy.
After two years Becky came home. Mr. Goldberg met her at the pier and was taken aback when she appeared with a child in her arms.
"Whose baby?" he asked.
"Mine," she replied.
"And the father?"
She shook her head. "I don't know, Papa."
Goldberg wept in despair. "Two books on etiquette you got and you don't even know to ask, 'With whom have I the pleasure?'"

Books can't help; even two books on etiquette won't make you cultured. A thousand books on spirituality and you will not become spiritual. It is not a question of becoming more informed. It is a question of transformation, not of information.
HE IS PURE, AND SEES. When you are innocent you have eyes to see the truth as it is, because you don't have any idea to distort. You have no prejudice, no like, no dislike. You are neither Hindu nor Mohammedan nor Christian. You are simply a consciousness, full of wonder, great inquiry. There is exploration; you reflect reality. In innocence reality is reflected and seen.
HE SPEAKS THE TRUTH.... And when you know, you cannot do otherwise. HE SPEAKS THE TRUTH...

whatsoever the cost. Even if you are to be killed for saying the truth; you would rather be killed but you will not stop speaking the truth.

Socrates was told by the judges that if he could stop talking about truth he could be forgiven, but then he had to make a promise to the court that he would never talk about truth. Socrates said, "I would rather die than stop talking about truth."
The judges were puzzled. They said, "But why? Life is so precious."
Socrates said, "Not more precious than truth. If I cannot speak the truth, then there is no point in living at all. I live to convey the truth. My life is only a means to spread whatsoever I have come to know. If I cannot do that, then there is no point in living -- please kill me. And I cannot make that promise for one more reason: even if I want to stop I cannot. I will go on saying what I see. I will go on living it. I can't do otherwise. Knowing the truth is being it."

HE SPEAKS THE TRUTH, AND LIVES IT. HE DOES HIS OWN WORK, SO HE IS ADMIRED AND LOVED. What is his work? His work is to shout. His work is to call you out of your sleep. His work is to wake people up. Yes, those who understand him will admire and love him. And there will be many who will not understand him; they will condemn him, they will even kill him. But Buddha takes no account of those. He is simply taking account of those few rare souls who will be able to understand what he is saying and what he is living. And in fact only those few people

MEAN anything. Only they are worth counting; the crowd is not worth counting at all.

WITH A DETERMINED MIND AND UNDESIRING HEART
HE LONGS FOR FREEDOM.
HE IS CALLED UDDHAMSOTO --
"HE WHO GOES UPSTREAM."

UDDHAMSOTO is a beautiful word that Buddha uses many times. UDDHAM means great endeavor; SOTO means the source. The English word 'source' comes from the same root as soto. The Sanskrit word is SHROT; from shrot comes the English word 'source' and the Pali word 'soto'. Buddha speaks Pali; he is using soto. Uddhamsoto means a man who is trying, with all his being, to reach to the source, to the very source of being. His whole effort is to know the ultimate, the very ground of existence, because that is where truth is, God is, nirvana is.
Great effort is needed, laziness won't do -- and people are really lazy. Because people are lazy, that's why priests could exploit them for centuries -- and they are going to exploit you if you continue to remain lazy. Because people are lazy they leave it to the priests: "You do the prayer, you do the worship for us on our behalf. We will pay you, but you do it on our behalf." They know that their priests are as blind as they are, as lazy as they are. They have not worked upon their beings.
Work is arduous. Many chunks have to be cut out of you and dropped; only then can you come to your original face. It is almost like a sculptor carving a statue out of a marble

rock; with chisel and hammer in his hands he goes on cutting the rock, taking out all unnecessary pieces. Slowly slowly, the formless rock starts attaining a form, the ordinary rock starts becoming something extraordinary, beautiful. A Buddha can be found in it, a Christ can be found in it, a Krishna can be found in it. But before you can find a buddha in the rock much has to be destroyed. Unless you are ready to do great work upon yourself it is not going to happen. You cannot rely on agents.
Your priests, your bishops, your popes, are all agents -- agents between you and God. You don't know God, and the agents go on saying, "Don't be worried -- we know. We will convey your messages." They don't know either; they are simply exploiting your ignorance.
But people are lazy. Laziness is one of the problems.

Manuel was the new man on the railroad crew, so naturally he got the worst jobs around the camp. Among the he-men laborers, the most hated job was that of the camp cook. During the first day on the job, Manuel complained bitterly about the horrible food only to be informed that whoever complained about the food had to be the cook. Manuel argued long and loud but the foreman would not yield: Manuel would have to cook until somebody else complained.
The next day Manuel got a brilliant idea. After washing the breakfast dishes he went off to the prairie and soon located exactly what he sought -- a freshly deposited pasture pastry, a steaming green moose turd. Carefully Manuel collected the fragments, putting the fragrant treasure in a large box he had brought along for the purpose, and returned to the

camp cookshack. He carefully prepared a large pie crust, inserted the moose turd, and baked the pie until it was a golden brown.
That night he gleefully served the tender pastry as his piece de resistance, and waited for the complaints to start. The faces of the crew were delightfully twisted as the diners choked down the delicate offering.
Finally one man rose to his feet, his face a twisted mass of disgust. "My God!" he roared at Manuel. "That is moose turd pie! It sure is good, though!"

Man is so lazy that he will go on as he is rather than working and trying to change -- trying to bring some changes in his circumstances. It is easier to remain contented, to remain insensitive, to go on pulling, somehow existing. But it is not life. And what is true about the outer circumstances is far more true about the inner, because the outer circumstances don't need so much effort to be changed but the inner lethargy is centuries old. The unconsciousness is so primitive, its roots are so deep, that it needs a total determination on your part, a tremendous determination, a commitment, a deep involvement. You have to risk all. Unless that happens it is impossible to change yourself, you will remain the same. You can go on reading, you can go on accumulating knowledge, you can go from one teacher to another teacher, but deep down you will not change. This is not the way to change.
The way to change is: WITH A DETERMINED MIND AND UNDESIRING HEART HE LONGS FOR FREEDOM.

HE IS CALLED UDDHAMSOTO -- "HE WHO GOES UPSTREAM." It is almost going upstream, because not to follow the crowd, not to follow the tradition, not to follow the scripture, not to follow the religion you are born in, the church you are born in, is going against the stream. Great effort is needed; otherwise ordinarily it seems easier, more comfortable and convenient to follow the crowd -- whatsoever they are doing, you go on doing. They will not give you trouble, but remember, you are simply destroying a great opportunity. And this life is going to disappear soon. Why not bring all your energies to such a point of integration where you can take a quantum leap from the known to the unknown, from time to eternity?
Unless you are determined... and that's what sannyas is all about: a determination, a commitment, to transform oneself, not holding back anything. I cannot change you unless you are totally determined to be changed. You cannot throw the responsibility on me. I am here to help, but I can help only those who are really committed, who are not halfheartedly here.

Fred was admitted to a madhouse because he always felt he was a mouse and was totally paranoid about cats.
After years and years of treatment he was finally declared normal again and the doctor said, "So you know now that you are not a mouse -- you are a human being like me and there is no need to be afraid of cats."
Fred agreed and was released. But as he stepped out of the gates he saw a cat walking on the opposite side of the road. He totally freaked and ran back inside in total shock.

The doctor said, "But Fred, I thought that it was clear to you that you are not a mouse."
Fred replied, "Doctor, you know I am not a mouse, I know I am not a mouse. But how the hell do I know that the cat knows?"

Nobody can help you from the outside. Yes, you can be convinced, but deep down you will remain the same. You can be silenced through arguments, but arguments cannot change you. You will have to bring all your energies to a single point, to an absolute determination, that "This life I am going to make it. I am ready to do whatsoever is required. I will not shirk any responsibility. I will not shrink from any responsibility. I will not find any excuses, rationalizations. I will not be a victim anymore of the old mind."
Once this determination is total, transformation immediately starts happening. In fact to be totally determined is almost half the journey.
Buddha says:

WHEN A TRAVELER AT LAST COMES HOME
FROM A FAR JOURNEY,
WITH WHAT GLADNESS
HIS FAMILY AND HIS FRIENDS RECEIVE HIM!

I am creating a family here, a family of friends. The day any of you will burst forth into a flame, the whole family will rejoice. And it is not only that this small commune of sannyasins will rejoice; the whole existence participates in rejoicing. Whenever a man becomes a buddha, the trees,

the rivers, the mountains, the stars, all rejoice, because at least one of us has reached home.
And Buddha says:

EVEN SO SHALL YOUR GOOD DEEDS
WELCOME YOU LIKE FRIENDS
AND WITH WHAT REJOICING
WHEN YOU PASS FROM THIS LIFE TO THE NEXT!

And whatsoever you have done to transform yourself -- he calls it "the good deed" -- that is real virtue. Whatsoever you have done to transform yourself, that is your treasure. And you will be surprised that when you reach to the other shore, the beyond, your treasure will be awaiting you there, to rejoice, to receive, to welcome you.
Either you can collect money, power, prestige -- which will be left on this shore -- or you can accumulate a totally different kind of treasure: of meditation, of love, of bliss, of understanding, of awareness, of godliness. If you attain to this treasure, you will be surprised: when you reach to the other shore, when you go beyond this body, when death happens to this body, you will be received by all the treasures that you have accumulated. They will all rejoice.
Buddha means that there is a treasure that goes with you to the ultimate, and there is a momentary treasure which is left behind. Those who are wise accumulate that which will be theirs forever, and those who are foolish accumulate the momentary, which will be taken away from you -- which is going to be taken away by death.
Remember, each moment, what you are accumulating. Is it going to be taken away by death? Then it is not worth

bothering about. If it is not going to be taken away by death, then even life can be sacrificed for it -- because one day or another life is going to disappear. Before life disappears, use the opportunity to find that which never dies.
Become an uddhamsoto. Find the source of existence, of your own being, of all that is. That source is God, that source is nirvana.
Enough for today.
The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 6
Chapter #8
Chapter title: Everything is possible
28 October 1979 am in Buddha Hall

The first question:
Question 1
BELOVED MASTER,
TO ME, THE MOST BEAUTIFUL PASSAGE IN THE CHRISTIAN SCRIPTURES ENDS WITH THE WORDS, "AND JESUS WEPT." IT OCCURS WHEN HE APPROACHES JERUSALEM FOR THE LAST TIME, LOOKS DOWN ON IT IN HIS COMPASSION, SEES ALL OF THE FOOLISHNESS, FUTILITY AND PATHOS OF MANKIND -- AND WEEPS.
BELOVED MASTER, DOES THE BUDDHA WEEP?

Anand Deepesh, it certainly is one of the most beautiful passages in the Christian scriptures, because it shows the humanity of Jesus, that is his unique quality. Gautama the Buddha is not so human.

Jesus is both the son of man and the Son of God. He knows the dark valley, he also knows the sunlit peak -- and he has a very human heart. That humanity remains with him to the very end. All the buddhas are unique. In the same situation Lao Tzu, looking back, would have laughed at the foolishness, at the ridiculousness, at the absurdity of human beings. And in the same situation Gautama the Buddha would not even have cared to look back; that is his uniqueness, he never looks back, the past does not exist at all. Mahavira would have looked back but would have neither wept nor laughed.

This fact has to be remembered: never compare two buddhas, otherwise you will create great confusion for yourself. Although their experience is the same, their expressions are different, are bound to be different. They have different individualities, they have different forms of expressing their experience.

Jesus remains human, very human. If you ask a Buddhist, he will say, "Then he is not a buddha if he wept." When he is just going to be crucified and he is raised on the cross, he looks at the sky and says, "Have you forsaken me?" There is great complaint, the complaint of the human heart, complaining to God as a child would complain to his mother or father: "Have you forsaken me? What are you trying to do to me?" He is angry too, a little anger is there, which is part of being human; a little anger, a little love, a little joy.

When he enters into the great temple of Jerusalem he feels so offended by the presence of the money-changers in the temple that he takes a whip in his hand and, alone, he drives all the money-changers out of the temple, turns their

money-changing boards upside-down, creates chaos; that too is very human. That is Jesus' speciality.
In the same situation you can't think of Buddha looking at the sky because for Buddha there is no God outside. God is within, you are looking at the empty sky, there is no one to respond. God is in the crucified person, there is no way to pray to God. Prayer is absolutely meaningless for a Buddha; he would have accepted it without any grudge, without any complaint, without any anger. He is suprahuman, his expression is absolutely suprahuman; not for a single moment will he allow human weakness to enter in.

When he was dying, he stopped his disciples from weeping and crying; he said, "You can do it when I'm gone, you will have enough time, but right now, at least while I am still alive, don't do such a stupid thing. There is nothing to weep for because there is nobody to die. Why are you weeping?"
Ananda, his disciple, said, "Bhagwan, we have loved you so much, how can we avoid feeling sad?"
Buddha said, "You loved a nothingness. I was never a person but only a presence, and I have been telling you again and again, don't think of me as a person. The person died the day I became Buddha. Gautama Siddhartha died the day enlightenment happened. Since then there has been nobody inside the house, the house is utterly empty. Hence nobody is dying, stop crying and weeping. Later on when I am gone you can do whatsoever you want, you will have enough time. Don't waste these precious moments in weeping."

This is a totally different expression. God is multidimensional. When he is experienced there are going to be many expressions of it.
Mahavira is absolutely indifferent to everything. He will not laugh, he will not weep either, because for him this whole world is nothing but a dream. If you know that something is a dream, how can you weep?

There is an ancient Chinese parable. Chuang Tzu used to tell that parable again and again.
A great king had only one son and the son was dying -- dying of a disease for which there was no medicine available. All the physicians had said, "There is no way to save him. It is only a question of a few hours or at the most one or two days and he will be gone."
The king had loved the son so much; he was the only son, the king was getting old and there was no possibility of another son. The king was sitting by the side of the bed the whole night because this might be the last night.
Nearabout four o'clock the old king fell asleep and had a dream. In the dream he saw a beautiful marble palace; he had never dreamed of such a beautiful palace. And the kingdom is so vast; he is the king, and he is sitting on a golden throne studded with big diamonds and emeralds. He HAD emeralds and diamonds but not so big, not so pure, without any flaw. And he had beautiful women and twelve sons; maybe the idea of losing his only son had created the desire for twelve sons, maybe it was just a reflection of his actual state. This dream might have been just a wish fulfillment, but he felt so blessed. And all his sons were so wise, so healthy, such great warriors.

And then suddenly his son died on the bed. The wife cried so loudly that the king's dream was shattered; he opened his eyes, looked at the dead body of his son and didn't say a word -- remained like a statue. His wife was shocked, she shook him and said, "Do you understand or not? Your son is dead!" The king said, "I can see it but now I am puzzled -- for whom to cry? Just a minute before I had twelve beautiful sons, very handsome, very wise, in every way skillful. And because of your crying my dream is shattered, those twelve sons have disappeared; and the golden throne and the marble palace and the great kingdom, all have gone. Should I weep for those or should I weep for this son because when I was dreaming I had completely forgotten my son, you and the kingdom?
"Now I am awake, I have forgotten the dream and the beauties of the dream. Which is true, which should I cry for? Because when I was seeing the dream it was true, at least it appeared to be true. Now I am seeing my dead son, it appears true, but how to decide which appearance is really true?"

Chuang Tzu, in another parable, says the same thing. He says, "Once I dreamed that I had become a butterfly, moving from one flower to another, enjoying the sun and the wind. And then somebody awakened me; it was morning and getting late and the sun was shining in my face. As I opened my eyes the butterfly disappeared, I was again Chuang Tzu. Since then I have been in confusion. The confusion is, if Chuang Tzu can dream that he is a butterfly, why can't the butterfly dream that she is Chuang Tzu?"

He seems to be very penetrating; this puzzle is something worth meditating over. If Chuang Tzu can become a butterfly in the dream... the butterfly may have fallen asleep, sitting on some tree, under the shade of a tree; the butterfly may have fallen into sleep and dreamed that she is Chuang Tzu. Now who is right and what is a dream? Both seem to be similar.

A man like Buddha knows the falseness of the whole world; he will not weep, he will not laugh, he will not even look back. That is his way of expressing his experience of the total. Mahavira will look back because he also has great compassion -- but different from Jesus; he will not weep, because it helps nobody. If you weep for the world, it does not help the world. If you weep at the stupidity of people it makes you look silly, that's all. It does not help people.
But Lao Tzu would have certainly laughed because looking at people's absurdity, their ridiculousness, what else can you do? Lao Tzu used to ride on a water buffalo, moving from one place to another. He was a jolly fellow, telling jokes, telling stories to people, always in a laughing state.
If you see the statues of Buddha that have been made in China and in Japan you will be surprised. They don't look like Buddha, particularly not like the Indian statues, not at all. The Indian statues have a very athletic form, Buddha has a big chest and a very small belly, no belly at all, his body seems to be very proportionate.
But the Chinese Buddha has a big belly; the chest is completely sunk in, the belly is too big. And not only is the belly big, even in the marble statues you can see the belly laughing, there are ripples of laughter on the belly. It has

been conceived according to the Taoist idea; because China could understand only if Buddha was presented in the form of Lao Tzu. They knew Lao Tzu, they were acquainted with this enlightened man, and he was always laughing. To him there is nothing to weep for. What reason is there to weep at the ridiculousness of man?

Three college boys, upon entering their favorite juke joint to sit at their usual table, found it to be occupied by an oldish woman. After debating what to do about the situation, they finally decided to embarrass the woman into leaving.
Sitting next to the old lady, the first student started.... "Say, John," he said, "did you know that I was born three months before my parents were married?"
"Why, that's nothing," said the next one. "I was born six months before my parents were married."
"Fellows," replied the last of the hungry men, "I was born without my parents being married."
The old lady finally looked up from the table and pleasantly asked, "Will one of you bastards please pass the salt?"

Life is ridiculous, you never know what is going to happen, it is absurd.

An artist's model arrived at her boss' studio and was waiting for him to arrive. When he walked in the door she headed for the dressing room to get undressed.
But he said, "No, don't bother getting ready. I have got a terrific hangover and really don't feel like working today. But why don't you stay and join me in a cup of coffee?"

The model said, "I would love to."
Just then the artist heard familiar footsteps approaching the door.
"Oh my gosh," he gasped. "Here comes my wife. Get your clothes off -- quick!"

Lao Tzu would laugh; Jesus wept. Now it is for you to choose. I love both the men; in fact laughing and weeping are two sides of the same coin. And because of this story that Jesus wept, I say something which Christians have denied down the ages. Christians have been saying that Jesus never laughed. Now a man who is capable of weeping is bound to be capable of laughing, it is impossible to weep if you cannot laugh. In fact laughter and weeping are not opposites, but complementaries -- two extremes of the same spectrum.
Christians say Jesus never laughed. That is an invented story, I can't believe in it. Because Jesus was not an ascetic. Yes, I can understand some ascetic saint never laughing because he is so desertlike, so dry, so dull and so dead. But Jesus is a juicy man, he is not an ascetic; he enjoyed good food, good company, he enjoyed drinking wine, he enjoyed being festive with his friends. And his friends were all sorts of people, his friends were not Rotarians; they were gamblers, thieves; even a prostitute, Mary Magdalene, was part of his company. He enjoyed the real people.
If you want to see the unreal people you can go to a meeting of the Rotary Club. There you see pseudo people, all with masks, all smiling and saying hello to each other. These are not their real faces, they always keep their real faces locked in their cupboards, they never take them out.

Only once in a while can you have a glimpse of their real face. It happens only when they are unconscious; maybe when they have drunk too much you can see their real face. The unconsciousness may give you a glimpse of their truth. Gurdjieff used to give as much wine as possible to his new disciples; he would go on forcing. And when the master forces you to drink.... Just think of me asking you to drink, and I go on pouring and pouring -- how can you say no? And trust is the first thing.

Gurdjieff would force them to eat and drink so much that their real faces would show; that was his first contact with the disciple. The disciples were very much puzzled, they had never seen such a master. They would fall on the ground and would start saying incoherent things. Then Gurdjieff would sit by their side and listen to what they are saying, what their faces are showing, because these are the real faces, these are their realities.

You cannot think of Buddha telling people to drink, but Gurdjieff did. I cannot believe that Jesus never laughed; he lived with such alive people: fishermen, carpenters, poor people. He was not keeping company with the rabbis, the pundits, the scholars and the professors. He was moving with raw people, real people of the earth. It is impossible to think that he was a sad man, that he never laughed; and if he was incapable of laughter, he would be incapable of weeping too.

This statement, that he wept, shows with absolute certainty that he must have laughed too. That is one of the most beautiful things about Jesus; I love that he is very human. Buddha is a little cold, has no warmth, is far away -- that is his beauty. We need ALL kinds of masters, we need ALL

kinds of flowers in the garden. A rose has its beauty and a lotus has its beauty. The lotus will need a lake, a different situation to happen in, it will have a different fragrance. But all kinds of flowers enrich the garden. The garden of buddhahood is full of strange, unique, incomparable beings: Lao Tzu, Zarathustra, Mohammed, Mahavira, Buddha, Krishna, Christ.

Now, Christ is on the cross. Whenever you think about Christ, you think of the cross too. It is impossible to think of them separately, they have become inseparable. If you see the cross you will think of Christ, if you think of Christ the cross is always there in the background. With Krishna it is not the cross but the flute. Now, Krishna is a dancer, a singer; you cannot think of Buddha dancing, singing, it is impossible to conceive. And it will look very ridiculous too; with Krishna it fits, his whole vision of life is such that the flute fits with it.

Remember this and don't become too much attached to one form of buddhahood. There are as many forms of buddhahood as you can conceive. Many more buddhas will happen in the future, who will have a totally different quality which was never available in the past. If you become too much attached and obsessed with a certain form, you will miss other buddhas.

In Holland there was a conference arranged by Krishnamurti followers. Krishnamurti was coming there and staying with the people for seven days. His disciples had gathered from all over the world. One woman went from India but after two, three days she was back.

She came to see me. I said, "You came back so early? Is the conference finished?" She said, "No, the conference is not finished but I am finished with Krishnamurti." I said, "What happened?" She said, "I had gone shopping and I saw Krishnamurti purchasing a necktie, and not only purchasing a necktie but making such a fuss. At least two hundred neckties were spread all over the table and nothing was liked by him. Something was wrong with everything: some color was wrong, the size was wrong, this was wrong, that was wrong." And she said, "I simply watched what he was doing. Is he a buddha? A buddha purchasing, shopping? A buddha looks good with a begging bowl but a buddha purchasing -- and what? A necktie! And then too, he is making so much fuss."

Krishnamurti is very fastidious about his clothes. She became so frustrated, she did not attend the conference. What is the point now? This man is not a buddha. Now, what to do with this woman -- to weep for her or to laugh at her? One can weep for her stupidity because Krishnamurti is Krishnamurti; he is not Gautama the Buddha, he is not Jesus Christ. He has his unique way of living, of expressing. He is not a renunciate, he lives in the world. And to see the point, that he lives in the world and yet is not of it, needs great understanding inside. This woman missed.

What to do with this woman? To weep for her? She went to Holland without even listening to a single talk of Krishnamurti.... Or to laugh at her stupidity? And one never knows -- Krishnamurti may have managed the whole thing only for this woman. Seeing that she is watching he may have made so much fuss... because people like

Krishnamurti always want to get rid of the rubbish type of people, the stupid type of people.

Gurdjieff used to do many things just to get rid of unnecessary people. Sometimes he would behave so absurdly that the person who had come to see him would never come again -- thinking that he was mad. One day he is sitting drinking tea with two, three disciples and a journalist comes to see him. He was always against journalists entering into his ashram because this was his understanding: that they are bent upon misunderstanding. He asked the journalist, very courteously, to sit and have some tea, some cake. The journalist was very happy because he had heard that Gurdjieff always throws journalists out, he tells them in no uncertain terms to get lost! He was very happy that he was being received with such love and compassion.
And then Gurdjieff asked the woman sitting by his side, "What day was yesterday?"
She said, "Friday."
"And what day is today?"
Then the journalist became a little confused -- this man cannot manage! If yesterday was Friday, then there is no point in asking, "What day is today?"
The woman said, "Of course today is Saturday."
And he shouted at the woman, he said, "How it can be? If yesterday was Friday, how it can be Saturday today? Impossible! You go and find out what day today is."
The journalist escaped, thinking that this is something insane, this man is insane; he never even looked back. When he had gone, Gurdjieff had a good, hearty laugh. He

said to the woman, "You see how I got rid of that man. Now he will never come back and he will spread the story around and many more will be prevented from coming."

One never knows how an enlightened person is going to behave -- with what devices.

Deepesh, your feeling that you love these words, this beautiful passage, is good, but remember that man is worth both weeping and laughing over. Yes, he is in great misery but the misery is created by himself. He IS trapped and he suffers much, but the trap is made by himself. He is like a small child who was playing outside the house with a pile of bricks. He started making a house of bricks, standing in the middle he went on putting brick upon brick around himself. When they came up to his neck then he became puzzled, then he started shouting to his mother, that "I am imprisoned, come and save me!" Now he cannot get out of it -- but he himself has created it!

This is the situation of man, we create our misery, our hell. If you see that we go on creating it, it is worth laughing at; but if you say, and see, that "Maybe we create it but still we are suffering," then it is worth weeping over.

But Buddha will not do either. He will remain detached, cool. He will not suffer because you are suffering and he will not even think your misery worth laughing about. He will keep his cool; he will do whatsoever he can to help you and will go on his way. Whether you are helped or not is not his business. His business is to say what is, and even THAT he had agreed to very reluctantly.

When he became enlightened he remained silent for seven days. The story is, the gods became very much worried because it rarely happens that a man becomes enlightened. Now this Siddhartha had become enlightened and he has not spoken a single word for seven days. They looked deep into the consciousness of Siddhartha and they saw that he was not going to speak at all.

They came down to the earth, bowed down to Buddha and asked him to speak because there were many who could be helped. Buddha said to them, "I had thought about it but there are only two alternatives. One is: I will speak but I will be understood only by very few people. The majority will not understand, maybe ninety-nine percent of the people will not understand at all. So ninety-nine percent of my efforts is going to be a sheer wastage.

"Of the one percent who will be able to understand me, my insight says that even without me, sooner or later they will find their own way. Their intelligence is such, their courage is such, their search is such... they are passionate lovers of truth. That's why they will be able to understand me.

"The ninety-nine percent will never understand, the one percent who are capable of understanding me will understand it anyway, whether I speak or not. In fact it will be easier for them to understand if I don't speak. My silence will be more of a communion with them. So what is the point of speaking?"

The gods were very much worried how to answer this. They gathered together, they discussed among themselves, then they came again with a new argument and they said, "Listen! You are right, there are people who will never understand you and there are people who will understand

even without your saying a single word. But can you deny that there are people between these two? Can you say there is not a single person who is just between these two categories, a third category, who will understand if you speak, and who will never understand if you don't speak? Can you deny -- it may be a very small minority, it may be one in a million, but can you deny that one single person -- that link between the majority and the minority? The nonunderstanders and the understanders... they are linked."
Buddha could not deny it. He said, "You are right, there ARE a few people; yes, one in a million who will be helped."
"Then," those gods said, "even if it is only one in a million, it is your to duty help him."

It is because of this argument that Buddha started speaking; otherwise he was not going to speak. And remember, there have been many buddhas who have not spoken. They remained silent their entire lives, you will never hear about them because they have never spoken. No scripture exists to describe them.
One point I would like to make very clear to you: that each individual when he becomes enlightened, becomes part of the universal -- but his expression still remains individual. His experience is universal, but his expression is individual. If he was a poet before, like Kabir, when he becomes enlightened he will sing songs. If he was a poet, if being a poet was part of his individuality -- now knowing the universal, his understanding, his light, will start flowing into the old patterns of poetry. He will be like Kabir, Nanak, Farid. But if he was a painter, not a poet, and he

becomes enlightened, then he will paint -- that will be his natural way of expressing. If he was a sculptor then his expression will be different.

Each buddha lives in the universal but expresses himself individually. This is Jesus' expression, he is all too human. Maybe that is his appeal -- now almost half the earth is in love with Jesus. The reason is his humanity. Buddha is a faraway star, Jesus seems to be very close to the heart. Buddha appeals to the very sophisticated, Jesus' appeal is for the masses.

Whenever a country becomes sophisticated, cultured, educated, rich, affluent, Jesus' appeal starts disappearing. That's what is happening in America. Buddha is becoming more and more powerful: more and more Zen centers are being opened, more and more people are becoming converted from prayer to meditation, more and more people are becoming interested in the sayings of Buddha.

Jesus is losing ground in America; he is still gaining ground in India, but he is losing ground in America. America is now in the same affluent state as India was in the times of Buddha. The country was rich, people were well-educated, sophisticated, cultured; they knew what philosophy was. They knew all the flights of metaphysics, they knew the highest peaks -- at least intellectually. And Buddha was speaking to this intelligentsia; it was a totally different communication.

Jesus was talking to the poor villagers, farmers, gardeners, fishermen. He was speaking to the lowest, the poorest of the poor. His language is different, it is very human, it has to be.

Buddha's language is very pure, philosophical, metaphysical. It is less concerned with whether you understand it or not, it is more concerned with being true, being closer to truth, as close as possible. Hence their expressions are bound to be different.
Deepesh, you ask me, "Beloved Master, does the buddha weep?" Some buddhas do, some buddhas don't. It all depends on the individuality.

It happened when Basho's master died -- Basho is a buddha, a buddha who writes poetry, a buddha who paints beautiful pictures, a very aesthetic buddha. His master died, thousands of people gathered. His master was very famous; more famous because of Basho, because Basho was a famous poet and painter and he was Basho's master. Thousands of people gathered and they were very much surprised when they saw Basho crying, big tears rolling down his cheeks.
A few close disciples of his master came to Basho and said, "It does not look right. Thousands of people are coming and they are getting confused. They don't think a buddha should be crying and weeping, and you are the man who has been saying to them again and again: There is no death and the innermost core lives forever. Then why are you weeping? Your master is not dead, he has only moved from the small body to the universal body of God. So why are you weeping?"
Basho wiped his tears and he said, "Listen! This is nobody's business. I live according to my inner feelings, I cannot pretend. When my innermost core

has disappeared into the universal. don't care whether people think it right or not. If they don't think that I am enlightened it's okay, but I cannot pretend. I cannot do something which is not really there. And yes, I have said that the soul is immortal and my master has not died, he has disappeared into the universal. That's why I am crying, not crying that he is dead but crying that now I will never be able to see his form. Now he has become formless -- and his body was beautiful. I will never be able to look again into those deep eyes, I will never be able to hold his hand and touch his feet. I have lost his form -- I am crying for his body, for his form; I am not crying for the formless soul. And I am not concerned whether people think me enlightened or unenlightened, that is their business. Who cares?"

No, this is Basho's approach, and he too is true. But never compare. Let each buddha be a Himalayan peak separate from other peaks. Let each buddha be understood according to his own way, never impose any other pattern on him. That has been done down the ages again and again. The Christian can't believe that Buddha is a christ, because he does not serve the poor, he does not heal the wounded, he does not make the blind see, he does not do miracles like Jesus did. Lazarus died and Jesus came, and after four days he revived Lazarus. Buddha does nothing like that; on the contrary, he does something absolutely different.

There is a beautiful story:
A woman lost her young son; just a few days before her husband had died. Kissa Gautami was her name, and now

her only son had died. She was in great despair, naturally; the child was her only hope. Buddha was staying in the town; people said, "Don't cry and don't weep. Why don't you take the child to the Buddha? He is so compassionate, he may revive him back to life."

The woman rushed with the dead body of the child. Buddha looked at the woman, told the woman to put the child in front of him and said to her, "Yes, I will revive him, but you will have to fulfill one condition."

The woman said, "I am ready to give even my life. Say any condition and I will fulfill it."

Buddha said, "It is a simple condition, I never make big requirements of people, only small requirements; this is a very simple thing. You just go into the town and bring a few mustard seeds. Just remember one thing: the mustard seeds should come from a house where nobody has ever died."

The woman was in an insane state, she could not see the point. How can you find a house where nobody has ever died? She rushed with great hope and she knew that every house has mustard seeds because that was the only crop the people were growing. The whole village was doing the same work, growing mustard seeds -- so there was no problem.

She knocked on many doors, the people said, "A few mustard seeds? We can bring cartloads of mustard seeds, but we cannot fulfill the condition; many people have died in our house. So our mustard seeds won't do."

By the evening the woman came to her senses. She had knocked on many doors; slowly slowly, she saw the point that death is inevitable -- it happens to everybody, that

nobody can escape from it. She came back, she was a totally different woman when she came back in the evening. The child was there, Buddha was waiting. He said, "Where are the mustard seeds?"
The woman laughed, fell down at his feet and said, "Initiate me into your path, because I have understood your message, that everybody has to die. Today my son has died, a few days before my husband died, a few days afterwards I am going to die. Before I die I want to see the deathless. Now I am not interested in my child being raised from the dead. Now I am interested myself in seeing the eternal life."
Buddha initiated Kissa Gautami.

Now, these stories are the same, almost the same. Lazarus' sisters or Jesus' disciples, they sent for him. He was away. He came -- it took four days for him to reach there -- and he raised Lazarus from the dead. But what happened to Lazarus then? He must have died again because we don't see him anywhere. So what is the point?
If you ask Buddha he will say, "What is the point of raising the man? He will die again. You are simply creating another opportunity to die. Once is enough, why twice?" Buddha would have responded in a totally different way. Christians can't understand it because they are obsessed with the idea of Christ. They would like Buddha and Mahavira and Krishna to be the same way. That is not possible.
Buddhists cannot understand Christ either, because they have the idea of Buddha, the image of Buddha, and Jesus does not fulfill it. In fact there is no need for Jesus to fulfill

anybody's idea, or for Buddha to fulfill anybody's expectation. They are unique people. We should stop this continuous comparison. Thousands of books are written every year comparing, and every comparison is going to be wrong, it is going to do some injustice to somebody or other. Either you will be unjust to Buddha, or to Christ. You cannot be just to both.
My effort here is to make you aware of the varieties of buddhahood, of the multidimensionality of enlightenment. The world is rich because there are so many birds and so many trees and so many flowers. And the same is true about the inner world; so many possibilities of growing, so many different, unique expressions when you become mature -- different flowers. The world is richer because there is a Buddha and a Christ and a Lao Tzu. The world would have been really very poor if there were only Ramas, just Ramas; the world would have been very poor. In each village and town you can find a few Ramas, carrying their bow. Or if there were millions of Christs everywhere it would not be beautiful, it would be boring.
It is good that Jesus has the touch of humanity and Buddha has pure divinity.

The second question:
Question 2
BELOVED MASTER,
WHAT IS "COINCIDENCE"?

Anand Viramo, there are three things to be understood. One is the law of cause and effect. That applies to the material world and because science believes only in the law of cause

and effect, it denies everything else. The law of cause and effect is mechanical, there is no coincidence. You heat the water to one hundred degrees and it evaporates, there is no coincidence. It is not that one day it evaporates at ninety-nine degrees, another day at ninety degrees. There is no question of the mood, the water cannot decide, the water is mechanically ruled by a law of cause and effect.

Those who believe in the law of cause and effect, they will not believe in any coincidence. Everything is predetermined, there is nothing like coincidence. Everything has an inevitability.

Then there is another law -- Carl Gustav Jung called it the law of synchronicity. Two things can happen together although they are not related as cause and effect. For example if somebody is singing a beautiful song, some cord in your heart is touched, but it is not inevitable, it is not cause and effect -- it may happen, it may not happen; it may happen to a few people, it may not happen to a few others. It may happen to you one day, it may not happen to you another day.

Today you are feeling happy, you have met your woman, your friend, you are riding on the winds. Somebody is singing a song, suddenly it strikes a note in you, you also feel like singing. Somebody is dancing, your feet suddenly have the feel to dance, the mood to dance.

But your wife has died, you are sad and somebody is singing and it hurts. The moon has risen in the sky, a full-moon night, and you are sad -- the moon also looks sad, not beautiful. You are in such a sad state that the full-moon night looks like it is ridiculing you; it looks so indifferent to you, so unconcerned, so hard. You are in such a sad state

and the moon is still shining the same way it used to, and the roses are blooming and the birds are singing. Nobody seems to be concerned about you, nobody seems to care about you.
The universe seems to be very neutral, very cold. You feel hurt, you feel alienated, you feel a stranger, an outsider. Now there will be no synchronicity.
The law of synchronicity means sometimes you fit and sometimes you don't fit. It is fluid. The law of synchronicity belongs to the world of mind; just as cause and effect belong to the world of matter, body, the law of synchronicity belongs to the world of mind, heart. Beyond these two there is a possibility of coincidence too. That means no law pertains, or you can call it the law of freedom. That is the ultimate, the law of your innermost core, in fact it is not a law because it is a law of freedom. Things can happen which are not caused by anything and which are not created by the law of synchronicity, just coincidences.
Coincidence simply means that there is a possibility of freedom. Now there are people here of all the three kinds. There are people here who have come according to the law of cause and effect; they had to come, it was inevitable, unavoidable. There was something pulling them like a magnet, they could not resist it.
There are people here who have come not through the law of cause and effect, but they felt a synchronicity, a harmony with me, a deep accord. If they wanted to resist they could have resisted very easily, if they wanted not to come they could have remained. There was not some gravitational

pull, they had to choose. It is out of their choice that they are here.
And there is also the third category of people who have just come as a coincidence, accidental. A friend was here, and you had come to see your friend, not to see me, not to listen to me, not at all concerned about me; you had come just to see your friend -- but then you got caught. The friend may not be here anymore, the friend may have escaped. Now this is coincidence.
Your husband was coming here, and you simply followed him just as a dutiful wife. Now there are many children, many kids who are coincidentally here. Their parents are here, so they are here; their being here is not their choice, just a coincidence. Their parents are Christian, they are Christian; their parents are Hindu, so they are Hindu; their parents have become sannyasins, they have become sannyasins. This is just coincidence.
All these three things happen. The higher you rise, the higher your consciousness is, the more aware you become of freedom. At the lowest point everything is determined, at the highest point nothing is determined.

Buddha renounced his palace and the first day, when he was walking on the bank of a river, he created much confusion in the mind of a great astrologer.
The astrologer was coming from Varanasi; he had achieved the highest degrees possible in those days. He had become the most famous astrologer; now he is going back to his part of the country. He saw Buddha's footprint on the wet sand; he could not believe his eyes, because it was against all his astrological knowledge. The feet of the Buddha had

a few marks which were clearly there on the sand. Those marks were thought to belong only to a man who is the ruler of the whole world, a CHAKRAVARTIN, who is the ruler of six continents.

Now what is the ruler of six continents doing in this poor village, on this dirty bank? And why should the emperor of all the six continents walk barefooted? He could not believe his eyes. He studied them very minutely and there was no suspicion, no doubt. Either his astrological books are not right or some emperor has passed from here. He followed those footprints in search of the man and he found Buddha sitting under a tree. Now he was more puzzled; the man looked as if he was the emperor of all the six continents, and yet he was a beggar with a begging bowl.

He bowed down to Buddha and he said, "I would like to see your feet. I am an astrologer, you may have heard my name." He looked at the feet and he said, "Now you have created such confusion in my mind, I have never been so confused. For twelve years I have studied astrology, should I throw my scriptures in the river and forget all about it? You should be the emperor of the whole world. What are you doing here? How can you be a beggar?"

Buddha laughed and he said, "Yes, there is no need to throw away your books, there is no need to be so confused. Your books are right. I was meant to be a great king, but that belongs to the law of cause and effect. If I had simply followed the pattern in which I was born, then I would have been the king, a great king, a chakravartin. But because I renounced, I took a conscious, deliberate step against the pattern that was imposed, imprinted in my being. I revolted against it, I rebelled against it, I became free of it. I became

a witness of it, I dropped my identification with my mind, and once you drop your identification with your mind you are no longer under the law of cause and effect."

First you enter into the world of synchronicity and then, ultimately, you enter into the world of freedom. In the world of freedom there are only coincidences. Nothing is absolutely certain, everything is possible. Nothing is impossible. Napoleon is reported to have said: Nothing is impossible. But Napoleon cannot say that, he should not say it. A Buddha can say: Nothing is impossible, all things become possible.
You ask me, Anand Viramo, "What is 'coincidence'?"
It simply means that life is not just mechanical. It is not determined by fate and it is not determined by history. It is not determined by your past or by your past karmas. It is not determined, as Karl Marx says, by historical necessity. It is determined only for those who live unconsciously; otherwise it is freedom. You can choose and you can choose to be anything. You can even choose to be a nothingness, that is the ultimate freedom.
And coincidences are always happening in ordinary life too. Life is not as logical as you think, it is very illogical. Only the surface looks logical.

The preacher decided to enumerate the Ten Commandments to his flock.
When he got to "Thou Shalt Not Steal," he noticed a fellow in the first row acting nervously. When the preacher got to "Thou Shalt Not Commit Adultery," he noticed the fellow brighten up and smile. After the service, the preacher

approached the man and asked him the reason for his unseemly conduct -- to which the happy one replied, "When you said, 'Thou Shalt Not Steal,' I discovered my umbrella was gone. But when you said, 'Thou Shalt Not Commit Adultery,' I remembered where I had left it."

A bachelor named Clem showed up at his weekly poker game with a black eye.
His friend Joe asked what had happened to him.
"Well," Clem replied, "when I was getting dressed this morning a button came off my pants. I don't know how to sew a thing, so I went to the next apartment and asked the woman there if she would sew it on for me."
"Oh boy," Joe said, "she probably thought you were making a pass and socked you, huh?"
"No, that was not it," said Clem. "She was as nice about it as she could be. Got out a needle and thread right then and there. She sat down in front of me and sewed the button on while I was standing there. But just as she finished and was biting the thread off, her husband walked in."

Life is not just logic. It does not follow a clean-cut path, it goes zigzag. And it is good that it is not simply logical, otherwise there would be no joy, there would be no surprise, you would be simply machines, not men. Coincidences never happen to machines, they can't happen to machines, they can happen only to man. It is your being conscious that makes them possible. Remove man from the earth and all coincidences will disappear, things will be following simple, logical law. But remove man and life

loses all its beauty, because life loses its ultimate peak of evolution.

The third question:
Question 3
BELOVED MASTER,
WHY DO YOU GO ON SPEAKING AGAINST KNOWLEDGE? I HAVE NEVER HEARD YOU SPEAK AGAINST IGNORANCE.

Sargam, knowledge hinders, ignorance never does. Knowledge makes you egoistic, ignorance never does. Knowledge is nothing but hiding your ignorance, covering it up. If there is no knowledge, you will know your ignorance because there will be nothing to hide it. And to know that "I am ignorant" is the first step towards real wisdom. Hence I never speak against ignorance, ignorance has something beautiful about it. One thing that is beautiful about ignorance is that it can give you the right direction to move.

Socrates says: I know only one thing, that I know nothing. But Socrates is one of the wisest men of the world.
It happened that a few people had gone to the temple of Delphi, and the oracle at Delphi declared that Socrates is the wisest man, the greatest wise man ever. Those people rejoiced very much because they had come from Athens. They came back, they went to Socrates and they said, "You should also rejoice. Have you heard or not? The oracle at the temple of Delphi has declared you the greatest wise man on the earth."

Socrates said, "There must be something wrong, some misunderstanding, because I am the most ignorant; I know only one thing, that I know nothing. You go back and you tell the oracle that Socrates says he is the most ignorant person in the world."
They went back, they told the oracle and the oracle laughed and said, "That's why I have declared him the wisest man in the world."

Hence I never speak against ignorance. Ignorance also has another beautiful thing about it: that it is yours. Knowledge is always borrowed. And something that is yours cannot be taken away from you. It cannot be stolen, robbed, but knowledge can be taken away from you very easily. It is borrowed.
And when you are ignorant you don't have any pretensions, you are simple, you are innocent. Ignorance has the quality of innocence about it. That's why children are so innocent, because they are so ignorant. Primitive people are so innocent because they are so ignorant; they are not cunning, they cannot be. They don't have enough knowledge to be cunning. Before you can be cunning you have to be educated. Before you can be cunning you need a university degree; the more universities there are, the more cunningness there is in the world. The more people become knowledgeable, the more they are deceptive, cunning, oppressive. And they go on finding ways to exploit others. Ignorance is pure, unadulterated. From ignorance move towards wisdom, not towards knowledge. If ignorance becomes meditative it becomes wisdom; if ignorance becomes interested in more and more information then it

becomes knowledge. To be knowledgeable is not going to help at all. Wisdom liberates. Wisdom is as much yours as your ignorance is yours.
Knowledge not only deceives others, it deceives you too. When you know answers parrotlike, you start thinking that you really know. Because you can read and you can write, you start to think that you know; because you can understand words you start thinking that you know; because your intelligence is covered with intellectuality, you start thinking that you are intelligent -- but you are not intelligent, only intellectual.
Intelligence is part of wisdom, intellectuality is part of knowledge.
Yes, Sargam, I speak against knowledge because there is nothing more dangerous than knowledge. It hinders you from knowing yourself. Knowledge hinders you from knowing, because it gives you plastic, synthetic, false things to play with and you forget all about the real thing. Don't start believing in words; it is the most dangerous game one can play. Don't be a parrot, otherwise you will be going farther and farther away from your inner source.

One very hot day a dog was walking along a road when he saw a take-away food shop. He went in and asked for a can of lemonade.
"Get out!" said the shopkeeper. "Dogs are not allowed in food shops."
"But look here," said the thirsty canine, "you've got a big sign outside that says, WE SERVE HOT DOGS!"

Just knowing the words is not enough. And the more words you know, the more confused you are going to become, because you don't know, your words are just on the surface. If somebody scratches a little bit more, your ignorance is bound to show. People go on pretending.

When I was a student in the university, I had a professor who was not even very knowledgeable -- wisdom was out of the question. But he had this habit of pretending. Whenever anybody would mention any name of a philosopher, author, poet, mystic or a name of some book, he would immediately say, "Yes, I have read the book, it is beautiful," or this or that, he would make some comment. But I could see in his eyes that the answer he was giving was hollow, he had not read the book, he knows nothing about the person and nobody had ever seen him in the library. I had gone to his house also, and I had not seen any books there. I inquired in the library -- he had been in the university for ten years -- not a single book had been taken out in his name, and nobody had ever seen him reading, except the newspaper. He was not reading anything else, and that too, he used to borrow from the neighbors. I inquired everywhere, and I became absolutely certain that he was simply pretending.
One day I invented three names, just invented. I told him, "Have you read, sir, Nomineo's book?"
He said, "Yes." Now, there is no person like Nomineo....
I asked him, "Can you tell me the name of his book?"
He looked a little puzzled; he said, "I must have read it many years ago, I have forgotten the name. You can inquire in the library."

I said, "You come along." In the library there was no name like Nomineo and no book he had written, because he has never been -- so how could he write a book?
I told him, "The other two names were also inventions and you have agreed, and a few other books also you have agreed that you read -- they don't exist!"
He took me aside and said, "Listen, don't tell it to anybody but I don't know a thing about these books. But one has to keep one's face. I don't want to look stupid."

People go on trying to pretend to be what they are not. Knowledge gives you the greatest pretension; you can quote Buddha, Jesus. And you don't understand what they are saying and you will always do something wrong. You will interpret them in a wrong way.

In India there are thousands of commentaries on the Bhagavadgita. Now if Krishna was either mad or insane then there could be thousands of meanings to his words. But Krishna was very particular about what he wanted to say. How then can you explain these thousands of commentaries? These are people imposing their meanings on Krishna. If he comes back and looks at the commentaries he himself will be puzzled, he himself will be in some difficulty trying to decide what his meaning really was. And these people are very argumentative. Anybody can prove anything. Shankara proves that the Gita is the philosophy of renouncing the world; the world is illusion, and the Gita preaches renunciation -- and he proves it beautifully. His contemporary, Ramanuja, proves just the opposite: that the Gita teaches one to live in the

world and be a devotee of God. It does not preach renunciation, it teaches the art of living in the world with prayer.

And Lokmanya Tilak finds something else; he says the Gita preaches action. Of course with great detachment -- but you have to act.

These three are the paths, ancient paths. The paths of no-action, inaction, that is Shankara's finding in the Gita. The path of action, that is Lokmanya Tilak's finding in the Gita. And the third is the path of devotion; Ramanuja is finding the third in the same book. And then there are different variations of the theme.

Knowledgeable people can go on imposing their own ideas of those who have known. The right way to come across a book like the Bible, Gita or Koran is not to have any ideas, not to have any knowledge. Encounter them with great silence, just like a mirror, reflecting only, not interpreting; then you will be able to see the real meaning, their meaning -- not your meaning imposed on their meaning. And the man who can become a mirror need not go to the Gita, the Koran or the Bible, he can find the message in the trees, in the song of the birds, in the clouds, in the sun, in the moon. He can find it anywhere, because God's message is written all over existence. His signature is on each leaf; you just have to be mirrorlike, silent, meditative, with no thought, with no knowledge.

That's why I speak against knowledge. It is knowledge that has become your imprisonment.

Betty was constantly losing her boyfriends because of her grandmother's tendency to say the wrong things to them in her attempt to be modern.
One day, her current boyfriend arrived while Betty was upstairs changing, and the old lady started to brag about her granddaughter.
"I think Betty would rather screw than eat," Granny chatted cheerfully to the young man. "There is hardly a young man around she has not screwed with, and she even has a record to screw by."
The young man blushed, stammered, grabbed his hat, and beat it out the door.
A moment later Betty came downstairs, noted his absence and said, "Alright, Granny, what did you say this time?"
"Nothing," protested the old lady, "I was just telling him how much you liked to screw, when he ran out the door."
"Oh my goodness, Granny, how many times must I tell you, the word is not 'screw', it is 'twist'!"

What happens to Jesus in your mind, what happens to Buddha in your mind is exactly something like that. Your mind does both the things, it twists, it screws. Put your knowledge aside, just go in deep innocence, in deep ignorance, and then you will be able to find what truth is. Truth is not found by knowledge, it is found by silence. And knowledge is noisy.

The last question:
Question 4
BELOVED MASTER,
IS IT REALLY DIFFICULT TO UNDERSTAND YOU?

Dhammo, it is the same old story. It has always been difficult to understand people like me. Not that you are not intelligent enough to understand, but because you are too knowledgeable. You already think you know and that is the trouble. Come to me not knowing anything, don't come to me as Hindus, Buddhists, Christians; otherwise you will misunderstand. I am saying simple things, but if you have a preoccupied mind, you are going to miss them.

"It was terrible, mother," complained the curvy teenager. "I had to change my seat four times at the movies."
"Some man started bothering you?" asked her mother.
"Yes," said the girl. "Finally."

An American girl visiting England went to a posh party. She was dancing with a rather stuffy Englishman when her necklace became unfastened and slipped inside the back of her gown. So she asked her partner to retrieve it.
Though he felt rather uncomfortable about it, he courteously attempted to reach the necklace. After a couple of tries, he finally said, "I am awfully sorry, but I am having trouble getting to it."
"Try further down," she instructed.
Just then he noticed that all eyes in the room were on him, and he blushed beet-red. He whispered to the lovely American, "I feel such a perfect ass!"
"Never mind about that," she said. "Just get the necklace!"

Different languages.... I speak one language, you speak another language. By the time words reach to you they

have a totally different meaning. Unless you start listening to me in the same silent space in which I am speaking to you, misunderstanding is inevitable. But it can be avoided. Be a little bit more meditative, learn the ways of being more silent -- and many of you are learning, and many of you have become aware of it, and many of you are tasting me without misunderstanding me at all.

It is going to happen to you too, Dhammo. You are new; just get a little seasoned, a little ripe and mature. And the only maturity required here is to sit with me absolutely empty, so I can resonate within you, so I can touch your heart, so I can play upon the harp of your heart.

Then the sounds created will not come from your mind; otherwise, if you keep the mind between me and you, then whatsoever meaning you arrive at is your own; I have nothing to do with it, it has nothing to do with me either. Wait a little, Dhammo, become a little more silent, learn how to be in communion with me. It is a love affair to be with a master, a love affair which is inexpressible in words; but one can get attuned, it is an attuning. Slowly slowly, the disciple falls into accord with the heart of the master. He breathes the way the master breathes, his heart beats in the same rhythm as the master's heart. Then understanding comes so naturally; just as your shadow follows you, understanding follows silence.

Enough for today.

The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 6

Chapter #9

Chapter title: Mind is a fraud

29 October 1979 am in Buddha Hall

LET GO OF ANGER, LET GO OF PRIDE.
WHEN YOU ARE BOUND BY NOTHING,
YOU GO BEYOND SORROW.
ANGER IS LIKE A CHARIOT CAREERING WILDLY.
HE WHO CURBS HIS ANGER
IS THE TRUE CHARIOTEER.
OTHERS MERELY HOLD THE REINS.

WITH GENTLENESS OVERCOME ANGER,
WITH GENEROSITY OVERCOME MEANNESS,
WITH TRUTH OVERCOME DECEIT.
SPEAK THE TRUTH,
GIVE WHATEVER YOU CAN,
NEVER BE ANGRY.
THESE THREE STEPS WILL LEAD YOU
INTO THE PRESENCE OF THE GODS.

THE WISE HARM NO ONE,
THEY ARE MASTERS OF THEIR BODIES
AND THEY GO TO THE BOUNDLESS COUNTRY,
THEY GO BEYOND SORROW.
THOSE WHO SEEK PERFECTION
KEEP WATCH BY DAY AND NIGHT
TILL ALL DESIRES VANISH.

LISTEN, ATULA, THIS IS NOT NEW,
IT IS AN OLD SAYING.
THEY BLAME YOU FOR BEING SILENT,
THEY BLAME YOU WHEN YOU TALK TOO MUCH
AND WHEN YOU TALK TOO LITTLE.

WHATEVER YOU DO THEY BLAME YOU.
THE WORLD ALWAYS FINDS A WAY TO PRAISE
AND A WAY TO BLAME.
IT ALWAYS HAS AND IT ALWAYS WILL.

BUT WHO DARES BLAME THE MAN
WHOM THE WISE CONTINUALLY PRAISE,
WHOSE LIFE IS VIRTUOUS AND WISE,
WHO SHINES LIKE A COIN OF PURE GOLD?
EVEN THE GODS PRAISE HIM,
EVEN BRAHMA PRAISES HIM.

BE AWARE OF THE ANGER OF THE BODY,
MASTER THE BODY,
LET IT SERVE TRUTH.
BE AWARE OF THE ANGER OF THE MOUTH,
MASTER YOUR WORDS,
LET THEM SERVE TRUTH.
BE AWARE OF THE ANGER OF THE MIND,
MASTER YOUR THOUGHTS,
LET THEM SERVE TRUTH.

THE WISE HAVE MASTERED BODY, WORD AND MIND,
THEY ARE THE TRUE MASTERS.

The first sutra:

LET GO OF ANGER, LET GO OF PRIDE.
WHEN YOU ARE BOUND BY NOTHING,
YOU GO BEYOND SORROW.

The most important thing to be understood is that Buddha is not saying, "Repress anger, repress pride." And he is not saying, "Drop anger, drop pride," either. He is using the words LET GO OF ANGER, LET GO OF PRIDE. The key is in the words 'let go'.

There are people who are full of anger, possessed by anger, possessed by pride. They are insane. Insanity is the climax of pride and anger. And there are people who are afraid of anger and pride; hence they repress them. But a repressed insanity is far more dangerous, because it accumulates. Then you are sitting on a volcano. It can erupt any moment. It will destroy you. It will destroy others who are related to you. It is poison.

If one has to choose between the two, expressing or repressing, then expressing is far better, because at least the poison never accumulates. It is thrown in mild doses, homeopathic doses. But if you accumulate, it is no longer homeopathy, it becomes allopathy. Then the doses are big and, sooner or later, your repressed anger will be so powerful that you will not be able to keep it repressed anymore. Then it simply explodes and you are absolutely helpless.

Humanity has been taught by the priest, the politician, the pedagogue down the ages to repress anger. The society is not concerned with you, it is concerned only with your outer appearance. What happens to your inner world is nobody's business; whether you suffer, live in hell inside, that is left to you. Just keep a beautiful appearance, learn etiquette, behave in a cultured way and if you are carrying a hell that is your problem.

But the person who is carrying a hell within, howsoever cultivated he becomes, sophisticated, cultured, he remains a wild animal within. Scratch him a little bit and his humanity will disappear, his character will disappear and you will find just the opposite kind of man inside. That's what happens when somebody drinks too much. A very cultured man, once he is intoxicated, starts being very uncultured. That is his truer self. Alcohol has not created it; it has only removed the barriers, it has only removed the rocks that were repressing it.

In the East there has been a secret tradition of tantrikas who go on practicing meditation -- and side by side they go on taking drugs in greater and greater amounts for a certain reason. They are not interested in drugs, they are interested in meditation. But they go on increasing the amount of the drug slowly slowly, so that they can remain alert with the drug. It takes a long time, it is a very subtle process of awakening.

In the hands of the fools it will be destructive, it will be suicidal. Hence it is a sacred tradition. Only the master gives it to the disciple -- and very rarely. If he finds some disciple of such integrity, then only does he give this process: "Meditate and go on increasing the amount of the drug so slowly that it never overpowers you and your watchfulness remains intact."

But the drug will start removing all rocks and it will bring up all that you have repressed down the ages in your many lives. Watching it you will be allowing it to disappear. That is the magic of watching. If you watch something, either it is going to disappear totally from your being, or it is going to be dissolved into your being. If it is something natural,

spontaneous, it will be dissolved into your being. That too is beautiful. If it is something not part of your being, extraneous -- has come from the outside, is a parasite on you -- it will evaporate.

The real definition of good and bad can only be this: the good is that which grows with meditation, watchfulness, and the bad is that which disappears as you grow in watchfulness, as you grow in awareness. Awareness has to be the decisive factor. When you become aware of your anger there happens a let-go, because anger is not part of your natural being, neither is pride. They start evaporating. As the sun of awareness rises in you, they start evaporating like dewdrops in the early morning sun.

And the second thing to remember: Buddha makes these two statements together, LET GO OF ANGER, LET GO OF PRIDE. Why? There is a reason: pride is ego, "I am superior, I am holier, I am greater, I am something special, I am." Ego is the root cause of anger. If you think you are superior, higher, holier, special, you will be constantly angry, because the world is not going to accept it. In fact everybody else also thinks in the same foolish way. And when there are so many great people, conflict is bound to arise. And everybody is trying to prove that, "I am greater than you." How can you avoid conflict? And that conflict brings anger. It is ego hurting, it is ego feeling the wound, it is unsatisfied ego that creates anger. And nobody's ego can be satisfied, that is impossible.

Even a man like Napoleon could not feel his ego absolutely satisfied, for the simple reason that he was not very tall -- only five feet five inches. And that was always heavy on him, because he had many servants, guards who were very

much taller than himself. And whenever he would see a tall person he would become angry. He would not be able to control himself.

The great Russian leader, Lenin, had very small legs. His torso was bigger, his upper body was bigger; his lower body was very small, disproportionate. That kept him always angry. Even if somebody looked at his feet -- which was natural, because they were so disproportionate that anybody looking would notice -- he would become angry immediately. Anybody looking at his feet would create anger.

He used to sit on a big chair -- so big that his feet wouldn't touch the ground -- so nobody would think that he had small feet. But people had become aware of his big chair; they would look more closely and that would again create anger, because they would see that his feet were not touching the ground at all. Now, to be the dictator of the greatest country in the world, Soviet Russia, the largest country in the world and yet feeling hurt for a very stupid reason... that you have small legs!

You cannot have all and everything. You can arrange to have a few things, but a few other things will be missing. You may be tall, but you may be ugly. Any small thing is enough to hurt the ego. You may be very tall and very handsome, but unintelligent -- you may have a very mediocre mind. You may have a very intelligent mind, but a very ill body. You may have a very strong body, a very good physique, but you don't have any intelligence. You can't manage all. You may have intelligence, a beautiful body but no money. The world is vast and there are a

thousand and one things and nobody can manage to have it all -- nobody has ever been able to.
And the ego is bound to be wounded; the ego is very sensitive, very fragile, because it is very false. It is ego that creates the space in which anger arises. Hence Buddha says, LET GO OF ANGER, and immediately adds, LET GO OF PRIDE. Because unless you let go of the ego you will not be able to let go of anger. Anger is a by-product. And one has to see very clearly the causes of things. Your minds are so jumbled up, in such a mess, you don't know what is the cause and what is the effect.

A woman used to come from a faraway village to the city each year to give birth to a child. When she came for the seventeenth time the doctor said, "We always wait for you. You are the only one we can depend on that each year you will be here. When will you be coming the next year?" She said, "I'm not coming anymore, because we have just discovered what is the cause of it all."

Seventeen children and they have just discovered the cause of it all! She said, "I am not coming anymore."
But that too is early. You may have lived thousands of lives and you have not yet been able to find the cause... why this anger? Our minds are in such a mess that you cannot make head or tail of it. You cannot sort it out. Everything is so mixed up with everything else: causes pretending to be effects, effects pretending to be causes, things which are not related at all have become accidentally associated with each other.

Betty Engrove, the singer, switched on her radio one morning and tuned in on two stations at once: one broadcasting calisthenic exercises and the other giving out cooking recipes. Here is what she heard:
"Hands on hips, place one cup of flour on your shoulder. Touch your toes and mix them in one half cup of milk, repeat six times. Inhale one half teaspoon of baking powder, lower the legs and mash two hard boiled eggs, exhaling into a bowl and breathe naturally. Lie flat on the floor and roll in the white of an egg until it comes to a boil. In ten minutes lift your head from the fire and scrub briskly with a rough towel. Bend your knees, shake powdered sugar on them and serve it with soup."

And your mind is tuned to so many stations, not just two! All kinds of things are going on inside the mind. One day just sit down and write whatsoever is coming into the mind. And don't cheat, just write exactly whatsoever comes in and you will be surprised that this is your mind, this is where you have been living your life from. You will find it absolutely insane.
It is good that we don't have windows in the head, otherwise other people would look inside and they would be surprised; they would not be able to believe that this is you. YOU also will not be able to believe that this is what your mind is.
But this is the reality. People never look inside. In fact, as if unconsciously, they suspect that if they look inside they will find insanity there. It is better not to look; avoid, keep the mind in the dark and remain occupied with something in the outside world. People keep themselves busy without

business for the simple reason that it helps them not to look in. They have become alienated from their own minds.
If you look in, in the beginning of course it is going to be a chaos; but if you start watching the chaos, slowly slowly things start settling and you will be able to see what are the causes and what are the effects. Once you have known the causes, you are on the right track. Many people are fighting with the effects. You can never win, you are bound to lose. Effects are only symptoms. You cannot fight with anger, because it is only an effect -- the cause is ego.
You cannot fight with causes either; unless you find that this is the ultimate cause. Anger is an effect; for anger, ego is the cause. But if you go deep down, watching your ego you will be surprised, it is also in its own turn an effect -- an effect of unawareness. Unawareness is the cause.
You can go on from anywhere -- from greed, from lust, from anger, from jealousy, from possessiveness and you will always come to the ultimate cause: unawareness.
So the only way to get rid of this mess, this chaos, is to be aware. And once you are aware you need not repress anything, you need not even drop; things start dropping on their own, they start disappearing on their own. That's what Buddha means when he says: LET GO OF ANGER, LET GO OF PRIDE. WHEN YOU ARE BOUND BY NOTHING, YOU GO BEYOND SORROW. And these are the two things which are keeping you tethered in an insane state. These are the two things which are creating all your sorrow and misery. Ego, hidden behind, goes on working, poisoning you. Anger is either expressed, then it poisons your relationships with people, or it is repressed, then it poisons your own being.

And slowly slowly, you find yourself in such a state in which many people would like to die; many people contemplate suicide for the simple reason that life is so painful and death seems to be a relief. Millions of people around the earth contemplate suicide -- many of them try, many of them succeed too. And those who don't contemplate suicide contemplate murder; they think that others are creating their trouble, so destroy others. Either they want to destroy others, or they want to destroy themselves, because they find no joy in life. When you don't find joy in life, when you are not blissful, you become destructive, either a sadist or a masochist.

When your life is full of joy, unbounded joy, it is creative, then great creativity is born in you. Then you do something to contribute to the evolution of humanity, to the evolution of the whole universe. You add some beauty to it, you share your celebration with it. You make at least a few flowers bloom.

You leave the world in great contentment, because creativity brings contentment. You leave this world joyously, because it has been such a beautiful opportunity to grow, to mature, to become aware. It has been such a joy to create a few things and share those things with people; otherwise you live in sorrow and you die in sorrow.

ANGER IS LIKE A CHARIOT CAREERING WILDLY.
HE WHO CURBS HIS ANGER
IS THE TRUE CHARIOTEER.
OTHERS MERELY HOLD THE REINS.

If you look at people or at yourself, you will find that anger is as if it is a chariot without a driver.

Just the other day I was reading a book:
A man has lived in the desert and he writes of many experiences he had there. He tried one experiment:
There were no roads, there were no people, no trees, no rocks, no hills; just a desert, spread out for thousands of miles. And for centuries it had been so infertile, it had become hard. It was not a sand desert, the crust was very hard.
He was driving his car, suddenly a whimsical idea arose in him. He moved to the seat next to the driver's -- he was the only one in the car. He left the driver's seat and let the car run on its own, because there was no road, no people, there was no fear of any accident. The car started moving. It was a rare experience. Then he jumped out of the car.
Greater ideas came to his mind... and the car was still going on. Then he ran after the car, jumped in again, took out his bicycle and went exactly opposite to the car on his bicycle till the car was just a speck far away on the horizon. It was still moving, going nowhere, still going.
Then he again bicycled towards the car. It was strange. He writes it was thrilling that the car was still moving, going nowhere.

Reading his notes, I suddenly remembered Buddha's sutra:
ANGER IS LIKE A CHARIOT CAREERING WILDLY. HE WHO CURBS HIS ANGER IS THE TRUE CHARIOTEER. OTHERS MERELY HOLD THE REINS.
They may not even be holding the reins -- they may be

simply sitting there. The car is running on its own. Your body is running on its own, your mind is running on its own. You are not needed at all. You can jump out of the window, take your bicycle, go away from the car and it will still be moving. And one day you can come back to meet yourself.

Yes, this has been tried. People down the ages have tried out-of-the-body experiences; they are exactly the same. You can try it. If you go a little deeper into meditation, one day you can find a way to get out of the body, to run in the room. Even running is not needed, you can float in the air, look at the body lying down there, sleeping, snoring; you can listen to the snoring. Everything is functioning perfectly well, the engine is humming, you can come close to the heart and listen to the beat. The body is breathing. You are not needed at all. You can escape from the window, go around the neighborhood, come back, enter into the body, you are still fast asleep. It makes no difference, as if the body does not care much whether you are in or out.

The body is a very complicated, subtle mechanism; it is automatic, it does not need you. You have not done anything, that's why you are not needed.

If you become a real charioteer then you will be needed. If you are a meditator you will be needed. Then there are a few things the body cannot do. It cannot meditate on its own -- that is impossible. It can snore, it can sleep on its own, but it cannot be aware on its own. For awareness you are needed.

Remember it: only that thing is worth doing for which YOU are needed. Things which can be done without you

are nonessential things. To devote your whole life to them is to miss the whole point.

"Take me to the railway station," said the drunk, stumbling into a waiting taxi.
"Look mate, we are at the railway station," said the cabby.
"Thanks," murmured the drunk, handing over a five-dollar bill. "And next time, don't drive so bloody fast."

The taxi had not moved even an inch. Your life may remain exactly where it was when you were born. It may not move even an inch. Millions die exactly as they are born. No growth happens, no flowering comes to their lives. Whether they are or are not simply makes no difference. They come and go like shadows. Their life is not worth calling life; they simply vegetate.

A farmer munching on a cookie was watching a big rooster chasing a hen and gaining ground at every lap. The farmer threw a piece of cookie in front of the racing pair.
The rooster came to a sliding stop and gobbled up the tidbit.
"Gosh," said the farmer, "I hope I never get that hungry."

But the rooster, the lion, the tiger, the dog, the cat and you, are not in any way different -- unless something of buddhahood starts arising in you. The rooster is dominated by his hunger, by his lust; so are you.
B.F. Skinner, the modern prophet of the behaviorist school of psychology, says that man is a machine. And about ninety-nine point nine per cent of people he is correct.

George Gurdjieff used to say that man is a machine. And he was not a behavioral psychologist. He was one of the greatest spiritual giants who has ever walked on the earth. But still he used to say that not everybody has got a soul. It is very rarely that a person has a soul.

And I can understand B.F. Skinner. It is impossible for him to come across a buddha and to study a buddha. He studied rats and you; and he finds no difference. The instincts possessed by the rat are the same instincts possessed by man. Of course man is a little more complicated, true, a more complicated machine, that's all; a computer.

One day I was reading a fictitious story about the future, when scientists will be able to make mechanical men, robots. They look exactly like men, except that they have no soul. But from the outside you can't see any difference: they talk, they make love, they eat, they get tired and they go to sleep. And if you meet a robot -- who looks exactly like a man -- how are you going to judge whether he is a robot? Are you holding the hand of a robot or a man? Only once in a while will you be able to know: when the battery runs down and the robot starts, "Grrrr, grrrr, grrrr." Otherwise there is no difference.

You were making love to the robot and the robot says, "Grrrr, grrrr, grrrr." Then suddenly you become aware that this is not a man! But up to now he was perfectly alright. He was reciting great poetry, discussing great ideas, philosophy, quoting Socrates and Aristotle and he was hugging you and telling you, "I love you, and I will love you forever."

And these are all recorded things that he has been saying to every woman he meets. The moment he sees a woman

something triggers in him and he starts talking poetically and saying, "I love you and I will die without you."

I have heard of a psychoanalyst who was very much puzzled. He was in love with a woman, but the woman was a little strange. Whenever he would say to her, "I love you," she would look down.
He asked her, "What is the matter? Whenever I say, 'I love you,' are you feeling ashamed, embarrassed or what? Why do you start looking down?"
She said, "I look down to see whether you really mean it. ... Because I can't trust your mind. I can only trust your body."

It is very difficult to lie through the body. One can learn it, actors do that -- but very few are actors. Otherwise it is a very difficult art to make the body lie. The mind is perfectly at ease in lying; it can say things which it doesn't mean. But the body is still far more authentic, far more true. What irony, that the body seems to be more authentic and your mind seems to be simply a fraud!
You can attain to the soul only by becoming more watchful of all that is happening in your body and in your mind. Unless and until the witness arises in you, you are a robot.
Sheela has written a question to me: "When I go away from you, I am such a rat, but when I come back to you I become just a mouse."
I know what she means. People think there is much difference between rats and mice; there is not much. The mouse is just a sophisticated rat, college-educated, a hypocrite. The rat is far more authentic, the rat is whatsoever he is. The mouse has a facade. But there is not

much difference between the rat and the mouse. There is not much difference between the mouse and man, and there is not much difference between man and the machine. The difference arises -- the only difference that makes a difference -- in meditation. Before it, you can never have any differences. All differences are only formal.

That's why psychologists study rats, particularly white rats, because they are simple people and it is easier to understand them. Once you have understood the mind of the rat, you have understood the mind of man too. They infer all their knowledge about man through studying rats. It is really a condemnation of man that rats supply information about you. And that information works, it is perfectly applicable to you -- you behave in the same way. That information will not be applicable to a Buddha, to a Jesus, to a Krishna. But where is B.F. Skinner going to find a buddha? And even if he can find a buddha, who is going to study whom? The buddha will study Skinner, not vice versa. Skinner will not be able to study a buddha; he will not have the right context, he knows only how to study rats. A buddha will be absolutely incomprehensible to him. And when something is incomprehensible, the ego simply denies it. That is the ego's way of protecting itself. The incomprehensible, the mysterious has to be denied, overlooked, bypassed. One does not take note of the incomprehensible, because to take note of the incomprehensible means you are taking note of the limitation of your mind, and that hurts the ego.

Hence, buddhas are born once in a while, but nobody takes note of them. That is the difference between the Eastern and the Western psychology. Western psychology is based

on the understanding of rats. Eastern psychology is not based on the understanding of rats or even on the understanding of man.

Eastern psychology is rooted in the psychology of the buddhas. We think from the highest and then we come downwards. First we think of the ultimate and from there we infer about those who are on lower ranks -- it is respectful.

Trying to observe the lowest and inferring about the higher is humiliating; it is ugly and it is going to be wrong. It is like studying a seed and inferring about a flower. Now, studying a seed, how can you infer about a flower? You can dissect the seed, you can look into it; you will not find any color and you will not find any beauty and you will not find any fragrance. Although it contains them all, but they are still in the unmanifest.

And if you decide by the seed about the flower and you say that the flowers don't have any fragrance -- can't have, because when it is not in the seed, how it can be in the flower? And the flowers are not beautiful, because the seed is not beautiful... then everything has to be reduced to the lowest denominator; then the flower has to be simply denied -- that it is just poetic imagination and nothing else. That's what has been done about buddhas. The materialists go on denying their existence, they say it is poetic imagination. Such people have not existed, cannot exist; it is impossible for them to exist, because the seed does not show any sign of them.

The psychology of the buddhas starts from the other extreme. It starts from the highest: it studies the flower and then infers about the seed. Because the flower has

fragrance, it says the seed MUST have it; it is unmanifest. The flower is beautiful, the seed must have beauty in it, covered, hidden. The flower has color, the seed must have it, just waiting for its right time, for the spring, to explode into color, into fragrance, into beauty. Now this is the right way to understand man: not through rats, not even through ordinary man, but through buddhas.

This is the difference between the Eastern and the Western approach. The Western approach has reduced man to a very ugly phenomenon. The Eastern psychology has raised man to the height of the gods. And then the very process of both the psychologies becomes different. Western psychology goes through analysis, thinking -- that is its method. Eastern psychology follows the method of no-mind, of meditation; not of analysis, not of thinking, but of silence. Because to see the beauty of the flower you need silence, not analysis; beauty can never be understood through analysis. The dance of the flower in the wind, in the sun, in the rain, cannot be understood by the head; the heart has to be open for it.

WITH GENTLENESS OVERCOME ANGER....

This sutra is also tremendously important. Now Buddha is saying.... Anger contains energy. You cannot simply throw it away. It is your energy. Throwing it away will make you weak. Energies are not to be thrown away, but to be transformed. WITH GENTLENESS OVERCOME ANGER.... Let your anger be transformed into gentleness.

WITH GENEROSITY OVERCOME MEANNESS,

WITH TRUTH OVERCOME DECEIT.

He is saying that meditation is an alchemical process -- it is not morality, it is alchemy. It is the science of the soul. Through meditation anger slowly slowly disappears, and its energy becomes available and becomes gentleness.
You will be surprised to know that if you suffer from great anger you have great potential for gentleness. Anger simply shows that you have great energy. A man without anger is impotent, he has no energy. A man who cannot be angry cannot be gentle either. WITH GENEROSITY OVERCOME MEANNESS. Don't repress meanness, don't destroy meanness, but with generosity transform it into a generous consciousness, into sharing.
WITH TRUTH OVERCOME DECEIT. Don't fight with darkness, bring light in. That is the essence of this sutra. Don't fight with the negative, bring the positive in. And the positive comes through watchfulness -- the negative is already there. Your society prepares you for the negative, your society needs you to be negative. Your society wants you to be angry, full of anger, so that you can be forced into war, into crusades: religious, political, ideological conflicts; so you can be manipulated into killing people. Or, you can be manipulated into becoming martyrs; destructive to yourself.
Millions of Christians have died, Mohammedans have died, killing each other for the simple reason that so much anger is repressed, it needs some outlet. You will be surprised to know that Buddhism is the only religion in the world which has not shed blood, the only religion in the world which has converted millions of people without coercion of any kind.

Christianity has converted thousands of people, but with coercion. In the beginning it was by the sword. Mohammedans have converted millions of people, but it is through the sword, forcibly, violently. This is not conversion, this is something absolutely ugly and irreligious.

Now the sword is no longer used, because to use the sword directly will be condemned all over the world, so subtle means of coercion are used. In poor countries you can go with bread and butter, with clothes, with better facilities for life and you can convert people. Christian missionaries are doing this all over the world, particularly in the poor countries. It is not a conversion to Christ -- it is not at all a conversion -- it is simply purchasing people with bread and butter. People are starving -- whosoever can give them food, they are ready to go with him.

Buddhism is the only religion in the world which has really converted people without the sword, without bread and butter, without any coercion, positive or negative; which has simply converted through its understanding of people, bringing them more light, bringing them more understanding of their minds, their bodies.

And this is of great importance. Never fight with the negative. Your society prepares you for the negative. Transform the negative into the positive; transformation is possible. The medium that has to be used is meditation. Just become more watchful of all your mind things -- anger, greed, meanness; otherwise you can cultivate, you can deceive others and you can deceive yourself, but you will remain mean. A miser can donate, giving charity, but he is giving with calculation. His miserliness is there. Now he is

opening a bank account in the other world. He wants to have a bank balance there too.

A blind man was standing in a bus queue, when his neighbor was startled to see a dog calmly cock his leg and piss all down the blind man's trousers.
When the blind man realized what was happening, he put his hand into his pocket and produced a bar of chocolate that he held downwards for the dog.
"That's a very charitable thing to do," said his neighbor.
"Oh," replied the blind man, "I am just finding out where his mouth is so I can kick him in the balls."

So don't be deceived about what people are doing on the outside, deep inside they may be calculating something else. Their act may be generous, but their motive is the real thing that matters; not the act, but the intention.

A man picked up a woman in a bar one night and took her home to his apartment.
When they got there, she started to disrobe, but he stopped her, saying, "No, let us just sit here on the couch together, and if you will keep both of your hands on my head while you are here, I will give you twenty dollars."
The girl thought this a little unusual, but did as he requested. Finally, she could not restrain her curiosity any longer and asked, "But what kind of a thrill do you get out of having my hands on your head?"
"No thrill," he answered. "I just get a sense of security knowing that your hands are on my head and not in my pocket -- for twenty dollars it is worth it."

The people who are miserly will remain miserly, even in their sharing. If you look deep down you will find they are trying to bargain for something, there is some business hidden in it. The priests go on telling people, "If you give to poor people here, you will get a thousandfold in the other world" -- a thousandfold, it is like a lottery! And who would not like to have it? Give a little bit here and you will get a thousandfold there.
Priests have been cheating people, because people are mean, because people are miserly; otherwise priests would disappear from the world. If people are really generous there will be no need for the priests, nobody can exploit generous people. They give for the sheer joy of giving. They don't think that giving is a means to some end. If you think giving is a means to some end you miss the whole point. Unless giving becomes a joy in itself, you don't know what it is.

SPEAK THE TRUTH,
GIVE WHATEVER YOU CAN,
NEVER BE ANGRY.
THESE THREE STEPS WILL LEAD YOU
INTO THE PRESENCE OF THE GODS.

Speak the truth, whatsoever the cost. It is going to cost you much, because the world lives in lies. People are brought up in such a way that truth never crosses their paths. And they are forced to believe in something which their society, their church, their state wants them to believe in; it is not a question of truth. People love lies, because lies are very

consoling. And people love lies because others are also believers in the same lies -- and you feel part of others, you feel a kind of belonging, you don't feel alone.

The man of truth feels alone. A Socrates, a Pythagoras, a Heraclitus find themselves alone, very alone. In this world if you say the truth and you live the truth, you will have to live alone. You will not find many people who would like to be with you. You will not find great company in the world. You will find few people who are lovers of truth. And you will always be in danger, because your truth will be a dangerous thing for those who live in lies. They will not tolerate you. You will become an unbearable phenomenon for them. They will be bent upon destroying you.

But still, even if life is sacrificed, truth is worth it. A moment of truth is more valuable than a hundred years of life, because a moment of truth makes you part of eternity, part of God.

SPEAK THE TRUTH, GIVE WHATEVER YOU CAN. It is not a question that you have to give money or you have to give this and that; whatever you can, whatever you have -- if you have a song, sing the song, share it. If you can dance, dance and share it. GIVE WHATEVER YOU CAN. And, NEVER BE ANGRY, because people may not accept your gift. Don't get angry about that. People may never thank you, they may not feel grateful to you. On the contrary, they may feel offended by you.

It has always been so; they were offended by Jesus, they were offended by Buddha. Why? -- because those people look so different from the ordinary, that people become aware of their own ordinariness and it hurts. They bring

great treasures to share -- but it hurts, because they have that great treasure and we don't have anything. People will not be thankful to you, in fact they will never be able to forgive you. They may crucify you, they may stone you to death.

Hence Buddha reminds you again: remember, don't expect anything, otherwise anger will be natural. If you expect even gratefulness from people and they don't show any gratefulness -- on the contrary, they show great ungratefulness -- you may feel angry. Beware, your joy is in giving. It is not for you to be worried about whether what you give is accepted or is not accepted; is accepted with gratefulness or is accepted indifferently.

You do good to people, they may do bad to you... still, don't be angry. Remember this is how things are, this is how people are. Remembering it will help you not to become enraged.

THE WISE HARM NO ONE... but the fools enjoy harming others. And who is wise? Not the one who knows much, but the one who understands much. The wise is not one who has all the scriptures at the tip of his tongue; the wise is one who has seen his own reality, and seeing it has become aware of the universe and its beauty and its intelligence. The wise is one who has seen the wisdom of existence; he is not knowledgeable, but he is absolutely innocent. How can he harm anyone? -- that is impossible, because he can't see others as different from himself. He sees the whole as one.

Beware of knowledgeable people, beware of the so-called experienced, they are not wise.

Two women were sitting in the doctor's waiting room, comparing notes on their various disorders.
"I want a baby more than anything in the world," said the first, "but I guess it's impossible."
"I used to feel just the same way," said the second, "but then everything changed. That's why I'm here; I'm going to have a baby in three months."
"You must tell me what you did!"
"I went to a faith healer."
"But I have tried that. My husband and I went to one for nearly a year and it didn't help a bit."
The other woman smiled and whispered, "Try going alone next time, dearie!"

The experienced people, the people who have lived life... they appear wise; they are not wise, they are only mature fools. And mature fools are more dangerous than the immature fools, because the mature fool has all the arguments to support his foolishness, all his experience is at his disposal.

The professor of criminal law was concluding his final lecture before the holidays. "Remember, gentlemen, if you have an affair with an underage girl, with or without her consent, it is rape! If you have an affair with a girl of age without her consent, that is rape; but if you have an affair with a girl of age with her consent, Merry Christmas!"

These people are wise in a way, wise in the ways of the world; they can give you good advice, but they are not wise in the sense Buddha uses the word. They are as foolish as

you are, just a little bit more experienced. And foolishness does not disappear with experience.

"I am looking for adventure, excitement, beautiful women," cried the young man to his father as he prepared to leave home. "Don't try to stop me! I'm on my way."
"Who is trying to stop you?" yelled the father, "take me along!"

THE WISE HARM NO ONE,
THEY ARE MASTERS OF THEIR BODIES
AND THEY GO TO THE BOUNDLESS COUNTRY,
THEY GO BEYOND SORROW.

As you become a witness, as you become aware, you simply come to know that you are not the body, not the mind, not even the heart. You are simply a watcher, different from all that surrounds you. The body is your outermost boundary; the mind a little more inner, the heart still more inner, but at the innermost core you are just a consciousness.
Knowing this you become detached from your own body, your mind, your heart; and that detachment brings mastery. Not that you become destructive to the body -- you take every care of it, it is a beautiful instrument, it is a great gift of God. But now you know that it is only the house you live in. Just as you take care of your house, you take care of your body; it is the temple.
Your consciousness is your reality; you become disidentified, and to be disidentified is to be the master.

THOSE WHO SEEK PERFECTION
KEEP WATCH BY DAY AND NIGHT
TILL ALL DESIRES VANISH.

Buddha expects only one thing from you: keep watch day and night till all desires vanish. Make your watchfulness so integrated, so powerful, so strong and so unwavering that it helps all the desires to evaporate, vanish. Desires are not to be dropped, but allowed to evaporate. LET GO OF ANGER, LET GO OF PRIDE. WHEN YOU ARE BOUND BY NOTHING, YOU GO BEYOND SORROW.

LISTEN, ATULA, THIS IS NOT NEW....

Atula is a disciple of Buddha. Buddha is saying to Atula: LISTEN, ATULA, THIS IS NOT NEW....

IT IS AN OLD SAYING.
THEY BLAME YOU FOR BEING SILENT,
THEY BLAME YOU WHEN YOU TALK TOO MUCH
AND WHEN YOU TALK TOO LITTLE.
WHATEVER YOU DO THEY BLAME YOU.

Why does Buddha suddenly address Atula? He was addressing all his sannyasins, and out of nowhere he suddenly addresses Atula. You may not be able to see the point immediately. Atula may be the one who was not listening, who was hearing, but not listening. And when you are in communion with a buddha, he knows perfectly well who is listening and who is only hearing. This happens here every day. When new people come, it is so clear that

they are only hearing, not listening. As you live here a little longer, slowly slowly you start listening.
Listening is a totally different phenomenon than hearing. Hearing is physiological. Because you have ears, so you can hear. Listening is a deep phenomenon. You listen only when you are in absolute silence. Those who have been here long enough are falling into that silence.
Atula must have been hearing only, must have been a new disciple; hence Buddha specifically mentions his name, LISTEN, ATULA.... And it is also possible that Atula was thinking that Buddha was saying something very new, very strange. In fact what buddhas say is, in a way, the eternal truth, as ancient as the Himalayas; and in another way it is as fresh as the flower that has blossomed just this morning, as fresh as the dewdrops and as old as the Himalayas.
And all the buddhas in the past have said the same thing; maybe in different languages, with different expressions, in different ways. "There is nothing new under the sun." It is a truth -- but only half. The other half is, "There is everything new under the sun." Because truth has the capacity to renew itself continuously, to be reborn again and again. So buddhas always speak the ancientmost truth, and yet they speak the most rebellious truth possible.
Buddha says: THIS IS NOT NEW, ATULA, IT IS AN OLD SAYING. People are such that they will always find reasons to blame you. They blame you for being silent -- if you are silent they will blame you: "Why are you silent?" If you are talking too much they will blame you: "Why do you talk so much?" If you talk too little, they will blame you: "Why do you talk so little?"

Whatever you do, they blame you, because by blaming you their egos feel satisfied. Nobody looks at his own faults and everybody is capable of seeing the faults of others; not only seeing them, but magnifying them as much as possible.

Mother called upstairs, "Caroline, please stop that shouting and screaming. Why can't you play quietly like Tommy, who is not making a sound?"
"He's not supposed to make a sound," said Caroline. "We're playing our family. He's Daddy, after getting home late for dinner, and I'm you."

It is very simple to see others' faults, because one wants to see the faults of others. If they are not there, then one invents them. Your ego can live only by feeling superior; so you make every possible use of others' faults to feel superior. Blaming others is nothing but a strategy of the ego to feel superior. Beware of it.
The world always finds a way to praise and a way to blame. It always has and it always will. Yes, sometimes it praises too, but it praises only when you are helping other people's ego -- then it praises you. For example, if you say to the Hindus that their religion is the greatest religion in the world, they will praise you.
How can they praise me? Impossible! Because I am simply saying the truth: that no religion is greater than any other religion; that all religions are in the same trap of the priests. You may call the priest the shankaracharya, you may call the priest the pope, it does not matter. All the religions are in the grip of politicians. Hindus and Christians and Mohammedans, they are all no longer religions, but just

politics -- power politics hiding behind the name of religion. No religion is greater than any other, superior to any other. In fact, a really religious person is neither Christian, nor Hindu, nor Mohammedan. He is simply religious.

Indians will praise you if you praise India: if you say that this is the greatest land in the world, the most spiritual land in the world -- then their egos are puffed up, they will praise you. They will blame you to puff up their egos, and they will praise you if you puff them up. The whole game is of the ego.

BUT WHO DARES BLAME THE MAN
WHOM THE WISE CONTINUALLY PRAISE,
WHOSE LIFE IS VIRTUOUS AND WISE,
WHO SHINES LIKE A COIN OF PURE GOLD?

Don't be worried about the praise and the blame of the ordinary masses, of the crowd. Yes, if you have to pay attention, then pay attention to the wise. If they say that something is wrong with you, listen carefully, because they are trying to help you. They have no egos to fulfill from your faults. They are just like mirrors; they reflect your face. If you have an ugly face, don't destroy the mirror; simply try to change your face.

And the wise ones praise too, but they praise not to puff up your ego. In fact they praise you only when they see that you are becoming a nobody; their praise showers like flowers on you. When you are becoming a nobody, when you are becoming a nothingness, you are coming closer and closer to the divinity hidden within you.

EVEN THE GODS PRAISE HIM,
EVEN BRAHMA PRAISES HIM.

A person who is praised by the wise, by the enlightened ones, is praised by the gods, is praised by the whole universe -- by the creator himself, by Brahma. Their praise is worth... even if a single buddha smiles at you, it is enough. The whole world may condemn you; don't be worried about it. If all the blind people of the world gather together and praise your beauty, will you be happy about it? They can't see, they have no eyes to see; you will not be very happy by being praised by the blind.

In India we have a saying that the best couple is when the husband is deaf and the wife is blind. The husband can go on doing whatsoever he wants -- fooling around -- and the wife can go on saying whatsoever she wants; the husband is deaf and the wife is blind. The saying says it happens only very rarely, with the blessings of God. It doesn't happen ordinarily. But what is the point of being praised by blind people? They can't see. And why be worried by their condemnation? They can't see your faults either.

But a buddha, an enlightened one, if he praises you, that means he has seen ego disappearing. If he finds fault with you, that simply shows he is trying to help you so you can drop the fault.

BE AWARE OF THE ANGER OF THE BODY,
MASTER THE BODY,
LET IT SERVE TRUTH.

Anger has three layers. The first layer is the anger of the body. BE AWARE OF THE ANGER OF THE BODY. You may not have watched it: that the body accumulates anger, that the body has its own ways of accumulating anger. When you feel angry you gnash your teeth, you clench your fists -- why?

In fact, in the East there have been devices to help you. Those are temporary helps, but of great value because they can make you aware of many things. When you feel angry, just gnash your teeth, clench your fists and you will be surprised: that as you gnash your teeth and clench your fists and just fight with the air -- a shadow boxing -- within five minutes the anger is gone. Something has happened, something has been released.

Now, Postural Integration, Rolfing, and methods like that are becoming very much aware that your repressed angers, sexuality, greed and all kinds of poisons accumulate in the body, in the muscles. By deep massage those poisons can be released. Rolfing is really a great contribution. Deep massage of the body can be of great help. It can make you aware that your body is carrying many things; and your body drives you into things which you may not have gone into if the body was not driving you there.

BE AWARE OF THE ANGER OF THE BODY, Buddha says, MASTER THE BODY, LET IT SERVE TRUTH. How to master the body? The first thing is to learn relaxation. Buddha taught his disciples how to relax. In the East, particularly, in the science of yoga, there is a special posture, SHAVASANA. This is the posture: lie down on the ground as if you are dead. Let the body slowly slowly die. Start from the feet. In fact, communicate with your

body; say to the feet, "Die, please die." And then go on upwards.

A psychoanalyst had told one of his patients, "All that you need is relaxation, so from tonight you start relaxing. Start from the feet; say to your toes, 'Toes relax, feet relax,' and go on upwards, talking to each limb and then finally, tell your mind to relax."
The man went home. He was very much thrilled by the idea; the whole day he waited for the night. The night came, he was lying on the bed. He had taken a good, hot shower as the psychiatrist had suggested, was feeling a little relaxed lying down on the bed.
He started: "Toes relax, feet relax, legs relax, thighs relax," and so on, and so forth.
He was just coming to the mind to say, "Mind relax," and his wife came out of the bathroom absolutely naked, ready to go to sleep. Suddenly the man shouted, "Wake up! Everybody wake up!"

This won't help. Hence Buddha does not say to relax, to go to sleep, because then you can wake up and you can call everybody else to wake up. He says, "Feel dead. Let the body die for the moment, as if you are just a corpse." You cannot do anything. An ant starts crawling on you; you can't do anything.
And it is really a great experience, to feel like a corpse, and the ant crawling on your face or a mosquito biting; but you can't do anything, you are simply a watcher. It is a rare experience to go through it. Slowly slowly, you become a

master by relaxing your body. The more tense your body is, the more it is a master of you.

BE AWARE OF THE ANGER OF THE MOUTH....

And when you have learned how to relax the anger of the body, the rage of the body, then start becoming aware of what you say. Sometimes, unconsciously, you say a word. You were not aware of the implications of the word. You may not have ever thought that it would create such trouble for you.

A young man arranged for his fiancee to meet his parents over cocktails at a swanky hotel. After his family left, the girl asked if she had made a good impression on them.
"Well, frankly, darling," he said, "my mother told me privately that she found you a little vulgar."
"But did you tell her that I went to one of the best finishing schools?" she asked.
"Yes, of course I did."
"And did you tell her of my interest in art and culture?"
"Certainly."
"And did you tell her how important my family is in the neighborhood?"
"Naturally, I did," he replied.
"Then what is this 'vulgar' crap all about?" the delicate young lady asked.

People go on saying things, not really aware of what they are saying. In fact, their minds are like gramophone records. They simply repeat.

Now science has discovered that holes can be made in your head and electrodes can be put in; certain points can be pushed and a very strange thing happens. For example, an electrode is pushed into your brain at a certain center and you start saying something for no reason at all. Nobody has asked it, there is no context for it, but you start saying it. Then the electrode is taken out and you stop saying it. Again the electrode is pushed in; you start the same thing again from the very beginning -- again the same sentences, the same words. It can be done a hundred times and each time you will do it again, as if the electrode is nothing but a needle on the gramophone record.
Your mind is a great recording mechanism. You have recorded all kinds of things and you go on saying them, thinking that YOU are saying; that is not true. Unless you are really watchful, YOU are not saying things. Your mind goes on repeating old patterns and you go on getting into old problems, again and again. BE AWARE OF THE ANGER OF THE MOUTH....

MASTER YOUR WORDS,
LET THEM SERVE TRUTH.
BE AWARE OF THE ANGER OF THE MIND....

And finally, slowly, first the body, then the word, then the mind.

MASTER YOUR THOUGHTS
LET THEM SERVE TRUTH.

THE WISE HAVE MASTERED BODY, WORD AND MIND,
THEY ARE THE TRUE MASTERS.

If you can watch the body, the mind and all their functionings, you will become so separate from them that you can master them.
You can master something only when you have a distance from it. If you are identified with it you cannot master it.
And Buddha says one who is master of his own self is the master of the whole existence; he has entered into a different plane of life. You are slaves, he is a master; you are machines, he is a real man; you function unconsciously, he functions consciously.
And to function consciously is to go beyond all sorrow, is to go beyond all misery, is to go beyond all anguish, is to go into the beyond. Other religions call that beyond "God"; Buddha calls it simply "the beyond." Prepare for the beyond.... Become masters of your own beings.
Enough for today.
The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 6
Chapter #10
Chapter title: Happiness: the death of the ego
30 October 1979 am in Buddha Hall

The first question:
Question 1
BELOVED MASTER,
WHY DOES MISERY FEEL SO SAFE AND HAPPINESS SO THREATENING?

Deva Surabhi, happiness is threatening and misery is safe; safe for the ego. Ego can exist only in misery and through misery. Ego is an island surrounded by hell; happiness is threatening to the ego, to the very existence of the ego. Happiness rises like a sun and the ego disappears, evaporates like a dewdrop on the grass leaf.

Happiness is the death of the ego. If you want to remain a separate entity from existence as almost everybody is trying to do, you will be afraid of being blissful, cheerful. You will feel guilty in being blissful. You will feel suicidal because you are committing a suicide on the psychological level -- the level of the ego.

It almost always happens that people enjoy a few moments and then afterwards they feel very guilty. The guilt arises because of the ego. The ego starts torturing them, "What are you doing? Have you decided to kill me? And I am your only treasure. Killing me? You will be destroyed. Killing me is destroying yourself."

We are so much identified with the ego that when the ego says such things, they have a great appeal, attraction, conviction in them. The reality is just the opposite -- we are not our egos. In fact because of the ego we are not growing, the ego is like a rock preventing your growth. Remove the rock and you will start growing, growing into a big tree -- with great fulfillment, flowering.

But in the beginning it will feel as if throwing the rock away is throwing all safety. The rock was preventing many things. It was preventing rain from coming to you and you were thinking it is safer. In fact the rain is nourishing. If it had reached you, you would have started growing. The

rock was preventing the sun and you were thinking it is a shelter: it prevents the heat of the sun from reaching to you. But that heat is needed, that heat is life.

What is destructive to you, you have been told by the society is not destructive; not only that it is not destructive but it is a shelter, a protection, a security. That idea has become deeply rooted in you. Hence, Surabhi, you feel misery is safe. Everybody feels like that. That's why everybody chooses to be miserable; it is your choice. Everybody chooses hell. It is your responsibility. If the whole earth is living in hell it is nobody else's responsibility. It is our decision -- a deliberate decision to live in hell because in hell the ego can remain.

The ego can remain when it is dark, dismal, no sun on the horizon. When the sun arises on the horizon, the sun of awareness, then the ego starts disappearing like the darkness. Of course if you feel identified with the darkness then the sunrise is threatening. But if you disidentify yourself with the ego then you will be able to welcome the sun, it is not threatening anymore. It is a thrill, adventure, it is new life, new birth, it is resurrection.

The ego is a grave. To come out of the ego you will need to come out of the grave. Don't think that the grave is safe. It appears safe because you have never ventured outside it. You have never been adventurous. You have not known the taste of danger, insecurity. Once you have tasted danger and insecurity you will never go back to the grave. It is better to live for a single moment but to live totally, than to lie down in a grave for a thousand years.

That is not life, it is avoiding life. Come out of your misery, Surabhi, come out of your ego, come out of your grave and

accept the threatening happiness. Accept the danger of going to the heights, because those who go to the heights can fall -- they are risking.
Risk all because life is only for those gamblers who can risk all. But by risking all you become the beloved of existence, of God. By risking all you become worthy, by risking all you become a soul. Without risk there is no soul in you, you are just hollow, nothing inside you. Without risking there is no significance, no poetry, no song, no dance, no ecstasy in your life. No celebration at all.
Celebrate, dance, let joy fill your heart, let it overflow. And if the ego dies, let it die. Help it to die because it is not you. You are something transcendental to body, mind, ego and all. You are part of God, part of eternity.
Don't be worried, you cannot die. Even if you want to die, you cannot die -- you are eternal. So, in fact there is no fear, no need to be afraid. Death is impossible, only the ego can die. So if you remain identified with the ego then the fear remains there. Once ego is dropped, death disappears and fear disappears, anxiety disappears, anguish disappears; and the energy that was involved in fear, anxiety, anguish is released.
That same energy becomes your dance, your celebration.

The second question:
Question 2
BELOVED MASTER,
WHAT DOES LOVE MEAN?

Prem Jyoti, love has different meanings for all. To writers, love is words. To artists, love is color. To a comic, love is

laughter. To a baby, it is mother. To bees, it's nectar. To flowers, it is sunshine. And to cows, it is a lot of bull.
It all depends on you what love is going to mean. Love is a ladder with many rungs. At the lowest it is physiology, biology, chemistry. It is nothing but a play of hormones. A man is attracted towards a woman, a woman is attracted towards a man. They think they are falling in love, but if hormones could laugh they must be laughing inside you -- you are befooled. What you are calling love is nothing but attraction between male and female hormones. It is pure chemistry; at the lowest point it is not more than that. It is animal, it is lust.
And millions of people know only love at its lowest. Because of these people there has arisen a great tradition of renouncing love. The people who think that lust is love have created great religions in which love has to be renounced. Both are wrong, because both have accepted the lowest rung as if it is the all. It is not so.
If you go a little higher, a man's love for music is not chemistry, it is not hormonal, it is not physiology; it is psychological. A man's love for flowers cannot be reduced to sexuality. A man's love for painting... there have been painters who have sacrificed their whole lives just to paint.

Vincent van Gogh, one of the greatest painters, sacrificed himself totally just to paint: painting was far more important than life itself. Because of the painting he could not work; he was continuously painting so there was no time to work. His brother used to give him just enough money to live by, because nobody was interested in his being a painter. And he was a strange painter too, a very

great genius. Whenever there is a genius it takes hundreds of years to recognize him. He was not a traditional painter. He was bringing to painting something new, a new vision. So nobody was able to appreciate his paintings, they were not selling. You will be surprised to know that not even a single painting was sold while Van Gogh was alive; now each of his paintings is worth millions of dollars. Only a few paintings have survived, two hundred at the most -- he painted thousands. All are lost, because nobody cared to preserve them.

He used to give his paintings to friends just free, because nobody was interested in his paintings; not only were they not interested, they were not even courageous enough to put his paintings in their sitting rooms because people would laugh at them. His approach towards life and nature was so new. His brother used to give him enough money weekly just to live on. He would eat for only three days in the week; four days he would save money to paint. Now how long can you live in this way?

By the time he was thirty-seven, only thirty-seven, he committed suicide. And the note that he has left is of tremendous significance. He has written that "I am committing suicide not against anybody -- I have no complaint against anybody or life -- life has been a great fulfillment to me. I am committing suicide because all that I wanted to paint I have painted; now there is no point in living. I have done what I had come to do; my work is finished."

He wanted to paint the sun in all its possible faces. For one year he was continuously painting the sun. He was continuously standing in the open under the sun. His

stomach was empty, he was hungry, and the hot sun... and he was continuously painting because there was not much time left. The sun drove him mad, it was too much. And then he committed suicide, because he had painted the sun from the sunrise to the sunset, all the faces, all the colors, all possible clouds. He had done his work. He died contentedly.

Now, this love for painting, this love for art, is something higher -- higher than biology, higher than chemistry, higher than physiology. It is not lust, you can't call it lust. It is as passionate as lust or more so, because very few people die for a woman and very few people die for a man. But this man died for his paintings. This is psychological; this is far better.

But there is still a higher state: the spiritual love, the love of a Buddha, the love of a Jesus, the love of a Krishna. It is totally different. It is not even aesthetic, psychological; it is spiritual. Now love has the expression of compassion -- passion has turned into compassion. Buddha loves the whole of existence, because he has too much and he has to share it. He is burdened by the love released in him; the love has to be shared with the trees, with the birds, with people, with animals, with whosoever comes by.

At the lowest when love is just lust, physiological, it is an exploitation of the other, it is using the other as a means. Soon it is finished. Once you have exploited the woman or the man you lose interest; the interest was only for the moment. The moment the woman is well-known to you you are finished with her. You have used the other human being as a means -- which is ugly, which is immoral. To use

another human being as a means is the most immoral act in existence, because each human being is an end unto himself.

Psychological love knows how to sacrifice. The art, the poetry, the painting, the music, the dance, becomes the end, they are no more means. YOU become a means. The biological love reduces the other to a means; the psychological love raises the other as the end.

But in the spiritual world there is no question of means and ends, there is no question of the other; there are not two. Buddha loves the existence because Buddha has become the existence itself. There is no question of 'I' and 'thou'; it is not a dialogue. At the point of the ultimate consciousness love is not a dialogue; there is no I/thou relationship, it is not a relationship. It is pure overflowing of love.

Prem Jyoti, that is the meaning of your name: PREM means love, JYOTI means flame. A buddha is a flame of love, just pure flame with no smoke. The smoke comes from lust. When there is no lust, when you don't want to get anything out of your love, when you simply want to give, when you feel obliged because others accept your love, the flame is without smoke. It is pure, it is pure gold.

And do you know? -- love rises always upwards, just like the flame always rises upwards. The flame never goes downwards. Lust is like water, it goes downwards; love is like a flame, fire, it always goes upwards. And between the two is the psychological phenomenon: something of lust in it, passion, and something of compassion in it. It is just in the middle. It has some quality of the lower and some quality of the higher to it.

Hence when the poet is in his poetic mood he is almost like the mystic, but it is only a question of mood. When he is not in his poetic mood he is just as ordinary or maybe more ordinary than the so-called ordinary people. You may have observed it: when a musician drowns himself in his music he rises to such peaks, such ephemeral peaks, that you can feel the presence of great mystery. And the same musician you can see sitting in some hotel drinking tea, talking all kinds of nonsense. He looks too ordinary; you cannot believe that this man was creating such beautiful music, such celestial music!

If you read the poetry, the poet seems to be like a seer, a Kahlil Gibran. If you read THE PROPHET it is almost like a prophet, but if you meet Kahlil Gibran and see him in his ordinary moods you will be surprised: he is a very angry person, jealous, quarrelsome. He goes into very childish tantrums, throws things, is very possessive. If you meet Kahlil Gibran you will be surprised... how could this man write a book like THE PROPHET? -- because the book rises to the same heights as the Bible, as the Koran.

But the man is not abiding on those heights; only once in a while clouds are not there and the poet can see the sun, the ocean, can see the open sky and can give you a glimpse of it in his poetry, in his music. But soon the clouds are there again and the sun is no longer available... and the poet is as ordinary as you are or even more ordinary, because when you fall from a glimpse you fall into depths, just to keep balance.

So you can find a poet drunk, lying down in the gutter like a dog, shouting nonsense, and the same poet brings such beautiful flowers from the unknown. So in the middle both

things will be together; it is a mixed phenomenon. Rise from the lower, but don't stop in the middle. Go on rising to the highest.
When I talk about love I always mean the highest, with one difference: when others speak of the highest they deny the lowest; I don't deny it, I accept it. I want to use it as a stepping-stone. The lower has to be purified by the higher. The lower has to be transformed by the higher, not denied, not rejected. If you reject it, it persists. If you reject it, if you repress it, it takes revenge. It makes you more ugly than you ever were before.

A woman with a baby, next in line in the crowded anteroom of a station of the Infant Welfare Society, was shown into the doctor's office by the nurse in charge.
The doctor examined the baby, and then asked the woman, "Is he breast-fed or bottle-fed?"
"Breast-fed," she replied.
"Strip down to you waist," he ordered. She did, and he examined her. He pressed each breast, increasing and decreasing pressure. He squeezed and pulled on each nipple. Suddenly he remarked, "No wonder this child is suffering from malnutrition -- you don't have any milk."
"Naturally," she replied. "I am his aunt. But I'm glad I came."

If you go on repressing things, then on the surface you may look like a saint, but only on the surface. It is better to be a sinner on the surface and a saint in the center than vice versa.

The old maid was walking down a dimly lit street when a holdup man jumped out of the bushes. "Give me your money!" he demanded.
"I don't have any," she managed to reply.
He proceeded to search her thoroughly. Every possible place of concealment was explored.
"I guess you were telling me the truth," he finally muttered angrily. "You don't have any money on you."
"For heaven's sake," she wailed, "don't stop now! I'll write you a check!"

I am not in favor of repressing the lower. The lower has to be raised to the heights, the lower has to be given wings. With insight, with understanding, it is possible. If you deny the lower you will never be able to reach the higher, because the lower rung is a necessary step. Yes, go beyond it, but you can go beyond it only if you don't reject it. Use it, but remember not to become obsessed with it. These two things have to be remembered: one is, not to be obsessed with it, not to stop at it, and the second is, not to reject and deny it but to use it as a stepping-stone.
Be skillful. Buddha's word is UPAYA -- skill. And when he says "upaya," he means be very artful in transforming your life. It is only a potential, a seed, but it can become a great tree and it can blossom in its own time. And when a tree blossoms, when thousands of flowers have arisen on the tree branches, there is great joy in the being of the tree, great ecstasy.
You are also a seed -- become a tree. The seed may be ugly -- seeds almost always are; the roots may be ugly, but remember, it is on the roots that the tree has to grow. The

roots have to be used; without roots there will be no flowering.
Without physiological attraction there will be no psychological growth. And without psychological love affairs with art, music, sculpture, there is no possibility of spiritual love. Poets and painters and dancers and musicians are a necessary step towards becoming a buddha.

The third question:
Question 3
BELOVED MASTER,
WHAT IS tathata -- TOTAL ACCEPTANCE?

Dharmesh, tathata is one of Buddha's most significant contributions to the world. Tathata means total acceptance: whatsoever the situation is, don't fight with it. Accept it wholeheartedly, because it is through total acceptance that transcendence happens. If you fight with it you will be unnecessarily wasting your energy. Accepting it you preserve your energy. Accepting it you become capable of understanding it, because only one who accepts can understand; one who rejects cannot understand.
Anything that you reject, anything that you become inimical to, you become incapable of understanding -- because we avoid that which is rejected. We are really afraid of it so we keep it at the back and we escape from it; we find ways and means to escape from it. And if you try to escape from something, how are you going to understand it? And without understanding there is no liberation, no transformation.

Buddha says "tathata" -- accept it totally. Whatsoever is the case, accept without denying, without condemning, and in that acceptance many things happen, many doors open. The first is: your energy is preserved, which is a great blessing. In fighting you dissipate energy, your energy leaks, you remain always energyless. And to go to the heights you will need great energy, you will need vitality. If you want to reach to the sun, the journey is long and arduous. You cannot go to the sun, you cannot fly that far away, without energy in you.

The man who is fighting his sex, anger, greed, jealousy, possessiveness -- and there are a thousand and one things to fight -- remains entangled in his fight; he cannot go anywhere. He is constantly disturbed and distracted by these things. He fights with one, represses one, something else raises its head -- because he is one and the enemies are many. You fight anger, you will become greedy. The whole energy you repress from anger turns into greed. You fight greed, you will become very sexual. You fight sex, you will become very angry. You repress one thing, and the same thing with a new face, with a new mask, arrives from the back door. You will go insane.

That's how the whole of humanity has gone insane. The insanity is so pervasive, that's why we don't think that people are insane. Everybody is insane! It is very rare that there is a sane person. To be sane in this insane society is really a great work of understanding, courage, rebellion.

If you drop all the conditionings that the society has imposed on you, only then will you be able to remain sane. Otherwise society turns everybody into an insane person. The society turns everybody according to its own mode,

mold, pattern, structure. It gives you ideas, ideologies, religions. It poisons you from the very beginning; when you are in your mother's womb the poisoning starts.
Now they are finding scientific ways of conditioning the child which is in the mother's womb. Yes, certain things can be done to condition the child. For example, they have tried using a certain type of tight belt on the mother's belly; that belt is made in such a way that it keeps the child in a tight situation. And they have discovered that these children are very obedient; when they are born they are more obedient than other children, because for nine months they have lived almost in a tight corner, in a prison.
In Soviet Russia they are trying the belt on many women. Now, the poor child who is not even born yet is already being conditioned, prepared for a certain society. He will be obedient. Certain music can reach to the womb. A soothing kind of music which lulls the child is helpful to create a slave. And so many drugs are available which can drug the child even before he is born -- he is born drugged. He will live his whole life in a kind of unconsciousness; but that's how the society wants him to live. Conscious people have proved dangerous; a Jesus, a Buddha, a Zarathustra, these people have proved dangerous.
The story is that the first thing that Zarathustra did when he was born was, he laughed loudly. Can you think of a more rebellious child? Children are not supposed to laugh when they are born; they are supposed to cry, but not supposed to laugh. He must have shocked his parents and the neighborhood and the people who had heard his laughter. Why did he laugh? And such a person is not reliable, not reliable at all -- this is a dangerous man! He has done his

first act of rebellion. He has already said that "I am not going to be a part of the crowd -- enough is enough. Many children have cried, I don't follow them. I will start my life with laughter."

Whether it really happened or not is not the question. In fact it is difficult to laugh immediately after you are born, but the story is significant because it says something about Zarathustra's whole philosophy of life: it is that of great rebellion.

Zarathustra is one of the greatest teachers of the world -- he has accepted life in its totality. He is not a renunciate, he is against renunciation. That's why the few Zarathustra followers that have survived had to escape their original motherland, Persia. They had to leave, because Mohammedans were coercing them, converting them; they converted Persia into a Mohammedan country. Persia is now known as Iran.

A few people escaped who were not ready to accept this coercive violence. They came to India; they live in Bombay and around Bombay -- the Parsis. They are the only followers of Zarathustra; they are very life-affirmative people. Hence many Parsis have become interested in me; to them I have a great appeal because I also affirm life. I am not in favor of escaping.

It is because of Zarathustra's total affirmation of life that Friedrich Nietzsche loved him tremendously and wrote his great book, THUS SPAKE ZARATHUSTRA. He wrote the book to appreciate life and the love for life. He could not find any other master so life-affirmative as Zarathustra; a man who begins his life with laughter, whose whole life

is a laughter. There is no pessimism, not even a strain of pessimism in him.
That's exactly the meaning of tathata -- accept the whole of life as it is. In your acceptance you will be preserving your energy, and you have inexhaustible sources of energy if you accept.
Secondly: when you accept everything, your life becomes cheerful. Nobody can make you miserable, nothing can make you miserable.

A man with three hairs on his otherwise bald head came into a hair saloon and asked to get his hair shampooed and braided. The hairdresser got on with his job but just as he was about to finish combing it, one of the hairs fell out. The hairdresser was very embarrassed but the man only said, "Well, what to do? I guess I will have to part my hair in the middle!"
The hairdresser very carefully put one hair to the right side and was about to put the other to the left side when that one fell out too. The hairdresser could not apologize enough but the man took it really cool.
"Well," he said, "I guess now I will have to run around with my hair all ruffled up."

This is tathata, this is total acceptance! You cannot disturb such a man. He is always contented, he always finds a way to be contented. It is a great art. And a man who is always contented and always finds a way to remain contented has the capacity to see things transparently.
Discontent clouds your eyes and your vision; contentment makes your eyes unclouded and your vision clear. You can

see through and through, you can understand things as they are.
Tathata is also translated as suchness; that too is one of its meanings. You see things as they are in their suchness; you don't impose any idea of your own on them.
And that is a miracle, a magic key. If you can see anger as it is, without any judgment, you will be surprised: seeing anger without judgment, without condemnation, without saying it is bad or good, should be or should not be, without bringing any "shoulds" in... if you can see your anger as it is, with no prejudice for or against, a miracle happens: anger disappears and its energy becomes absorbed in you. Just by pure insight you transform anger, greed, jealousy. And all that goes on dragging you hither and thither, keeps you running, never allows you rest and relaxation, is absorbed; more energy becomes available to you.
And slowly slowly, when there is no anger -- not that you have rejected it but you have absorbed it, digested it -- no greed, no jealousy, no possessiveness, no sexuality... you have digested all these phenomena in you. You are becoming greater and greater and you have energies available to rise higher; you have fuel enough to keep your fire burning bright and without smoke.
Dharmesh, tathata is a method of transforming your energies into your friends. Ordinarily you are taught such stupid ways that your own energies become your enemies and you are constantly fighting with yourself. Now there can be no greater stupidity than this; this is the most stupid act in the world that people go on doing -- fighting with themselves. You cannot win, you cannot defeat. You will remain quarreling with yourself, you will destroy yourself

in quarreling your whole life. You will die, and you will never know what life was. You will never know the glories of life, the grandeur of life and the tremendous gift that life was, and could have been if you had lived with right mindfulness, with tathata, with acceptance.

The fourth question:
Question 4
BELOVED MASTER,
I WANT TO THROW THIS UGLY MIND OUT OF MY SYSTEM. HOW TO DO IT?

Narayano, nothing has to be thrown out of your system; everything has to be transformed and absorbed. The mind is not ugly; your USE of the mind is ugly. Change your use. Mind is not ugly -- you are unconscious. The chariot is beautiful, it is a golden chariot, but the charioteer is drunk and fast asleep; and he calls the chariot names, condemns the chariot. When he finds himself in a ditch he beats the horses, he condemns the chariot, he condemns the chariot-maker, and he never thinks that it is not the fault of the chariot, not the fault of the horses, not the fault of the chariot-maker. It is his fault -- he was drunk, he was fast asleep. If the chariot has fallen into a ditch it is natural, the whole responsibility is yours.
It is not a question of destroying the mind or throwing the mind out. Mind is a beautiful mechanism, the most beautiful mechanism in existence, but you have become a servant to the mind. You are the master and the master is functioning as a servant; the mind is a servant and you have made the servant the master.

I have heard an ancient story:
A king was very happy with one of his servants. He was so devoted, so totally devoted to the king; he was always ready to sacrifice his life for the king. The king was immensely happy, and many times he has saved the king, risking his own life. He was the king's bodyguard.
One day the king was feeling so happy with the man, he said, "If you desire anything, if you have any desire, just tell me and I will fulfill it. You have done so much for me that I can never show my gratitude, I can never repay you, but today I would like to fulfill any of your wishes whatsoever it is."
The servant said, "You have already given me too much. I am so blessed just by being always with you -- I don't need anything."
But the king insisted. The more the servant said, "There is no need," the more the king insisted. Finally the servant said, "Then it's okay. You make me the king for twenty-four hours and you be the guard."
The king was a little apprehensive, afraid, but he was a man of his word and he had to fulfill the desire. So for twenty-four hours he became the guard and the guard became the king. And do you know what the guard did? The first thing that he did, he ordered the king to be killed, sentenced to death!
The king said, "What are you doing?"
He said, "You keep quiet! You are simply the guard and nothing more. It is my wish and now I am the king!"
The king was killed, and the servant became the king forever.

Servants have their own devious ways to become masters. The mind is one of the most beautiful, the most complex, the most evolved mechanisms. It has served you well, it serves you well. Because of its services you have repeated the same story in your life, everybody has repeated the same story: you have made the mind the master and now the master treats you just like a servant.
This is the problem, not that the mind has to be thrown out. If you throw the mind out you will go insane. Without the mind there is only one profession you can be in: that is politics!

I have heard:
One politician was going through a brain operation. His brain was taken out, they were fixing his brain and he was lying on the stretcher waiting.
Suddenly a man came in and said, "What are you doing here? You have been chosen the prime minister of the country!"
So he got up. The surgeon said, "Where are you going? -- your brain is here!"
He said, "What am I going to do with the brain now? I am already the prime minister, I don't need it. You can keep it. When I need it I will come back."

Once you are a prime minister you don't need the mind.

I have heard another story too:
A man -- it must be some future story -- a man went to the hospital because his brain was damaged in a car accident

and he wanted a new brain. So he asked the surgeon to show him all kinds of brains available. The surgeon took him around; there were many brains.
The first brain belonged to a professor, a mathematician. He asked the price -- fifty dollars. He was surprised: a famous mathematician, a Nobel laureate, just fifty dollars' worth! Then there was a musician and his was only thirty dollars. Then there was a businessman's brain and it was only twenty dollars. And so on, so forth.
Finally they came to the brain of a politician -- it was five thousand dollars! The man was puzzled. He said, "Why does it costs so much?"
The surgeon says, "Because it has never been used. All the other brains are secondhand, this is brand-new."

Narayano, if you throw the brain out, then you will have to go into politics, that's all. Then you cannot be a sannyasin: a sannyasin needs more intelligence than anybody else. So please don't ask me how to do it. And don't do it on your own -- because sometimes people do, and then fixing it is very difficult.

William had a big problem with his wife, Lisa. Every night before she went to bed she would stop at the door, start running and then with a big jump leap into the bed. He got so upset about this habit of hers that he decided to do something about it. So one night when she was asleep he got up, went to the fridge, got a big piece of beef liver out of it and placed it on the floor in front of the bed.

The next morning he got up and said, "My God, Lisa, look what has happened -- your uterus has fallen out! I always told you to stop your jumping." Lisa was very shocked. When he came home that evening from work he said, "Now, Lisa, you see what can happen with a bad habit like this."
She replied, "Oh, that was not so bad. You should have seen how much trouble it was to get it in again."

So Narayano, please don't do it! It is easy to throw it out, it is very difficult to get it back in. You will need all the mind that you have. Just be the master of it. Use it, and don't be used by it.
And that's what meditation is all about: the art of moving away from the mind, being above the mind, becoming transcendental to the mind, knowing that "I am not the mind." That does not mean that you have to throw out the mind. Knowing that "I am not the mind" makes you again the master. You can use the mind. Right now, mind is not within your hands. You are not a good charioteer.
Just the other day, in his sutra, Buddha was talking about a good charioteer. And he says: Others only hold the reins in their hands and the chariot goes on moving wherever it wants to, the horses go on moving wherever they want to. You are simply holding the reins, but you are not really in control.
Be a good charioteer. And the first step is to know that you are not the mind. If you are the mind then you cannot be the master, because there is no separation between the mind and you, no distance. Create a little distance. Watch the mind, its functioning, and create the distance. Watching

automatically creates the distance. Hence Buddha's insistence again and again: watch, watch day and night. Slowly slowly, you will see that you are consciousness and mind is just an instrument available to you. Then you can use it when needed and when not needed you can put it off. Right now, you don't know how to put it off; it is always on.

It is like a radio in your room which is always on and you don't know how to turn it off, so you have to sleep with the radio on and it goes on shouting all kinds of advertisements and all kinds of songs that you have heard a thousand times, but you don't know how to turn it off. The whole day you are tired, many times you want to get rid of the radio, but you cannot because you don't know how to turn it off. It is like sleeping with the lights on because you don't know how to turn them off.

Freud remembers that when electricity came to Vienna for the first time, a friend, a villager, came to visit him. Freud took every care of the visitor, took him to the room where he was going to sleep, left him there, said good night.

The villager was very much puzzled by only one thing -- the electricity, the electric bulb. He knew how to put a lamp off, how to blow a candle out, but what to do with this electric bulb?

He tried all that he knew: standing on a chair he blew it many times, but nothing would happen to it. He watched it from everywhere; there was no hole, there was nothing. And how could he imagine that just on the wall there is a switch? That was impossible for him to imagine, he had never seen electricity. But he was also afraid to go and ask

Freud or somebody else because they would think that he is a fool.... "You can't even put the light off -- what kind of man are you?"
So, feeling embarrassed, he tried to sleep with the light on. He could not sleep. Many times he stood up again on the chair, tried again. The whole night it continued; sleep wouldn't come because of the light -- too much light, too bright light, he had never seen such bright light. One candle he has known, and the bulb must have been of a hundred candles or more. In the morning he was dead tired.
Freud asked him, "You look very tired. Couldn't you sleep?"
He said, "Now there is no point in hiding, because I am going to stay three days -- this bulb is going to kill me! Even to look at it a shiver goes up my spine. How to turn it off?"
Freud said, "You fool! Why didn't you ask me?"
He said, "I was just feeling embarrassed -- so foolish to ask such a simple thing!"
Freud took him to the wall, showed him the switch. He tried it, put it on and off, and laughed. And he said, "Such a simple thing, and the whole night I tried and could not find it!"
He may have tried his whole life and may not have connected the switch with the light.

This is how it is happening to you; your mind is continuously on. They say that the mind is such a magnificent mechanism that it starts working the moment you are born and it goes on working till you stand before an audience -- then suddenly it stops, then something happens

to it. Otherwise it continues till you die. And very few people need to stand before an audience, so the mind continues unhindered, and it keeps you utterly tired, exhausted, weary, bored. And it goes on saying the same things again and again. Why are people so much bored? Life is not boring, remember. Life is always a tremendous mystery, it is always a surprise, it is always new, it is constantly renewing itself. New leaves are coming, old leaves are falling; new flowers are appearing, old flowers disappearing. But you cannot see life because you are constantly bored by your own mind. It goes on saying things which it has said thousands of times. You look so tired, for the simple reason that you don't know how to turn it off.

The mind has not to be thrown out, Narayano. The mind has to be put in its place: it is a beautiful servant but a very ugly master. You take the reins in your hands, you be the master. And the first act, the first step is: become detached from the mind. See that it is not you, create the distance; the greater the distance, the more is the capacity of turning it off.

And one more miracle you will be coming across: when you turn the mind off, the mind too remains fresh and more intelligent; because it is also tiring. Just think: from the day you are born it starts and goes on working till you die. And one never knows, it may be even working when you are in the grave, because a few things continue to happen then. Nails go on growing even when you are in the grave, hairs go on growing, so some kind of mechanism still continues. Even in a dead body nails and hairs go on growing, something is still working, maybe some local mechanism,

not the mind itself, but the body also has small, local minds to support the big mind, agents of the big mind. Maybe they have not known yet that the big guy is dead and they go on doing the old thing continuously. They know nothing else so they continue repeating their old job. Hairs go on growing, nails go on growing -- just small, local minds, mini-minds.

The mind has to be put into its right place, and when you need it you use it; just as you use your legs when you need them. When you don't need to you don't use your legs. If sitting on a chair you go on moving your legs up and down, then people will think you are mad. And that's exactly what is happening in the mind and still you think you are not mad.

A meditative awareness comes to know the key. Whenever it wants to put the mind off it simply says, "Now shut up!" and that's it. And the mind simply keeps quiet and great silence prevails inside. And the mind can also rest in those moments, otherwise everything becomes tired.

I have heard:

A man brings his computer to the mechanic and says, "What is the matter with the computer? It is not working well lately."

The expert looks inside the computer and says, "Metal fatigue." Just as you go to the psychiatrist and he says, "Mental fatigue," he says, "metal fatigue -- a metal case!"

Everything tires, everything gets tired -- even metals get tired. And your mind is made of very delicate tissues, so delicate that there is nothing more delicate in the whole

existence. In your small skull millions of small fibers are functioning; so thin are they that your hairs, if compared with the nerves that function in your brain, are very thick, one million times more thick. Such a delicate phenomenon, but we don't know how to use it. It needs rest.

Hence a meditative person becomes more intelligent, he becomes saner. Whatsoever he does there is an art in it. Whatsoever he touches he transforms into gold. Mind is a blessing with meditation, otherwise it is a curse.

Add meditation to your being and the curse disappears, and the curse itself becomes the blessing; it is a blessing in disguise. You have not yet learned the art of how to use it and how to be a master. It is not a question of throwing the mind out; that will not help. That will make you even more hollow, more useless. If the brain, if the mind is thrown out, you will be just a cabbage -- or if you don't like the word 'cabbage', then cauliflower. And they say that there is not much difference between cabbage and cauliflower -- cauliflower is cabbage with a college education. You can choose, you can be a cabbage or a cauliflower, but you will not be a man. Very few men are men in reality. A man is one who is a master of his mind.

The English word 'man' comes from a Sanskrit root which means mind; MAN. To be master of your mind is the meaning of being man. If you are not master of your mind, there is no man inside you, only a computer functioning, a machine functioning, without any master. This is the situation. That's why the world looks so berserk, so insane.

The fifth question:

Question 5

BELOVED MASTER,
WHY ARE THERE SO MANY JEWS HERE?

Harish, Jews are very intelligent people, one of the most intelligent peoples on the earth. They had to be intelligent; otherwise they would not have survived. And because they are intelligent they are always searching for new pastures, new worlds, new life-styles, new ways of seeing, living and being. It surprises everybody.

There are almost fifty percent Jews here. This may be the only place in India where there are so many Jews, because in India there are not any Jews, none at all. And if things go on growing as they are growing, soon you will find another Israel here! And why are Jews coming? -- because they are intelligent, they are always ready to accept anything new and they are ready to drop the old.

In fact, seeing the intelligence of the Jews it seems almost unbelievable that they killed Jesus. The more I have come in contact with the Jews -- and I have thousands of Jews as my sannyasins -- the more I have become puzzled about the phenomenon. Why could they not accept Jesus? Maybe it was not really the Jews who killed him but the Roman emperor, Roman imperialism. Romans have always been cruel and they have not proved themselves very intelligent either. It may have been just that Jews were used as an excuse and the Romans wanted to kill Jesus.

And the Jews were not independent people in those days, they were part of the Roman Empire. It is possible that the Romans used the Jewish priests as a facade, because they would not have liked to kill Jesus directly -- that may have created a revolution in the country, a rebellion. It is a

simple diplomacy to use Jews themselves to kill Jesus; then there will be no rebellion, no revolution, no problems arising.

In fact, they pretended on the surface that they were not interested in killing Jesus, and from the back door they may have insisted. To the public they showed that "We are absolutely out of the game. If Jews want to kill him, they can kill him; if they don't want to kill him we are ready to forgive him." And from the back they may have been goading the Jews to kill Jesus. That's more possible, because Jews are not such unintelligent people that they would destroy their own greatest flowering.

Jesus was their greatest flowering. He was the climax of the Judaic approach to life. Jesus was born a Jew and died a Jew -- he was not a Christian, remember; he has not even heard the word 'christian'. And if he comes back he will find himself more in tune with the Jews than with the Christians, because he lived the life of a Jew. He was well acquainted with Jewish scriptures, he quoted Jewish scriptures. He said again and again that "Whatsoever has been said before by other prophets I am saying to you" -- giving it a more contemporary expression, of course, but he was not against Moses, Abraham, Ezekiel. He was not against the old prophets; he was fulfilling their prophecies, he was the very fulfillment.

Why should Jews kill him? There is every possibility that the Romans did it. They were afraid of his growing power. The political powers always become afraid of anybody who starts becoming powerful in any way. Although Jesus was not interested in politics, not interested in political power, his language could be misinterpreted very easily. He was

talking about the kingdom of God, but the Romans started thinking that he is talking of bringing the kingdom of Jews; he wants to become the emperor himself. They must have been apprehensive of his growing popularity.

Many many people were turning to him, coming to him, listening to him, becoming disciples, becoming initiates. Of course it was a religion now, but any moment religion can take the turn and become politics. Hence the politicians always become very alert and cautious.

They are doing the same to me. I am not interested in politics, I am not interested in that stupid game at all, but they are very much afraid. And the best way to kill me will be to find a sannyasin, a Judas, to kill me; that will be the best way. Then there will be no problem.

If a sannyasin kills me, then the whole responsibility falls on my own shoulders or on the shoulders of my sannyasins. The sannyasin may not be a true sannyasin, he may be just a detective, a spy, a government man, who has taken sannyas just to kill me. That will be the easiest and the most diplomatic way.

And there are many spies here: German spies and Italian spies and Indian spies. One Indian spy took sannyas. I gave him sannyas -- not only that I gave him sannyas, but I told him, "You become part of the ashram. Why live outside?" He was a little puzzled! Not only that, I told him that "Because you are an L.L.B., a practicing advocate... and we need a department, a law department; there are at least twenty-five cases against me in the courts, so we need our own legal department. You be in charge of it!" I had made him the head. He escaped after one month, because he became more and more interested in me, became more and

more interested in meditation, and I gave him access to all the files and everything, because he was the head of the law department. I gave him every access, so if he wants to report anything to the government he can -- there is nothing to hide! My trust in him became such a heavy burden on the poor man. If I had suspected him he would have remained here; but because I trusted him so deeply, he escaped. He said that he would be coming back, but he has not come. Almost eight months have passed.

He became so afraid of me that he sold his house where he used to live, because I am sending my sannyasins to his house in Patiala, in Punjab, to find out what happened to him -- we need him! He has sold his house and escaped from Patiala too, and he has not given his address to anybody in Patiala. But I am in search! I am going to find him, wherever he is. Now I have told my sannyasins in Delhi to search for him. We need him! I never allow people to escape so easily.

Jews are intelligent people; hence they are always the first to accept new ideas, original ideas, new visions, new dreams.

A Jew and a Catholic were sharing the same compartment on a train. The Jew took an apple out of his suitcase and ate it, core and all. The Catholic looked a little surprised and asked, "Do you always eat the core as well?"

"Of course," explained the Jew. "That's why we are so intelligent -- we get that way by eating the core. And you happen to be a lucky fellow, because I have just one apple left which I will sell to you for fifty dollars."

The Catholic accepted the offer, thinking to himself that fifty dollars for intelligence was a good deal. He bought the apple and ate it, core and all.
After sitting silently gazing out of the window for a while he said, "Now that I think of it, for fifty dollars I could have bought a whole crate of apples."
"See," said the Jew, "it has started working already!"

The Jews have survived out of sheer intelligence. They have lived without a country, without a homeland. They have lived through all kinds of tortures, all kinds of concentration camps, gas chambers; still they have survived. The people who were bent upon destroying them are no more. Where are the Nazis? -- gone down the drain. The people who wanted to destroy Jews absolutely, to annihilate them, are no longer anywhere, but Jews are there.
In fact, all those tortures, gas chambers, concentration camps, imprisonments, all those things have given them an integrity, a solidity. A tremendous intelligence is released in them; it is always released when you have to face great challenges. In fact, no other race has been facing such great challenges as the Jews.
Naturally they are always the first to accept anything that is new, they are always the first to drop the old. That is the sign of intelligence.

Two Jews meet on the street.
"How are you, Solomon?" says Irving.
"Terrible!" says Irving. "Ah, what a catastrophe! My son is converting to Christianity!"

"Funny thing," says Irving. "My son too is converting to Christianity! Let us go to the synagogue and pray."
Irving and Solomon run into their friend Myron who asks where they are going. When they tell Myron that their sons are converting to Christianity, Myron says, "Funny thing, my son is converting to Christianity too. I will go with you to the synagogue and pray."
Well, Myron and Irv and Sol meet their friend Herman, tell him their story and Herman says, "Funny thing, my son is also converting to Christianity! Let us go and pray."
This goes on for a while until a large group of Jews reach the synagogue. There they see the rabbi sitting on the front steps with his head in his hands. When the rabbi hears their story he replies. "Funny thing, my son is converting to Christianity. Let us all pray."
The group goes into the synagogue, lift their eyes to heaven and the rabbi says, "Oh God, please help us. All our sons are converting to Christianity!"
Suddenly they hear thunder, lightning flashes across the sky, and a deep voice intones, "Funny thing...."

The last question:
Question 6
BELOVED MASTER,
YOU REALLY GET US!! WE ARE ALL RUNNING AROUND LIKE HEADS WITHOUT CHICKENS!!! IS IT LOVE -- OR IS IT MEDITATION? AH DEAR! SQUACK SQUACK! BELOVED MASTER, WHAT IS A PATH?

Prem Maitri, you are really becoming a sannyasin now -- going cuckoo! That's what sannyas is all about.

In the Osho Meditation Center in Zurich, Switzerland, there was a clock-making contest. Many beautiful clocks were made.
The third prize was won with a clock which had a cuckoo coming out every hour saying, "Osho, Osho."
The second prize was won with a clock which had a cuckoo all dressed in orange with a mala around his neck coming out every half hour saying, "Osho, Osho."
The first prize was given for a clock which had Osho coming out every fifteen minutes saying, "Cuckoo, cuckoo."

Enough for today.

The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 7

Talks given from 11/12/79 am to 20/12/79 am
English Discourse series
10 Chapters
Year published: 1990
The original tape and book title was "The Book of the Books, Vols 1 - 6". Later reissued as twelve volumes under the present title.

The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 7
Chapter #1
Chapter title: Man: only a possibility

11 December 1979 am in Buddha Hall

YOU ARE AS THE YELLOW LEAF.
THE MESSENGERS OF DEATH ARE AT HAND.
YOU ARE TO TRAVEL FAR AWAY.
WHAT WILL YOU TAKE WITH YOU?

YOU ARE THE LAMP
TO LIGHTEN THE WAY.
THEN HURRY, HURRY.

WHEN YOUR LIGHT SHINES
WITHOUT IMPURITY OR DESIRE
YOU WILL COME INTO THE BOUNDLESS
COUNTRY.

YOUR LIFE IS FALLING AWAY.
DEATH IS AT HAND.
WHERE WILL YOU REST ON THE WAY?
WHAT HAVE YOU TAKEN WITH YOU?

YOU ARE THE LAMP
TO LIGHTEN THE WAY.
THEN HURRY, HURRY.

WHEN YOUR LIGHT SHINES PURELY
YOU WILL NOT BE BORN
AND YOU WILL NOT DIE.

AS A SILVERSMITH SIFTS DUST FROM SILVER,
REMOVE YOUR OWN IMPURITIES
LITTLE BY LITTLE.

OR AS IRON IS CORRODED BY RUST
YOUR OWN MISCHIEF WILL CONSUME YOU.

NEGLECTED, THE SACRED VERSES RUST.
FOR BEAUTY RUSTS WITHOUT USE
AND UNREPAIRED THE HOUSE FALLS INTO RUIN,
AND THE WATCH, WITHOUT VIGILANCE, FAILS.

IN THIS WORLD AND THE NEXT
THERE IS IMPURITY AND IMPURITY:
WHEN A WOMAN LACKS DIGNITY,
WHEN A MAN LACKS GENEROSITY.

BUT THE GREATEST IMPURITY IS IGNORANCE.
FREE YOURSELF FROM IT.
BE PURE.

The first myth of man is that he exists. Man is only a possibility. Rarely has man become an actuality. Only once in a while a Gautam Buddha, a Jesus Christ, a Lao Tzu, a Zarathustra -- the names are not many, they can be counted on the fingers. They are the only proof that man is not impossible. But the so-called ordinary humanity is only a myth, a belief in something which is not really there. Unless you become aware of this false phenomenon, you will never become what you were destined to become. You

will remain a seed. You will never bloom, you will not be able to release your fragrance.

The name of Gautama the Buddha is sweeter than honey, is more golden than gold itself. Gautama the Buddha is more godly than God himself. In fact there is no other God. God exists only when buddhahood exists. God needs the context of a buddha to exist. Without the space of a buddhafield God is just a theoretical, philosophical idea with no substance in it, just a shadow. Hence don't ask whether God is or is not. That question cannot be answered. God is when there is a buddha, God is not when the buddha is not. Whenever there is an awakened person, in the context of his awakening God becomes real. This is the only possibility for God to be. To be really a man means to become a space for God to exist in you. Buddha is the most godly man that has ever been born on the earth, and still the most godless too. He never believed in God. Nobody who knows has ever believed in a God.

All believers are ignorant people -- belief IS ignorance. Buddha never believed, Buddha knew. And when you know, you know; there is no question of belief. Buddha never argued about God, he himself was the proof. There can be no other proof. There are great arguers, speculators, theologians; their whole life they go on talking about God, but all their talk is mere talk, it is sheer nonsense. Even if they meet God, they will argue with him. Argument is their habit, argument has become their occupation, their profession, it has become an escape from their true being. Argument keeps them blind.

A rabbi's son converted to Christianity and the rabbi was totally distraught. God himself came down to earth to console him. "After all," said the Lord, "did not the same thing happen to my son two thousand years ago?"
"Yes," replied the rabbi, "but don't forget, my son was legitimate."

A theologian, a philosopher, a great thinker, even if he comes to encounter God, is bound to argue with him. He can't see him. For seeing, silence is needed, not argument. For seeing, love is needed, not logic. For seeing, scriptures are not needed but a totally different state of mind is needed: a state of mind where thoughts have disappeared, where the mirror of mind reflects nothing, is absolutely pure, not even a ripple of thought. In that silence, in that mirrorlike purity you need not go anywhere else to see God. Wherever you are you will see, because God is not a person, let me repeat again: God is a presence. If God was a person things would have been very easy. We would have caught him, we would have imprisoned him in the temples, in the churches, in the synagogues, in the mosques. If God was a person our scientists would be experimenting on him in their laboratories. Pavlov wouldn't waste his time on dogs, he would experiment on God. And B.F. Skinner would not remain occupied with rats.
Karl Marx actually has said that: Unless God is proved in a scientific experiment, I am not going to believe. Unless God is proved in the lab, I am not going to believe. But a God proved in a lab is not a God at all, cannot be a God. A God caught in the net of arguments will be impotent, utterly dead.

A group of cannibals attacked a mission but found that the missionaries had fled. The old chief was fascinated by a pile of magazines he found, especially one that had pictures of scantily clad women in the advertisements. Whenever he would come to a picture of a woman with very little on, he would tear out the page and eat it.
Finally one of his sons noticed what he was doing and said, "Tell me, dad, is that dehydrated stuff any good?"

But that's what people are doing. When you are pondering over the Bible, the Gita, the Koran, it is all dehydrated stuff. It is not going to nourish you. What is your Christianity and what is your Hinduism, and what is your Mohammedanism? A really religious person cannot be Christian, and cannot be Mohammedan, and cannot be Hindu. Yes, he can be an Ayatollah Khomeini, but not a Mohammedan, not really a religious person. Fanatics, lunatics, obsessed with unnecessary formalities....
What is the difference between a Christian and a Hindu and a Jew? If you look deep down there is no difference; all the difference is formal, and they are obsessed with the formalities. Dehydrated stuff has become much too significant.

The Silversteins sent their son to a highbrow New England boarding school. A few months later he returned home for the Christmas holidays.
"Samela," greeted his mother. "It is so good to see you."
"Mother," he replied, "stop calling me Samela. I'm grown up now and I wish you would refer to me as Samuel."

"I am sorry," said Mrs. Silverstein. "I hope you ate only kosher foods while you were away?"
"Mother, it is ridiculous to still cling to those old-world traditions. I indulged in all types of food, kosher and nonkosher, and you would be better off if you did."
"Well, did you at least go to the synagogue occasionally?"
"Really!" replied the young Silverstein. "Going to a synagogue when you are associating with mostly non-Jews is preposterous. It is unfair to ask it of me."
"Tell me son," said Mrs. Silverstein, "are you still circumcised?"

But these are the differences between Hindus and Mohammedans and Christians and Jews and Jainas. What have we made of religion? We have not listened to the buddhas; we have not understood Moses, Abraham, Jesus, Mahavira, Buddha. We have misunderstood them, and we are living according to our misunderstanding.
These sutras of Buddha will give you an insight, an insight into the heart of an awakened one, how he sees things, how he feels, what is his understanding of the world. But please remember to listen to his words very carefully. Put your minds aside. If you listen through your minds, you will listen to something else, you will misinterpret, you will come in between. The words can't carry the meaning to you if you interfere -- and we are constantly interfering. That's why everybody knows how to hear, but very few people know how to listen.
Hearing is simple, listening is an art. Be a listener for these twenty days, while we will be talking on these

tremendously significant sutras of Buddha. They can reveal to you a totally new vision of life.

Margaret got smashed at the company's Christmas office party. The sales manager, Harvey, offered to drive her home. She staggered out to his car, gave him her address and away they drove.
Fifteen minutes later, she leaned over and said, "Harv, you are passionate." Immediately he reached for her thigh. Margaret slapped his face.
They drove in silence, and then....
"Harv, you are passionate," and again he reached for her thigh. Pow! He stopped the car and said, "Look, honey, on the one hand you tell me I am sexy, on the other you whack me across the mouth. Make up your mind!"
Margaret looked at him and slobbered, "Who the hell said you were sexy? All I have been telling you is, my house, you are passing it."

Put your mind aside -- let there be a direct communion between me and you. And I'm not interpreting Gautam Buddha. What he is saying is my own experience too. Hence, in a way I am simply explaining to you my own existential experience. But I love Gautam Buddha, his words are beautiful. It is significant to revive them again and again, to give them life, to let them breathe again. I am not interpreting here, I am simply making myself available to him so that he can say something to you in your language, in the language of the twentieth century.
Of course his words will be a little old. Twenty-five centuries have passed since he spoke them; much water has

gone down the Ganges, much has changed. Life is no longer the same, people are no longer the same. That innocence has disappeared from the world. The world has become very cunning, the world has become very political. The world is no longer religious, no longer innocent, no longer simple. In fact it is impossible now to be in the world and to be simple. It is an almost superhuman task not to be political -- the demands made upon you are so great. I feel deep compassion for you, but this is the only world we have right now and we have to understand this situation, we have to transcend this situation.

Buddha has to be revived, resurrected in such a way that you can recognize him again, and I have been doing the same with Jesus, with Lao Tzu, with Kabir and with other enlightened ones. Their names are different, but their taste is the same. Buddha is reported to have said: You can taste the ocean from anywhere, and you will find the taste always the same, it is everywhere salty. So is the ocean of buddhahood -- the taste is the same. If you can put your mind aside, if you can commune with me heart to heart, not head to head... because head to head there is only collision, no communion.

Don't be political while you are here with me, don't be clever, don't be cunning, because then you will be missing. This is a totally different kind of dialogue, this is not an ordinary dialogue; it is not mundane, it is sacred. Unless you approach these sutras very innocently, you will miss, and you will miss a tremendously significant opportunity.

Kornblum, aged seventy-six, took an unscheduled flight in the Middle East and suddenly found that two big Arabs had

also boarded the airplane. One of them said, "Hey, Jew, we want the window seat!" So he gave it to them.
The plane took off and one of the Arabs said, "Go to the back of the plane and get me some coffee!" Kornblum got the coffee and when he came back the other Arab said, "Now I want coffee!"
The old man rushed back and got him some, but by the time he got back the fellow's companion wanted a refill. The two kept him running back and forth for an hour. Finally, Kornblum flopped down in a seat exhausted. One of the Arabs said, "Jew, what do you think of the world?" "Well, it is in terrible shape," said Kornblum. "In Pakistan, Mohammedans are killing Hindus, in India Hindus are killing Mohammedans. In Ireland, Protestants are killing Catholics. And in airplanes Jews are pissing in Arabs' coffee!"

Yes, the world is in a terrible shape, but for these few days you will be here with me, forget the world. Be dropouts for these few days at least, so we can talk of other worlds, of other visions, because there are mysteries upon mysteries.

The sutras.... The Buddha says:

YOU ARE AS THE YELLOW LEAF.
THE MESSENGERS OF DEATH ARE AT HAND.

There are two things in life which are the most important. The first is birth, and the second is death -- everything else is trivia. The first has already happened, now nothing can be done about it. The second has not happened yet, but can

happen any moment. Hence those who are alert will prepare, they will prepare for death. Nothing can be done about birth, but much can be done about death. But people don't even think about death, they avoid the very subject. It is not thought to be polite to talk about it. Even if they refer to death, they refer to it in roundabout ways. If somebody dies, we don't say that he has died. We say God has called him, that God loved him so much, that whomsoever God loves he calls earlier; that he has gone to heaven, that he has moved to the other world, that he has not died, only the body has fallen back to the earth but the soul, the soul is immortal.

Have you ever heard of anybody going to hell? Everybody goes to heaven. We are so afraid of death, we try to make it as beautiful as possible: we decorate it, we speak beautiful words about it, we try to avoid the fact.

But Buddha insists again and again... his whole life after his enlightenment for forty-two years continuously he was talking, morning, evening, day in, day out, year in, year out, about death. Why? Many people think that he is a pessimist -- he is not. He is neither optimist nor pessimist. He is a realist, he is very pragmatic. He means business, because he knows only one thing is left for you about which something can be done and should be done -- and that is death.

And remember: it is not a simple phenomenon that you die and go to heaven. It is a very complex phenomenon, more complex than life itself.

Mrs. O'Hara, a widow of some five years, went to visit a famous medium, thinking she might contact her late

husband, Mike. The medium assured her that every effort would be made and that they would hold a seance that very evening. Several believers gathered around the table, and the medium ordered that the lights be dimmed and that everyone at the table join hands. A hush fell over the room, and the medium called the name Mike O'Hara over and over again.

Suddenly a strange calm seemed to permeate the room and a distant voice, faint at first but growing stronger and stronger, cried, "I am Mike O'Hara. Who is it who calls my spirit forth?"

The medium replied that it was indeed his own wife who called upon him, and that Mrs. O'Hara wished to speak to him. The spirit replied that he would speak to his wife.

"Mike," said Mrs. O'Hara, "are you alright?"

"Yes," he replied. "I am alright."

"Tell me, are you happy there?"

"Yes, I am happy here."

"Are you happier there than you were on earth with me?"

"Yes," replied the spirit, "I am much happier here than I was on earth with you."

Mrs. O'Hara seemed a bit shaken, but she had one last question. "Tell me, my husband, what is it like there? What is heaven really like?"

"Don't be absurd, woman," roared the truthful spirit. "Whatever made you think I was in heaven?"

Even hell will look like heaven in the beginning, because you have created a bigger hell on earth. You are living in such misery, in such hell on earth, of your own creation, that when you enter into hell, if there is any hell, you will

find great relief in the beginning. It will be only later on that you come to understand that this is hell. But we talk about everybody who dies -- that he has gone to heaven, that he has become a beloved of God, that God has chosen him, called him forth... ways of avoiding death.
But Buddha talks continuously about death. His first sutra is: YOU ARE AS THE YELLOW LEAF. Yellow leaf represents death. Any moment it is going to fall down. Dust unto dust, any moment and death is going to possess you. Tomorrow may never come, even the next moment is not certain. This is the only moment you can be certain of, next moment you may not be here. What are you doing to prepare for that great journey into the unknown?
YOU ARE AS THE YELLOW LEAF. THE MESSENGERS OF DEATH ARE AT HAND.

YOU ARE TO TRAVEL FAR AWAY.

It is a long journey, a long long journey, because whatsoever you know will be left behind: your friends, your family, your money, your power, your prestige, all will be left behind. You will be going all alone, even your body will be left behind. You will not be able to recognize your own face, because you don't know what your original face is. You know only the bodily face, that too you know through the medium of the mirror. You have not encountered your reality, you have not gone into your inner being, you have not seen yourself, you don't know who you are. All the friends gone, family, money, power, prestige, body... will you be able even to recognize that it is you? You will be simply in a chaos. Buddha asks you:

WHAT WILL YOU TAKE WITH YOU?

Tomorrow is death -- YOU ARE LIKE THE YELLOW LEAF -- next moment is death: WHAT WILL YOU TAKE WITH YOU? Have you earned anything that you can take with you? If you have not earned anything, then your life has been a sheer wastage. You may have accumulated much wealth, you may have become very famous, but all that is futile. You cannot take it with you. Your degrees, your titles, your awards, all will be left behind. You will be going utterly alone. Is there something which you can take with you?

There is only one thing which you can take with you, and that is true wealth. Buddha calls it meditation, awareness, watchfulness, mindfulness, consciousness. If you become more and more conscious, you can take that consciousness with you. But you are living a very very unconscious life. Your whole life is mechanical, you simply go on repeating. You are not really living, you are being lived by unconscious desires.

Buddha says: Meditation is the only wealth, because you can take it beyond death. In fact he says this is the criterion: if something can be taken beyond death it is true wealth. If it cannot be taken beyond death, it is untrue wealth, it is a deception. And not only that you are deceiving others, you are deceiving yourself. And when death will knock at your door, you will weep, you will cry, but then nothing can be done.

It is said of Alexander the Great that when he was dying, tears were rolling down his cheeks, because the physicians had told him that he had only twenty-four hours at the most; his death was absolutely certain within twenty-four hours. His physician asked, "Why are you crying? You are a brave man."

Alexander said, "I had promised my mother that I would come back home. In twenty-four hours I cannot reach there. At least forty-eight hours are needed, and I am ready to give my whole kingdom to you if you can manage twenty-four hours more for me. I would like to fulfill my promise. I have given my word, and my mother will be waiting for me."

The physician said, "It is impossible. Nothing can be done. In fact twenty-four hours is also too optimistic a hope. As I see it, things are going down the drain. Within two or three hours you will be gone. Twenty-four hours is the most, more than that is not possible."

And Alexander died within six hours. Before he died, he asked for one thing only.

He said, "When you take me towards the cemetery, let my hands hang outside the casket."

"Why?" asked his generals. "It has never been done, it is not conventional. Why this eccentric idea?"

Alexander said, "For a simple reason. I would like people to know that I am going empty-handed. I am dying like a dog. Let people know. I lived with the idea that I am great, that I am the world conqueror. But all that I have managed to do is waste my life. My whole kingdom is not capable of purchasing even a few minutes for me."

Death is so powerful, but one thing it cannot take away from you, that is meditation. If you can become rooted in your being, alert, conscious, watchful, you will see that you are not the body, and you are not the mind, and you are not the heart. You are simply the witnessing soul, and that witnessing will go with you. Then you can witness even death. That witnessing is the source of all religion. Those who have attained to that source are the enlightened ones, are the buddhas.
In life, whatever you are doing, whatsoever it is, is wrong if it is not leading you towards meditation.

You must have heard about the famous Peter principle. The principle is: If anything can go wrong, it will.
The second principle of Peter is: No matter which way you ride, it is uphill and against the wind.
And the third principle of Peter is: You can't win, you can't break even, you can't even quit the game.

But Peter... I don't know who this Peter is. Nobody knows, so many Peters are petering around the world. But it seems he has not heard about Buddha. Yes, it is true you can't win. It is true, you can't break even. It is true, you can't even quit the game. And all three have been tried, and nothing has succeeded. Capitalism tries to win the game, that is the capitalist approach, the approach of Alexander the Great. Socialism tries to go against the second, that you can't break even. Capitalism has failed, because all Alexanders have failed, and socialism has failed, all Stalins and Maos have failed. And the pseudoreligious person has failed: he tries to quit the game, and that too can't be done.

But there is a fourth thing that only buddhas know. There is no need to quit the game, you can watch it. There is no need to escape, you can be a witness. And that's my approach too. To my sannyasins this is my message: don't be an escapist, because nobody can escape. Where will you escape to? Wherever you go you will be the same, wherever you will go it is the same world. And wherever you go your mind will create the same world again, because the seeds of the world are within you. You can't quit the game, it is true. But you can be a witness of the game, the game of life, you can transcend it. Witnessing is transcendence.

And once in a while you come to know it too. Every person, once in a while, comes to have a little glimpse of witnessing.

Churchill is reported to have said: Man will occasionally stumble over the truth, but most of the time he will pick himself up and continue on.

In life, many times you stumble upon the truth, many times you feel a great bliss arising whenever witnessing happens: witnessing a sunset or a bird on the wing, a roseflower opening in the early morning sun, a lotus in the lake. Just witnessing, you are not doing anything about it; you can't do anything about the sunset, you are just seeing it. You have forgotten that you are a doer, you are just a mirror, a pure mirror reflecting. And such joy arises in you, such bliss, such unbounded bliss descends on you, and great silence and great beauty is experienced.

You think that it is because of the sunset that you are feeling so joyous? No, your analysis is wrong. You stumbled upon the truth, but you picked yourself up and

continued on. You analyzed wrongly. It is not the sunset, it is not the lotus flower, it is not the beauty of a starry night that gives you silence and peace and bliss; it is witnessing. But because it happened accidentally, you missed it. Buddha says: do it deliberately, consciously. That's what yoga is all about -- conscious effort, deliberate effort of becoming available to bliss, to silence. Buddha says:

YOU ARE THE LAMP
TO LIGHTEN THE WAY.
THEN HURRY, HURRY.

On the one hand he says: YOU ARE THE YELLOW LEAF. If you are unaware, you are the yellow leaf, you are death. But if you become aware, YOU ARE THE LAMP TO LIGHTEN THE WAY. THEN HURRY, HURRY. Don't waste time, because who knows, there may be no time left -- this may be the only moment. Always remember that this is the last moment. Behave as if this is the last moment. Each night when you go to bed, remember that this is the last time you are going to bed. Who knows, tomorrow morning you may not rise.
If you can exist each moment with such intensity, as if this is the last, great energies will be released in you. You will be so focused, so centered that you will become integrated, that you will be born anew, that you will become a soul, that you will not remain just a body.

WHEN YOUR LIGHT SHINES
WITHOUT IMPURITY OR DESIRE

YOU WILL COME INTO THE BOUNDLESS COUNTRY.

And as your awareness deepens, your light shines forth. We are made of the stuff called light. The whole existence is made of light. Awareness is igniting the fire within you. And once you become aflame desires will be burned in that fire, impurities will be burned in that fire. You will come out of it as pure gold. You will come into the boundless country.

Buddha says there is only one impurity: desire. Hence he uses impurity or desire synonymously; desire is impurity. What is desire? Desire means there is future, desire means there is tomorrow, desire means you are projecting yourself into the next moment, and that is foolish, stupid. This is the only moment you can be certain of. Desire is a way of postponing this moment for something in the future which is not yet, and may never be. Desire is deceiving yourself. But people go on deceiving, they go on pushing their lives into the future. Today they will say tomorrow, and tomorrow again they will say tomorrow, and they will go on saying this. Many people come to me....

Just a few days ago one old man wrote a letter to me. His young son who is only thirty wants to take sannyas, and the old man is very angry; he is seventy. He wrote a letter to me that said, "My son is only thirty, so young, and he wants to become a sannyasin. Is it right, is it right of you to give him sannyas at such a young age?"

I inquired of the old man, "I am ready not to give sannyas to your son, if you replace him. You are seventy. What about you?"

And he wrote, "Yes, some day I will also take sannyas, but the time has not come yet."
But how will you manage? Death may come before and if the time has not come even when you are seventy, when is it going to come?
There are ways of postponing; desire is a way of postponing. Today is ugly, miserable; tomorrow you hope. And because of that hope you somehow manage to drag on. It is only a question of today -- tomorrow everything will be alright. It is not going to be so! Tomorrow is going to be born out of your today.

I have heard another principle. Somebody just like Peter, his name is Murphy -- Murphy's maxim. He says: Smile, because tomorrow is going to be worse.

This moment is all. Buddha insists very much: Live in the moment. And desire does not allow you to live in the moment. And you go on repeating the same things, you move in circles. Just watch your life, look back. You have been moving in circles: the same anger, the same sex, the same greed, the same ambition, the same postponement and the same desiring mind. When are you going to wake up?

A bartender at a very posh gentlemen's club was on duty when a distinguished gentleman seated himself at the bar, but made no attempt to order a drink. The bartender inquired what the gentleman would have, but the man replied that he was not drinking because he had tried liquor once and had not liked it.

The bartender hated to see the man just sitting there, so tried offering him a cigar. "No, thank you," was his firm reply. "I tried a cigar once, but I did not like it."
The bartender persisted in trying to make the customer comfortable, so he suggested that perhaps if he stepped into the billiard room he might find a friendly game of cards to sit in on. "Ah no," he replied, "I did gamble once, and did not care for it at all. I will just sit here, if you don't mind. You see, I am waiting for my son."
"Ah," replied the bartender sympathetically, "your only child I assume."

But very few people are so alert. They go on repeating the same things again and again. And not only in one life, in many many lives you have been doing the same things. Desire means you are dragged out of the moment; that creates a tension, that creates anxiety, that creates hope. And then finally hope turns sour, becomes frustration. Each hope leads you into anguish. Buddha calls it the only impurity. Cut the roots of desire, live in the moment so totally, pull yourself out of the past and don't project yourself into the future. Let this moment be all and all. And your life will have such a purity, such a crystal-clear consciousness that right now you cannot imagine.
In fact, listening to buddhas you start creating new desires: a desire of becoming pure, a desire of becoming a sannyasin some day, a desire of meditating tomorrow. That's how you misinterpret them. Your misinterpretations rarely, very rarely can be of any help, only accidentally. Otherwise, ninety-nine point nine percent, you will go on playing the same stupid game, even in the name of religion.

An old country doctor found his work load too heavy and managed to persuade a young doctor to share his practice.
"Just remember, son," cautioned the older man, "these are simple country folk. They don't have much of a way with words, and sometimes they won't be able to describe their symptoms accurately. But just keep your eyes open, and you will be able to diagnose their ailments with no trouble at all."
That very evening the two doctors were called to the aid of a beautiful young girl who lay in a stupor. The older doctor took her pulse while the younger man tried to take her temperature. His efforts only seemed to upset her, and her violent tossing and turning caused him to drop the thermometer. He bent over and picked it up and put it back in his bag.
He waved the older doctor aside and whispered a few words into the young woman's ear. Whatever he said seemed to soothe her and the two men went on their way.
When they got in the car, the old doctor demanded to know what the young man had said to the patient.
"I simply told her she would have to cut down on her political activity."
"Now that is ridiculous," exclaimed the old practitioner. "She was practically in a coma, and you thought it was politics? You are a fool!"
"No, sir. I just did what you told me to do. I just kept my eyes open."
"Now what is that supposed to mean?" demanded the irate physician.

"Well, when I bent over to pick up the thermometer, I saw the mayor under the bed."

Yes, once in a while accidentally, you may be able to understand a part of the message. But the part cannot be of much help. An accidental understanding is not liberation. Understanding has to be deliberate and conscious.

Now, this young doctor will do it again and again -- everywhere, wherever he will go, he will look under the bed. You can't hope that you will find mayors everywhere, and he will be at a loss. This time it worked. And sometimes a few wrong things can work. And once they work you become obsessed with them, and you start trying them in every possible way, hoping that they will become your very life-style. They will simply create chaos.

Hence on the path it is absolutely necessary to be a disciple, so that a constant source of light remains available to you; so the master can go on forcing you to see things as they are, and helping you to become deliberately conscious.

It is a long, arduous process, much hammering is needed on your head. You have remained unconscious for so long that unconsciousness has become your second nature, and it has grown so thick, that unless these rocks of unconsciousness are broken, waters of consciousness will not flow in your being. The first thing you can do is, start uprooting the weeds of desire: all kinds of desire, worldly and otherworldly.

That's why Buddha never talks of heaven, never talks about heavenly pleasures, never talks about moksha, nirvana. He never says to his disciples that great bliss is waiting for you, but goes on insisting: be desireless, be alert, be aware.

Because if you say to people that great joy is waiting for you if you become desireless, they can try to become desireless, but that too will be only another desire. The desire to be desireless is still a desire, and it is not going to help.

YOUR LIFE IS FALLING AWAY.
DEATH IS AT HAND.
WHERE WILL YOU REST ON THE WAY?
WHAT HAVE YOU TAKEN WITH YOU?

This is Buddha's special way -- he repeats. When for the first time Buddhist sutras were translated into non-Indian languages, the translators were at a loss to understand why he repeats so much. Particularly when he was translated into German, French, English... the translators went on cutting his repetitions. He used to repeat for a certain reason: the reason is your sleepiness. He was not writing, he was communicating. He was talking to disciples, and he knew that you go on missing.
The truth has to be hammered again and again and again. Hence the repetition. The repetition is significant. One time you may miss, a second time you may be able to listen; the second time you may miss, a third time you may be able to listen. And who knows -- there are moments in your being when you are less sleepy, and when you are very sleepy. When you are less sleepy something can penetrate in. When you are very sleepy, densely asleep, then nothing can penetrate.

YOU ARE THE LAMP

TO LIGHTEN THE WAY.
THEN HURRY, HURRY.

WHEN YOUR LIGHT SHINES PURELY
YOU WILL NOT BE BORN
AND YOU WILL NOT DIE.

He says, "Only one thing I can promise you. If you become enlightened, if you become fully alert and aware and conscious, if you dispel all desire and darkness from your being, this much I can promise: you will not die." Of course, if you are not going to be born, how can you die? There will be no birth and no death, and to go beyond birth and death is to go into eternity, is to be immortal. That's what nirvana is, that's what absolute freedom is.
Birth is a bondage, it is a confinement, you are chained into the body. And death again leads you into another birth, it is a vicious circle. Birth leads you into death, death leads you into birth, and you go on moving in a circle. Jump out of the wheel of birth and death.

AS A SILVERSMITH SIFTS DUST FROM SILVER,
REMOVE YOUR OWN IMPURITIES
LITTLE BY LITTLE.

Don't be greedy. Many times it happens, you become spiritually greedy, you start asking too much without any inner capacity to receive it. You start demanding too much -- that too is desire and greed. Don't be greedy, go slow, go steady. Be persistent in your effort but be ready to wait too.

Hope for the best, and expect the worst, so nothing will ever disappoint you, and nothing will ever frustrate you.

OR AS IRON IS CORRODED BY RUST
YOUR OWN MISCHIEF WILL CONSUME YOU.

If you don't listen to the buddhas you will be consumed by your own mischief. The harm that you do to yourself is such that nobody can do it to you; you are the greatest enemy to yourself, right now as you are. Of course you can be the greatest friend too, but you have not tried it.
All that you have done to yourself has been just a constant creation of hell, but you go on doing it, for the simple reason that you never take the responsibility on your own shoulders. You always throw the responsibility on others, on fate, on God, on the society, on the economic structure, on politics, on the state, on this, on that. You go on throwing your responsibility on others. This is a sure way to remain a slave forever. Take the whole responsibility.
When Buddha says, "You will be consumed by your own mischief," he is saying, "Remember that whatsoever happens to you is your own doing. Good or bad, bliss or misery, darkness or light -- whatsoever you reap you have sown, and you are absolutely responsible for it and nobody else."
Giving responsibility to somebody else is becoming a slave. Take the whole responsibility on your own self. In the beginning it is hard, it is a burden, but soon you realize: if you can create hell, you can create heaven too. Just more awareness will be needed. Hell is downhill, no awareness is needed. Heaven is uphill, more and more awareness will be

needed. When you move towards the peaks, you will have to be very watchful.
People are watchful of wrong things. If you have money, you are very watchful. You go on constantly looking into your pockets. You look again and again into your suitcase to see whether the money is safe. That's how thieves come to know that you have something. When a person constantly goes on touching his pocket, he himself is inviting thieves. He is making them aware, they are also watching. When you are hiding something, you are inviting people -- it must be precious. Just throw the kohinoor diamond in the garden, and nobody will steal it.
People are very watchful about wrong things, but not watchful about their inner being.

Mulla Nasruddin and his family were walking to the cemetery with the body of his recently departed wife. Suddenly one of the pallbearers tripped on a cobblestone and fell. The casket dropped to the ground and opened. Everyone stood in shock as the dead Mrs. Nasruddin opened her eyes. She was very much alive, the victim of catatonia.
Five years went by and Mrs. Nasruddin passed away, this time a victim of natural causes, but Nasruddin had not forgotten. And on the way to the cemetery as the pallbearers approached the spot where her casket was dropped, he shouted, "For God's sake, watch the cobblestones!"

Even after five years he had not forgotten, but within five seconds you forget. If it is real inner watchfulness even five seconds is too much.

George Gurdjieff used to give to his disciples his pocket watch and would tell them, "Just watch the second hand. If you can manage for sixty seconds, one minute, I will accept you as a disciple. Remember, looking at the second hand, remember that 'I am watching the second hand... I am watching the second hand.' Don't forget it!"

And out of a hundred it was rare that even one or two persons were able to manage for sixty seconds. Sixty seconds... within five seconds the mind goes far away, it starts thinking of other things, it forgets. You try it, keep a watch and try, and you will see within five to seven seconds you have gone into the past, into the future. You are no longer now and here. But about unnecessary things, trivia, you are so careful.

Your mischief is going to consume you. And we are all doing mischief. We think because we are doing with others... that is absolutely wrong. Whatsoever you are doing with others is going to fall upon you, it is going to rebound on you a thousandfold. The world is constantly throwing things back to you. If you throw flowers, flowers will be coming back. If you throw stones, stones will be coming back. And why are you throwing stones, why are you so violent? Why you are behaving in such a mischievous way? You are thinking, "This is the way to win, this is the way to compete. This is the way to be victorious in the world."

In the first place, out of millions of struggling people one percent will be able to become Alexander the Great. All the

remaining ones will fall in great frustration. And secondly, the one who after arduous effort comes to the peak, finds the peak utterly empty, although he will not say so, because that looks silly. You worked so hard, you struggled so much, and then you arrived and became president of a country -- and then telling people that there is nothing here.... You are bound to say, "Aha! I have arrived, what beauty, what joy!" You HAVE to say it, just to save your face.

And people are ready to do anything to win. They can crawl like dogs, they can wag their tails like dogs, they can do anything to win. And ask the winners -- they are utterly empty, but not honest enough to say that nothing has been achieved.

McNellis shuffled home one night in a drunken stupor, carrying the biggest ham Mrs. McNellis had ever seen.

"Now then, out with it," she exclaimed. "Where did you get that ham?"

"Won it at the tavern, drinking with the boys, me darlin'."

"And how did you come to win it, may I ask?" she continued.

"Me love," said McNellis proudly. "It was given to the man with the biggest organ. Everyone at the bar opened up and...."

"Kevin Patrick Michael McNellis!" shrieked his wife. "You don't mean to tell me you took out that thing in front of everybody?"

"Now, darlin'," said the Irishman, "not the whole thing. Just enough to win."

The Buddha says:

NEGLECTED, THE SACRED VERSES RUST.
FOR BEAUTY RUSTS WITHOUT USE
AND UNREPAIRED THE HOUSE FALLS INTO RUIN,
AND THE WATCH, WITHOUT VIGILANCE, FAILS.

IN THIS WORLD AND THE NEXT
THERE IS IMPURITY AND IMPURITY:
WHEN A WOMAN LACKS DIGNITY,
WHEN A MAN LACKS GENEROSITY.

BUT THE GREATEST IMPURITY IS IGNORANCE.
FREE YOURSELF FROM IT.
BE PURE.

NEGLECTED, THE SACRED VERSES RUST. FOR BEAUTY RUSTS WITHOUT USE. And that's how your great potential for awareness is getting rusted, neglected -- neglected for lives together. You have completely forgotten that you can become a buddha. You have completely forgotten your real nature, your authentic being; much rust has grown around you, and now you think, "This is all that I am."
FOR BEAUTY RUSTS WITHOUT USE AND UNREPAIRED THE HOUSE FALLS INTO RUIN, AND THE WATCH, WITHOUT VIGILANCE, FAILS.
IN THIS WORLD AND THE NEXT THERE IS IMPURITY AND IMPURITY....
There are all kinds of impurities, but three Buddha specifically mentions. They are significant. First he says:

WHEN A WOMAN LACKS DIGNITY, grace, and WHEN A MAN LACKS GENEROSITY, Sharing for sharing's sake. Why does Buddha make this difference? This is tremendously significant. This is part of the psychology of the buddhas.

The feminine mind is basically receptive, and the masculine mind is basically aggressive. The feminine mind is inward-going, and the masculine mind is outward-going. The inward-going mind can grow into grace very easily. Hence the woman has a natural grace, a natural beauty, a natural roundness, a certain sweet aura around her. If she becomes more aware, her grace deepens. If she becomes more aware, she becomes pure grace.

Many times I have been asked why there have been so many men masters, but not so many women masters. The reason is that when the woman becomes enlightened, she becomes so passive, so receptive, that she cannot teach. Teaching means approaching the other. Teaching is in a certain way an outgoing effort. The woman is a womb. You never ask why a woman never becomes a father. The woman becomes the mother, she can't become a father. Her sexual energies are not outgoing, they are ingoing, she has an interiority. And the same is true about her spirituality. The woman becomes the perfect disciple. No man can compete with the woman as far as disciplehood is concerned.

Hence it is always the same proportion with Buddha, with Mahavira, with Jesus, with everybody. The woman proves to be the more authentic disciple. When Jesus was crucified all the men disciples escaped. Those twelve apostles, not even a single one.... But the women disciples were there.

Even the prostitute, Mary Magdalene, was there; she did not escape, she was ready to risk her life.
Mahavira had forty thousand sannyasins: thirty thousand were women and ten thousand were men. And exactly the same was the proportion with Buddha -- and you can see here. People ask me why I am giving the whole ashram into women's hands. What can I do? They are the best disciples, they know how to say yes, they know how to trust, they know how to be committed totally. Man remains a little skeptical, somewhere deep down the no remains alive. Even if he trusts, he trusts conditionally. The woman trusts unconditionally, her trust is forever. The man trusts intellectually. The woman trusts with her whole body, mind, soul, with her every fiber. Her trust is love not logic.
Hence Buddha says, if a woman is not graceful she is missing something, that is an impurity. The absence of grace in a woman is impurity. It can be forgiven in a man, but not in a woman; and in a man, generosity, sharing, giving -- that is an outgoing phenomenon. If a man is not generous, if he cannot give, then he is not really a man. That's why there have been so many male masters, because it is generosity, it is giving, it is sharing. The woman can receive, the man can give. The question is not who is the master and who is the disciple. The question is, in whatsoever way you are perfect you are fulfilling your nature. Be a perfect disciple and you will enter into God, be a perfect master and you will enter into God. Perfection is the key. It doesn't matter whether you are a disciple or a master, but be perfect.
And thirdly, and the most important, which has nothing to do with man or woman, which is applicable to both is: BUT

THE GREATEST IMPURITY IS IGNORANCE. Not knowing yourself is the greatest impurity. The first two impurities are peripheral, on the circumference; the third and most important is central, is at the very core. Hence it has no male/female division. Man and woman are only different on the circumference, but at the center, consciousness is neither male nor female. Its expressions are male and female but its purest nature is beyond duality. Not knowing oneself is the greatest impurity.
How are you going to know yourself? Drop desiring and become more conscious. Free yourself from self-ignorance. Be pure. Free yourself from desiring. Be in a state of no desire, alert, conscious, and you have arrived home. Remember, until you become a buddha you have wasted your life. Buddhahood is your flowering, your fragrance. A tree is fulfilled when it blooms, and a man is fulfilled when he releases the fragrance of buddhahood, when he becomes luminous; then he comes to know who he is. In knowing that, all is known. In knowing that, God is known. In knowing that, truth is achieved -- you become the truth, and truth liberates. Truth is freedom.
Enough for today.
The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 7
Chapter #2
Chapter title: The greatest rebellion ever tried
12 December 1979 am in Buddha Hall

The first question:
Question 1
BELOVED MASTER,

FROM WHERE DOES FRESHNESS COME?

Prem Naren, it does not come from anywhere; it is always here. Existence is freshness itself. Existence is fresh because it is always now and here. It is not burdened by the past, it does not gather any dust from the past. It is never old.

Time makes no impact on existence. Time does not exist as far as existence is concerned. Time exists only for the mind; it is a mind invention. In fact, time and mind are synonymous. Stop the mind, and time stops.

Jesus is asked by someone, "What will be the most unique thing in your kingdom of God?" And Jesus says, "There shall be time no longer." A very unexpected answer: There shall be time no longer. That will be the most unique thing about the kingdom of God -- because there will be no mind, how can there be time?

Time does not consist, as ordinarily conceived, of three tenses: past, present and future. Time consists only of two tenses: past and future. The present is not part of time; the present is beyond time. And the present is always fresh. Present is part of eternity. Present is the penetration of the eternal into the dreamy world of time, a ray of light into the darkness of mind.

Past is never fresh -- cannot be, obviously. It is always dirty, it is always stinking -- stinking of death, stinking of all that is rotten, stinking of tradition, stinking of corpses. The past is a cemetery. And the future is nothing but a projection of the dead past. And out of the dead past the future cannot be alive -- the dead can only project the dead. What is your future? -- modified past, touched up here and

there; a little better, a little more sophisticated, a little more comfortable, but it is the same past. You are hankering to repeat it. Your future has nothing new about it, it cannot have.

Mind cannot conceive of the new. It is impotent as far as the new and the fresh and the young is concerned. It can move only within the small world of the familiar, the known -- and the known is the past. The future is nothing but a desire to repeat it -- in a better way, of course. Hence future is also not fresh. The present is fresh.

Naren, you ask me, "From where does freshness come?" Freshness never comes and never goes. It is always here, it is always now. YOU be here and now, and you are suddenly fresh, bathed in eternity, showered by something which is timeless. Call it God, call it the kingdom of God, call it nirvana, or whatsoever you want. All those names refer to the same unnameable. All those words try to express the inexpressible.

Just put the human mind aside. And by that I mean, put the past aside and the future, and look. This very moment... and the whole heaven descends upon you. You are overwhelmed. The birds are singing and their songs are fresh; they are not repeating old songs. They have no idea of yesterdays and they are not singing for the future. They are not rehearsing for tomorrows. And the trees are fresh. All is fresh except man.

So don't ask, "From where does freshness come?" Ask, "From where does this dullness come, this staleness, this deadness?" Because this deadness comes and goes. Freshness is always there -- it is the very nature of existence. It is God's presence.

Meditation is nothing but a way, a method, to connect you with the eternal, to take you beyond time, beyond that which is born and dies, to take you beyond all the boundaries, to take you to the inconceivable and the unknowable. And it is not far away; it is as close as it can be. Even to say that it is close is not right, because it is exactly your very being, it is you. Freshness is your soul. Your mind is boring, utterly boring. Get out of the mind. At least for a few moments every day, put the mind aside, be utterly nude of the mind. And then you will know it is welling up within you -- the freshness you are asking about. From where does it come? It comes from the deepest core of your being -- and it does not really come. Suddenly you find it has always been the case. It has always been there like an undercurrent, underground, hidden behind many many layers of memories, dreams, desires.

Buddha says: Be desireless and know. Be desireless, and you will reach to the realm which is beyond birth and death, and you will enter into the unbounded.

But why is man not going into his own being which is so close? He is ready to go to the moon, he is ready to go anywhere! He is ready to go to the stars, but not into his own being. Why? There must be some deep reason behind it. The reason is: to go within yourself you will have to lose yourself. And one is afraid of losing oneself. One clings, one wants to remain oneself. One does not want to lose one's identity. It is a very poor identity and false too, but still, something is better than nothing. That is our logic. We don't know who we are, so we cling to the body, to the mind, to whatsoever has been given to us -- the conditioning, Catholic, communist, Hindu, Mohammedan.

We cling to all that has been forced upon us, because it gives us a cozy feeling as if we know ourselves: "I am a communist," that becomes my self-knowledge. "I am a Catholic," that becomes my self-knowledge. "I am an Indian," "I am a German," that becomes my self-knowledge.

You are neither a communist nor a Catholic, neither Indian nor German. Your consciousness cannot be confined to such stupid labels. Your consciousness is so infinite, it cannot be contained in any word. It is as vast as the sky itself.

But you are afraid to go into that vastness. That vastness appears like emptiness, void. And one clings to one's own small, arbitrary identity. Hence the fear of going into oneself.

Buddha says: Know thyself. Socrates says: Know thyself. They all say: Know thyself. All the awakened ones have only one message: Know thyself. We listen and yet we don't listen. We go on moving on the same rotten tracks, we go on living in the same old miserable way. And the reason is, the old, miserable way has one thing to give to you -- the ego.

And if you go in you will have to pay the price. The price is, you will have to lose your ego.

Sweeney met Brecon on the road. "Where are you off to?" he asked.

"I am going to Connemara," replied Brecon.

"You mean you are going to Connemara, God willing?"

"No, I am going to Connemara, God willing or not."

Because of this presumptuous remark Brecon was turned into a frog and kept in a pond for several days. When he had completed his penance Brecon was changed back to his original form. Returning home, he began packing his belongings again.
"Where are you going now?" asked Sweeney.
"I am going to Connemara."
"You mean you are going to Connemara, God willing?"
"No!" shouted Brecon. "I am going to Connemara or back to the frog pond!"

One cannot leave one's ego. It is better to be a frog! One is ready to be anything. We have become rocks. We only appear to be alive -- ninety-nine percent we are dead. Yes, we breathe and we eat and we propagate, but we are not alive.
If you are alive you will not ask the question, "From where does freshness come?" You will know; there will be no need to ask the question. You will experience it moment to moment. It is arising in you.
That's how I feel. That's how all the buddhas have always felt. It does not come from anywhere; it simply wells up within you, and each moment. It is never the same. It is as fresh as dewdrops in the early morning sun. Tremendous is the beauty of it and great is its benediction.
But nothing is without a price. You will have to lose the ego, you will have to lose your idea of who you are. In the first place, it is false. You are not really losing anything, just an idea, a very nonsubstantial idea. But, repeated so often, the idea has become very deeply rooted in you; you have become hypnotized by it.

The ego is nothing but a deep hypnosis. And meditation is the process of dehypnosis. It is the process of bringing you back to that innocent state where you were not yet hypnotized.

Hence, Jesus says again and again: Unless you are like small children you will not enter into my kingdom of God. What does he mean? He means you have to be unconditioned again, you have to be dehypnotized.

Each society hypnotizes you. These societies exist on the strategy of hypnosis. A Hindu means one who has been hypnotized in a certain way, who has been told that the Vedas are written by God and that only the Vedas contain the truth, that the Bibles and the Korans are all nonsense. If you repeat it for centuries, it starts getting deeper and deeper into your being, it becomes part of you. Then you start repeating it -- you become a gramophone record. Then you function only as "His Master's Voice"; you are no longer really a human being.

All the societies in the past, hitherto, have been dehumanizing human beings. We have not yet been able to create a real civilization. These are all very primitive methods to control people -- ugly, violent, antihuman, but all the societies have done it. There has not been even a single exception.

It is really surprising how once in a while a person has escaped from our imprisoning atmosphere -- how Gautam Siddhartha escaped and became a buddha, how Jesus escaped from the Jews and became a christ, how Saint Francis managed....

The greatest miracle in the world is to be so intelligent that nobody, no society, no state, no church, can hypnotize you.

My work here consists of dehypnotizing you. Hence, all the societies will be against me. Beware of it! To be with me is dangerous -- all the governments will be against you. And this has to be known and accepted. This has to be simply accepted, because this is going to be the case. The more I start working deeply on you.... It is just the beginning of the work: I am preparing the ground from where to take off. Once the dehypnosis starts functioning within thousands of people, all the societies, all the governments, all the states, all the churches, are going to be against me and my people -- because this has never been done before. This is the greatest rebellion ever tried! This is true revolution.
And if you pass through this revolution you will know from where freshness comes. It comes from your own innermost core. God is not outside you; it is your very center, your very ground. Freshness comes from it, life comes from it, love comes from it, bliss comes from it. All that is significant -- poetry and music -- they all arise from it. And when the dance comes from within, it has a totally different quality to it: it is spiritual, it is divine.

The second question:
Question 2
BELOVED MASTER,
WHY DOES GAUTAMA THE BUDDHA INSIST THAT LIFE IS ALWAYS MISERY?

Dharmendra, because it is so! Life as you know it IS misery. Buddha is not talking about HIS life, because what do you know about his life? That is not utter misery; that is utter bliss, that is ultimate bliss. But the life that you know

IS misery. Does it need any proofs? Have you not observed yourself that it is misery? Do you need a Buddha to remind you?
And even when a buddha reminds you, you don't feel good. You feel offended, as if your life is being condemned. He is not condemning your life -- buddhas never condemn anything. They simply say whatsoever is the case. If you are blind, they say you are blind. If you are dead, they say you are dead. They simply state the fact -- and they state the fact because there is a possibility to go beyond it. Buddha insists again and again that life is misery because life CAN be tremendous bliss. But unless you understand the first thing you will not understand the second thing. First you have to be very very aware that your life is misery, so much so that it becomes impossible to live in the old way even for a single moment. When you see your house is on fire, how can you go on living in it? You will run, you will escape from the house! You will forget all your treasures. You will not carry your cherished items, beautiful paintings, art works, or whatsoever you love. You will forget all about your postal stamps and your picture albums. You will forget even your wife, your husband, your children. You will remember them when you are out of the house.

Buddha used to tell a story:
There was an old man, eighty years old, who became blind in old age. His friends, his physicians, suggested to him that his eyes could be cured, but the old man was a philosopher, a logician, a great scholar. He said, "What do I need eyes for? I have twelve sons -- that means twenty-four

eyes; their twelve wives -- that means twenty-four eyes more; my wife -- two eyes more; and so many children of my sons.... I have so many eyes, why do I need eyes for myself? In this house there are at least one hundred eyes; if two eyes are missing it doesn't matter. My needs are looked after."

His logic had a point in it. He silenced his friends and physicians. But one night the house caught fire. Those hundred eyes escaped -- they forgot all about the old man. Yes, they remembered, but they remembered only when they were safe outside. Suddenly they remembered that the old man is in the house. What to do now? And the flames were so big now they could not go in. And the old man was trying to find his way stumbling, getting burned here and there. And then he remembered that his logic was absolute stupidity.

In times of real need only your own eyes can be of help. But it was too late: he died, he was burned alive.

When Buddha insists again and again that life is DUKKHA -- misery, anguish, pain -- he is simply reminding you that your house is on fire and your eyes are still blind. It is time -- prepare! Your eyes can be cured. A way can be found to come out of this fire. You can still save yourself, all is not yet lost. Hence the insistence.

Not that he is a pessimist -- as many people in the West particularly have condemned him, and in the East too. People think that Buddha is a pessimist, saying life is misery. He is not a pessimist -- not a pessimist in the same way as Arthur Schopenhauer is. Schopenhauer is a pessimist: "Life is misery and there is no way to get out of

it. You have to suffer it, nothing can be done about it. Man is a helpless victim."

It is said that when Schopenhauer read Gautam Buddha's works for the first time he danced because he thought, "This enlightened man agrees with me!"

Now, no enlightened man can ever agree with those who are not enlightened; it is impossible. Either you agree with them or you don't agree with them, but they never agree with you. They cannot. How can the man who has eyes agree with the man who is blind about light? -- or about darkness even?

Remember one thing: the blind man knows nothing about darkness even, what to say about light! Because to see darkness eyes are needed. You may be thinking that blind people live in darkness -- you are totally wrong. They know nothing of darkness. Because YOU close your eyes and you feel darkness, so you think blind people must be living in darkness -- but they don't have eyes to close. And unless you know light you cannot know darkness; they are two aspects of the same coin. Eyes are needed for both.

Schopenhauer was utterly wrong -- Buddha was not agreeing with him. Of course, Buddha can be interpreted in such a way that he may look like a pessimist philosopher. He is neither a pessimist nor a philosopher. He is not even an optimist -- because pessimism and optimism both belong to the world of the blind.

Hopeless people hope. Blind people think sooner or later they will attain to eyes. In the dark night of your souls you cling to the hope that there must be a dawn. To tolerate the present misery you have to create a certain kind of optimistic attitude so that you can hope for a beautiful

tomorrow -- although it never comes. But in hoping, you can tolerate. At least you can dilute your misery a little bit, you can avoid getting too much disturbed by it. You can remain occupied somewhere else. You can keep your eyes closed to the present anguish.
Buddha wants to bring you to the reality of your existence. He is a very earthly man, very pragmatic. He is a realist, he is not an idealist. He has nothing to do with pessimism and nothing to do with optimism. He is simply trying to shake you up. It is a way of hammering on your head. That's why he insists again and again that life is misery.
Watch your life, and you will find proofs and proofs, more than are needed, more proofs than you can manage. In fact, you will see that Buddha's insistence is not as much as it should be, that he is very lenient, very liberal.

Let me remind you about Peter's principles:
His first principle: Anything that begins well ends badly; anything that begins badly ends worse.
His second principle: Negative expectations yield negative results; positive expectations yield negative results.

Whatever you do, this way or that, everything ends in failure, everything ends in frustration. Still you feel offended by Buddha?

Two bums came to rest on the same park bench and struck up a conversation. Eventually they got around to how each of them had come to such dire straits.
One explained, "You are looking at a man who never took a word of advice from any man."

"Isn't that a coincidence?" replied the other. "You are looking at a man who took everybody's advice!"

Do whatsoever you want to do, but you will end in the same way. Everything ends in misery, everything ends in death. People make tremendous effort, but what can you do? -- all your efforts are doomed, because you don't do the fundamental thing that can bring a radical change. You don't create consciousness. That is the only radical transformation of life: from misery to bliss. You do everything else except meditate. You will earn money and you will become more and more powerful and you will have all that the world can provide.

And remember: I am not against the world. And I am not saying don't earn money and I am not saying don't make a beautiful house. But remember: these things in themselves cannot make your life a life of joy. Yes, if you are meditative then a beautiful house will have a totally different quality. A beautiful garden, a pond in your garden....

Mukta has just made a pond by the side of my room, a really beautiful pond with a small waterfall. If YOU are meditative, then it is a tremendously beautiful experience just to see water dancing on the rocks, just to see the rocks, just to feel the texture of the rocks, the moss that will start gathering on them. Then everything is beautiful if inside your heart there is awareness; otherwise everything is ugly. It is not that a meditative person enters into heaven -- no, heaven enters into a meditative person. Paradise is not a geographical place, it is a psychological experience. A meditative person can enjoy everything -- only he can

enjoy. He is not a renunciate. Only he knows how to taste the beauty of things, how to experience the tremendous presence of existence all around. Because he IS, he knows how to love, how to live.
But your life is going to be one misery after another misery. It will be a long chain of misery.

Berkowitz, a salesman, while driving through the Negev desert, saw an Arab lying on the sand. Berkowitz rushed to the man's side and lifted him up. The Arab whispered, "Water, effendi, water!"
"This is kismet!" exclaimed Berkowitz. "Are you in luck! I happen to have in my suitcase the finest selection of ties you ever saw!"
"No!" wailed the Arab. "Water, water!"
"These ties you could see right now in the King David Hotel -- fifteen dollars apiece. For you, only ten dollars."
"Please, effendi, I need water!"
"Look, you seem like a nice person. I am known all over the Negev as Honest Abbie. Whatever kind of ties you like -- silk, wool, wrap, crepe -- you can have what you want -- eight dollars each!"
"I need water!"
"Alright, you drive a hard bargain. Tell you what, take your pick, two for ten dollars!"
"Please, give me water!"
"Ah, you want water?" said Berkowitz. "Why didn't you say so? All you gotta do is crawl five hundred feet to the sand dune, hang right for a quarter mile. You will come to Poppy's Pyramid Club; he will give you all the water you want."

The Arab slowly crawled to the sand dune, turned right, and with his last remaining strength came to the door of the club. Poppy, the owner, was standing out front.
"Water, water!" begged the Arab.
"You want water? You came to the right place. I got well water, seltzer water, whatever water you want I got inside. The only thing is, you can't go in without a tie."

Buddha is right: in your life, whatsoever you do, you are bound to meet misery. And as time passes, more and more misery, because life starts slipping out of your fingers, death starts overshadowing you. And you become very tense -- life is slipping by and you have not arrived anywhere yet. You start running, you put all that you have at stake... but only death is the culmination of what you call life. How can death be the culmination of life? If death is the culmination of life then life is utterly useless -- not only useless but a very ugly joke played on man. Then God cannot be the creator -- then the Devil must be in charge. And that exactly seems to be the case.
The Old Testament says God created the world in six days. And then? Then it seems the Devil is running it! Since then, God has not been heard of; since then the Devil is in charge.
Your life is a cruel joke, as if some evil force is playing tricks with you. Just like small children torturing some insect, you are being tortured by some unknown force -- as if some unknown force is enjoying your torture, as if God is a sadist!
Buddha is right: your life simply proves not only that YOU are wrong, but it even proves that the God you worship

must be wrong. It not only proves YOU wrong, it proves your popes and your shankaracharyas wrong. It proves your so-called religions wrong, because they don't help in changing your quality of life. They don't change your vision, they don't change your insight. They don't bring more sensitivity and awareness to you so that you can live on a new plane, in a new plenitude, in a new fullness.
Buddha insists for a certain reason. The reason is: if you listen to him and if you become aware that your life IS misery, you are bound to ask him, "Sir, then what should we do?"
Buddha has the way; he can show you the path. He diagnoses your illness, because he has the key which can transform your illness into health, your madness into sanity.

The third question:
Question 3
BELOVED MASTER,
WHAT IS SO FUNNY ABOUT YOUR DRIVING TO DISCOURSE IN A ROLLS ROYCE?
There is a long story behind it! I was driving... I was coming in an Impala, and people like you started writing letters to me saying that, "This is a plumber's car!"
I told Laxmi, "Change it!" So she bought a Buick -- and people started writing to me that "This is a pimp's car!"
So I told Laxmi, "Change it!" So she was bargaining for a Lincoln Continental. And people wrote to me, "This is good -- this is a president's car!"
I said, "That is worse -- worse than being driven in a plumber's or a pimp's car!" So I told Laxmi, "Now, for a poor man like me, only a Rolls Royce will do!"

Now, please don't make any objection to it... because coming from Lao Tzu to Buddha Hall, a helicopter won't do. Don't create troubles for me!

The fourth question:
Question 4
BELOVED MASTER,
I KNOW NOW THAT I AM ALRIGHT JUST AS I AM, BUT HOW CAN I MAKE SURE THAT OTHERS KNOW THAT TOO?

Deva Kamma, I know how you are feeling!
Alan, a real ladies' man, rushed into a Catholic church. He slipped into the confession booth and said, "Father, Father, I just made love to a woman twenty-five times!"
"Are you married?" asked the priest.
"No," said Alan, "and I am Jewish, not Catholic, but I had to tell someone!"

You start telling people! They will think you crazy because this is a very strange world: if you talk about your misery nobody thinks you are crazy. If you start saying that "I am tremendously happy, ecstatic! I am feeling fantastic, just far out!" then people start thinking you are going nuts, something is wrong with you.
Just the other day a letter came to me that "Sarvesh is again going nuts." And all that the poor man was doing was just expressing his ecstasy. Seeing the new commune place he became so ecstatic that people thought that he is going crazy.

In this world to be insane is alright. To be sane is difficult, because the majority consists of insane people. To be sane is really difficult.

Nobody will believe you, Kamma, and people will laugh at you. And it happens: when inside you are feeling a great joy and everything seems to be fitting perfectly well, humming, you want that others should know it. It is a natural by-product -- otherwise buddhas would have remained silent. Why did Gautama the Buddha speak at all? Why did Mahavira speak? When he was unenlightened he went to the mountains; when he became enlightened he came back to the world. And this has always been the case: people have gone to the mountains, to the forests, to the jungles, in the search for truth. They have gone into silence, but when they attained they rushed back, they have not lost a single moment. They have rushed back to the marketplace to shout from the housetops!

But then there are dangers. The danger is that people will think you are mad. The danger is that they will think you are a nuisance. The danger is that they will think that you can create trouble in the society, because a few others may become interested in your ideas.

It is not accidental that Socrates is killed, Jesus is killed, Mansoor is killed. The society protects itself and its sanity -- its so-called sanity, which is really not sanity at all.

So, Kamma, if you are ready to take the risk, say it to people, don't be afraid. That's the only way they will come to know about it. But remember: then you have to accept joyfully whatsoever they do to you. Then don't throw the responsibility on me -- I am warning you right now. Now start advertising!

Malcolm G. Krebbs was the last of the old diehards who believed in doing business without advertising, and like so many others he found that his philosophy just did not work anymore. So he finally went to an advertising agency, but with great misgivings. Mr. Krebbs just could not manage to understand the principle behind advertising until his account executive explained it to him like this: "Doing business without advertising is like winking at a girl in the dark -- you know what you are doing, but nobody else does."

And that's how you are feeling, Kamma, right now. You can go on winking in darkness -- nobody will know. Come into the light and wink... and then suffer the consequences! But my people won't take it badly. They are becoming slowly slowly aware of such phenomena. They will accept you -- but outside the commune there will be trouble for you, so be cautious. MY people will understand. If they can understand me -- this far, far gone guy -- what about you, Kamma? You are just a beginner!

Dugan, a delivery man from near Hyannisport making his first trip to New York, saw the sign CLIMB THE STAIRS AND SAVE FORTY DOLLARS ON A NEW SUIT. The Irishman went up and was immediately shown a number of shoddy garments by Spiegal, the eager salesman. Dugan refused to bite.
Spiegal knew that Zimmer, the boss, was watching him, so he made a special effort with the next number. Spiegal

whirled the customer around and around before the mirror crying, "It fits like a glove! You look like a movie star!" When the Irishman again said no, Zimmer took over, produced one blue serge suit and made the sale in five minutes. As Dugan left, the boss said, "You see how easy it is when you know how? He went for the first suit I showed him."
"Yeah," agreed Spiegal, "but who made him dizzy?"

Here I am making my people so dizzy... you don't worry, you can say anything! But outside the commune be a little cautious. Don't laugh loudly. Don't be so loving, so much hugging and so much kissing....
It almost always happens: the deeper you go, such great joy arises, and with joy, as a by-product, the desire to share. But there is no other way -- you have to share.
Start sharing, first with my crazy people -- that way you will learn the art -- and then if you feel that you are confident enough, then start sharing with strangers, outsiders; people who have no idea of what meditation is; people who have no idea what it means to go inwards, what it means to know oneself, what it means to be silent, to be empty. They have very strange ideas. They think the empty mind is a Devil's workshop. The empty mind is GOD'S workshop, because meditation means nothing but emptiness.
First start talking to the people who can understand your language, and then shout from the housetops. I am a firm believer in advertising, don't be worried!

A minister who believed firmly in advertising had a sign erected in front of his church which proclaimed: IF YOU ARE TIRED OF SIN, COME IN!
Some enterprising member of his congregation who also believed in advertising, however, scrawled the additional message: "If you are not, call Grandview 9-6001."

The fifth question:
Question 5
BELOVED MASTER,
WHAT IS YOUR FUNCTION HERE AS A MASTER?

Geeto, it is a difficult question, because I have to do so many things -- without doing them, that is the most difficult part of it! I never leave my room, but I have to do many things, conceivable, inconceivable.
But the basic function of the master is to force people out of their unconsciousness. It is a thankless job, because you have to hit them hard -- their ideas, their notions, their middle-class, bourgeois philosophies. All that they have thought is great, all that they have thought is true, you have to go on telling them that it is all nonsense, that it is just bullshit! And of course they feel hurt.

Rizzutti was sitting in the neighborhood bar. Next to him sat McIntyre who had had more than enough beer and was staring at his empty glass.
He turned to Rizzutti and asked, "Say, did you spill a glass of beer on me?"
"Absolutely no!" answered the Italian.

McIntyre turned to the man on his other side. "Mister, did you by any chance throw a glass of beer in my lap?"
"No!" snapped the man.
"Just what I have been suspecting," said the Irishman. "It is an inside job!"

You are as unconscious as that. You don't even know what is happening to you as an inside job! Even that has to be brought to your notice. And you try to escape from seeing any truth, because it will shatter many of your old ideas, and you have become very acquainted, familiar with them. You feel cozy surrounded with your old nonsense. Whenever you are forced to see a new idea you shiver -- because it is not only a question of seeing one single new idea. Allow one single new idea in your being and you will have to change your total vision, because then you will start seeing that this new concept, this new vision, does not fit with anything old.

I have heard a story about Count Keyserling -- his grandson is here, a sannyasin. Count Keyserling was one of the most famous German thinkers. He traveled far and wide in the East; he was fascinated by the East. The grandson must have something of Count Keyserling in him, hence he has come to me.
When Count Keyserling was in China, a friend presented him with a beautiful box, two thousand years old, but with a condition which has been fulfilled for two thousand years: that the box's face has to be towards the East. A beautiful piece of art work, a great work of art! With that

condition, for two thousand years whosoever had it has followed it.
Count Keyserling went with it. He placed the box in his drawing room facing towards the East, but then the whole drawing room was unbalanced. The box looked odd, so the whole drawing room had to be redone. But then the whole drawing room was no longer fitting with the house! But Count Keyserling was a man of his word -- he changed his whole house... but then the garden was not fitting, so he had to change the garden. And then he became afraid, because when he changed the garden the house was not fitting in the neighborhood. Now, he could not do anything with the neighborhood!
Then he wrote a letter to the friend who has given the box, "Please take this box back -- I don't know how I can fulfill the condition. I will have to change the whole world! Now the neighborhood, then the town, then the district, then the province, then the country.... This is too much!"
If you start seeing just a ray of light, a new light, you will have to change your whole world.
The friend wrote to Count Keyserling, "Don't be worried, that's exactly the message: that even a small box can change your whole world. It is an ancient Taoist symbol; a message is contained in it. You have understood the message."

Allow a single insight of a buddha in you and you will never be the same. That's my function here as a master: to give you something which will not fit with you but which will be so tremendously significant for you that you will be

ready to change for it, that you will be ready to risk everything for it.

A zookeeper was headed for the kangaroo cage right around feeding time when, much to his surprise, the kangaroo jumped right over the ten-foot fence and went hopping out of sight. The startled zookeeper dashed up to the cage and confronted a woman who was standing in front of the cage.
"What happened?" he asked.
"I have not the faintest notion," she replied. "All I did was tickle him a little."
"Well, lady," he replied, "I guess you had better tickle me in the same place -- I am the one who has to catch him now!"

My function is to tickle you in the right place -- because it is a long long journey, a pilgrimage, and you are to catch hold of God. Less than that is not going to fulfill you.

The last question:
Question 6
BELOVED MASTER,
WHY AM I NOT GETTING ENLIGHTENED SOON?
WHY IS THERE SO MUCH DELAY?

Sagaram, the cause must be in you. In fact, YOU ARE the cause. You are not trying to understand what I am saying. Now enlightenment has become an object of your desire -- and enlightenment happens only when there is no desire left. And when I say no desire I exactly mean no desire --

absolutely no desire. The desire for enlightenment is still a desire. If you go on desiring enlightenment it is not going to happen, neither sooner nor later. It is never going to happen. You will have to drop the desire.

See the point, because mind is so cunning and so stupid too that it can go on being clever. You can even say, "Okay, then I will drop the desire -- but is it guaranteed that when I drop all the desires, the desire for enlightenment included, is it guaranteed that I will become enlightened?" You miss the point again: it can't be guaranteed. And dropping desire to attain enlightenment is not dropping at all -- the desire is coming from the back door again. You are not getting enlightened because you WANT to get enlightened, and it is not something that can be wanted, can be desired. You can't be ambitious for it.

Then what is to be done? Try to understand the futility of desire. Try to see that desire is the culprit, that desire goes on taking you away from the present moment. It is desire that is not allowing you to be meditative. It is desire that goes on creating the mind and goes on creating hindrances for meditation. Mind is a hindrance for meditation. It is desire that goes on creating time and time prevents eternity, becomes a rock between you and eternity.

See the point -- simply see it! It is not a question of having to drop it. Just see the point, that desire is your hell. Seeing it, desiring disappears, because if you see it clearly, totally, one hundred percent, how can you go on desiring anymore? It will slip out of your hands on its own accord. And in that very moment is enlightenment. That moment is enlightenment.

Enlightenment is not something that is going to come to you from somewhere else. Desire dropped, and you are a buddha. The only difference between you and a buddha is desire.

It happened to Gautam Siddhartha exactly the same way. For six years he was also, Sagaram, continuously hankering for enlightenment and could not attain it. For six years he tried hard, harder than any man has ever done. He risked all. He was a warrior, a KSHATRIYA -- a man who knew only how to fight. He fought with God, with existence. He wanted to conquer truth, he wanted to become a conqueror. And after six years of arduous effort he was reaching nowhere, not even a single inch closer to truth than when he started.

One full-moon night sitting under the tree, he started looking backwards. Six years have passed since he renounced his family, his palace, his kingdom. All that is written in the scriptures he has done and all that the teachers he came across told him to do he has done -- and he has done it with totality. Now there is nothing more to do. This whole project has failed.

Then suddenly he became aware that "Although I was searching for truth, I was searching for God, I was still the same person -- the same ego, the same desire, the same ambition: the ambition to conquer, to be victorious. I was the same old man; these six years nothing has changed. Objects of desires have changed -- they are no longer worldly, they are otherworldly -- but what difference does it make? Desire is desire, worldly or otherworldly, it doesn't matter. Desire is desire; its nature is the same."

Seeing it and seeing the futility of it, that evening he dropped... or it will be better to say, desire dropped itself. That evening as the moon rose, a totally new being arose in him: a desireless consciousness, a nonambitious being, not asking for anything. His eyes were clear for the first time, unclouded, no smoke of desire. His flame was burning bright. That night he slept for the first time in his life without dreams, because once desires disappear, dreams disappear. Dreams are reflections of your desires.

And early morning just before the sun was to rise, he opened his eyes. There was nothing to do that day, all is finished. He is no longer interested in the world, he is no longer interested in the other world. He remained in the moment; there were no projects to do. He was utterly empty. He looked at the rising sun... and that was the moment when he became enlightened.

What is enlightenment? -- the insight that desire is futile, that ambition is illness. Then suddenly you are thrown back to the present moment. To be in the present is to be enlightened. To be now and to be here is to be enlightened. You are all buddhas -- dreaming, desiring. Understand the desire and let it go.

Enough for today.

The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 7

Chapter #3

Chapter title: Life: the greatest gift

13 December 1979 am in Buddha Hall

LIFE IS EASY

FOR THE MAN WHO IS WITHOUT SHAME,
IMPUDENT AS A CROW,
A VICIOUS GOSSIP,
VAIN, MEDDLESOME, DISSOLUTE.

BUT LIFE IS HARD
FOR THE MAN WHO QUIETLY UNDERTAKES
THE WAY OF PERFECTION,
WITH PURITY, DETACHMENT AND VIGOR.
HE SEES LIGHT.

IF YOU KILL, LIE OR STEAL,
COMMIT ADULTERY OR DRINK,
YOU DIG UP YOUR OWN ROOTS.

AND IF YOU CANNOT MASTER YOURSELF,
THE HARM YOU DO TURNS AGAINST YOU
GRIEVOUSLY.

YOU MAY GIVE IN THE SPIRIT OF LIGHT
OR AS YOU PLEASE,
BUT IF YOU CARE HOW ANOTHER MAN GIVES
OR HOW HE WITHHOLDS,
YOU TROUBLE YOUR QUIETNESS ENDLESSLY.

THESE ENVYING ROOTS!
DESTROY THEM
AND ENJOY A LASTING QUIETNESS.

THERE IS NO FIRE LIKE PASSION,
THERE ARE NO CHAINS LIKE HATE.

ILLUSION IS A NET,
DESIRE A RUSHING RIVER.

HOW EASY IT IS TO SEE YOUR BROTHER'S
FAULTS,
HOW HARD TO FACE YOUR OWN.
YOU WINNOW HIS IN THE WIND LIKE CHAFF,
BUT YOURS YOU HIDE,
LIKE A CHEAT COVERING UP AN UNLUCKY
THROW.

DWELLING ON YOUR BROTHER'S FAULTS
MULTIPLIES YOUR OWN.
YOU ARE FAR FROM THE END OF YOUR JOURNEY.

THE WAY IS NOT IN THE SKY.
THE WAY IS IN THE HEART.

SEE HOW YOU LOVE
WHATEVER KEEPS YOU FROM YOUR JOURNEY.

BUT THE TATHAGATAS,
"THEY WHO HAVE GONE BEYOND,"
HAVE CONQUERED THE WORLD.
THEY ARE FREE.

THE WAY IS NOT IN THE SKY.
THE WAY IS IN THE HEART.

ALL THINGS ARISE AND PASS AWAY.
BUT THE AWAKENED AWAKE FOREVER.

LIFE IS EASY
FOR THE MAN WHO IS WITHOUT SHAME,
IMPUDENT AS A CROW,
A VICIOUS GOSSIP,
VAIN, MEDDLESOME, DISSOLUTE.

Life can be lived in two ways: either as a continuous fall... then you are pulled by the unconscious forces of gravitation; you need not make any effort. You are not trying to reach to the peaks, you are simply a rock rolling downwards. Naturally it appears easy, comfortable, convenient. If you conform with the society, if you live according to the tradition, if you follow the stupid crowds, life is easy, but at a very great cost: you don't grow. You miss the whole point, because life is significant only when it is a continuous growth.

Man is the only animal in existence who has the capacity to evolve. Charles Darwin says that monkeys have evolved and become men. I don't agree with him, I can't agree with him. Not that I have anything against the monkeys -- they are good people! -- but if what he says is true, then why have not all the monkeys become men? For millions of years monkeys have remained monkeys. Why are they not growing? They should have taken at least a few preliminary steps by now, but they are exactly the same as they have always been.

You can find proofs for Charles Darwin's theory only if you watch the politicians. Then one suspects he may be right -- otherwise not! Otherwise, monkeys have remained monkeys. And the people who have been following Darwin

and trying to prove his theory have been coming across great, unbridgeable gaps. The greatest is, they have not yet found the missing link -- because between monkey and man there must have been a few links. There is a great distance between monkey and man. Where are the missing steps? Not even a single proof has been found yet... except Idi Amin of Uganda!

In fact, Darwin's whole theory is only a guess; it is not yet scientifically valid. And spiritually it is never going to be valid, because those who have known man's spiritual growth have come decisively to this conclusion: that man is a different being altogether from any other being on the earth. He is an evolving animal. No other animal evolves; they remain the same. They are very conformist: they don't go beyond their heredity. They never cross the limit of what is allowed by their instincts; they never do anything beyond the instinctive, beyond the unconscious.

It is only man who has been able to produce a Buddha, a Lao Tzu, a Jesus, a Bahauddin. It is because of the buddhas that we can say man has the capacity to be a god. It is in the buddhas that we have found the link between man and God. Darwin and his followers have not been able to find the link between monkeys and man, but we have found in the buddhas the link between man and God. Man has an infinite potential.

But then you cannot live an easy life. You cannot just be a Rotarian or a Lion. You can't be just a Hindu or a Mohammedan. You can't go on following the crowds. Crowds behave instinctively; they don't know anything of the beyond. Their life is easy. If you are part of them your

life will also be easy, but there will be no growth. And growth is all that matters.
The only thing that matters in life is growth. Unless you are moving to the ultimate peak of becoming a god you are wasting a tremendously pregnant opportunity.
Buddha says:

LIFE IS EASY
FOR THE MAN WHO IS WITHOUT SHAME.

This Buddhist idea of shame has to be understood in contrast with the Christian idea of guilt. In the dictionaries they seem to be synonymous; they are not. Shame is a totally different phenomenon.
Guilt is imposed by others on you. It is a strategy of the priests to exploit. It is a conspiracy between the priest and the politician to keep humanity in deep slavery forever. They create guilt in you, they create great fear of sin. They condemn you, they make you afraid, they poison your very roots with the idea of guilt. They destroy all possibilities of laughter, joy, celebration. Their condemnation is such that to laugh seems to be a sin, to be joyous means you are worldly.
Christians say Jesus never laughed. What a lie! And they have been lying for centuries and with such theological acumen, with great scholarship. They have been lying very piously, very religiously. Have you ever come across a picture of Jesus or a statue in which he looks happy, blissful, joyous? Impossible! You can't conceive of a joyful Jesus -- after two thousand years of Christian propaganda the whole figure of Jesus has become distorted.

He was a man of great joy. He was a man who knew how to laugh and how to love and how to live festively. He loved eating and drinking. He must have danced, he must have joked with his friends, with his disciples. I cannot conceive of him not having a sense of humor, because it is impossible for me to conceive of a man being spiritual and without a sense of humor. A sense of humor is one of the most fundamental qualities of a religious man.

But the picture that Christians have depicted of Jesus is ugly. He is always sad, in deep sorrow -- carrying the whole burden of the original sin committed by Adam and Eve. He has been depicted by the Christians as doing a great service to humanity. He is the savior -- and how can the savior laugh? Laughter seems to be such an earthly quality. He has to be very serious, long-faced. They have destroyed the beauty of Jesus.

Jesus has to be resurrected. He was killed twice. First he was killed by the Jews and the Romans, and then he has been killed by the Christian priests. He got away from his first murder, but from the second he has not yet been able to escape. He is still a captive of the Vatican; he has to be freed from the Vatican.

These people who have made Jesus look so serious, so sad, so sorrowful -- who have made him a martyr -- have also created great guilt in humanity. Whenever you laugh you feel as if you are doing something wrong. Whenever you are happy you start looking guilty. How can you be happy? How can you laugh? How can you dance? How can you sing? The whole world is in such a suffering, and you are singing, and you are dancing? It seems that you must be cruel.

Krishna seems to be cruel to Christian eyes: playing on his flute, dancing, singing, celebrating. He seems to be a hedonist, a Zorba the Greek! Christians can't conceive Krishna to be spiritual. And in fact, the word 'christ' is a derivation of the word 'krishna'. Jesus must have the same qualities as Krishna; hence he has been called Christ. 'Christ' comes from 'krishna', and Krishna-consciousness simply means ecstatic consciousness.

But why does the priest go on creating guilt in man? There is a secret behind it. If you can make humanity feel guilty you remain powerful. The guilty person is always ready to serve those who are powerful. He is always ready to serve those who are puritans. He is always ready to be a slave to the priests. The guilty person cannot have courage enough to be a rebel -- that is the secret. Only a blissful person can be rebellious. The priests must have found this secret long ago, because they have been practicing it for centuries and they have destroyed all the beauty of the human soul.

Remember, when Buddha says "shame" he does not mean guilt. Shame is a totally different phenomenon. Guilt is imposed by others; shame is your own experience. Shame is interior, guilt is from the outside. Shame is not because of others but because of your own understanding: "What am I doing to my own self? What am I doing to my life? How am I wasting it?" It has nothing to do with the priests, Christian, Hindu or Mohammedan. It has something to do with your awareness. It has nothing to do with the moral codes of a society. It has something to do with your consciousness, not with your conscience.

Guilt is part of conscience, and conscience is created by others. You have a Hindu conscience and a Mohammedan

conscience and a Jaina conscience, but consciousness is simply consciousness. There is nothing like a Hindu consciousness or a Mohammedan consciousness. Consciousness makes you aware of what you are doing to yourself. And when you see that you are destroying tremendously pregnant opportunities for growth, shame arises in you. You start feeling a deep anguish, and that anguish is helpful for growth, that pain is helpful to growth. It brings you, for the first time, a vision of the possible, a glimpse of the peaks.

Guilt simply says that you are a sinner. And the feeling of shame simply shows you that you need not be a sinner, that you are meant to be a saint. If you are a sinner it is only because of your unconsciousness; you are not a sinner because the society follows a certain morality and you are not following it.

All moralities are not moral, and something which is moral in one country is not moral in another country. Something moral in one religion is not moral in another religion. Something is moral today and was not moral yesterday. Morals change, morals are just arbitrary. But consciousness is eternal, it never changes. It is simply the absolute -- the truth.

Once you have become a little more aware you start feeling what you have done to yourself and to others. That experience brings shame, and shame is good and guilt is bad. With guilt, deep down you know that it is all nonsense. For example, in the Jaina religion to eat in the night is a sin. If you are born a Jaina and sometimes you eat at night, you will feel very guilty; knowing perfectly well -- if you are intelligent enough you will know it -- that this is foolish,

there can't be any sin in eating at night. But still your conscience will prick you, because the conscience is manipulated by the priest, by the outside powers who are dominating you.

Hence guilt creates a dual personality in you: on the surface you are one person and deep down you are another -- because you can see the futility of it, the nonsense of it. You become split -- guilt creates schizophrenia. And the whole of humanity suffers from schizophrenia for the simple reason that we have created guilt, so much and so deeply that we have divided every man in two.

One part of him is social, formal. He goes to the church and follows the rules as far as they are feasible. He maintains a certain front, a certain face, and from the back door he goes on living a totally different life -- just the opposite of what he goes on preaching, just the opposite of what he goes on praising.

The idea of shame never creates any conflict within you, it never creates any split. It creates a challenge, it challenges you, it challenges your guts. It says to you, "Rise above -- because that is your birthright. Reach to the peaks, they are yours. Those sunlit peaks are your real home, and what are you doing in these dark valleys, crawling like animals? You can fly -- you have wings!"

Guilt condemns that which is wrong in you. The idea of shame makes you aware of that which is possible. Guilt goes on bringing in your past again and again -- burdens you with the past. And the idea of shame brings the future to you, it releases your energies. They are totally different.

Buddha says: LIFE IS EASY FOR THE MAN WHO IS WITHOUT SHAME...

IMPUDENT AS A CROW....

Cunning! And people think that to be cunning is to be clever. It is not so -- only mediocre people are cunning. A really intelligent person need not be cunning. He is intelligent and that's more than enough. Cunningness is a poor substitute, a plastic substitute for intelligence. The mediocre person tries to look intelligent; in that very effort he becomes cunning.

And the greatest cunningness is to be a hypocrite: to be one thing and to show something else. But then life will be easy. Buddha makes it clear: you will fit with other cunning people, they will understand your language.

What was the fault of Jesus? The only fault was that he was not cunning. What was the fault of Socrates? The only fault was that he was a really intelligent person, utterly innocent, full of intelligence but with no cunningness.

Cunningness is cowardice, intelligence is courage. And the greatest courage in the world is to be exactly what your consciousness says to you to be. And the greatest cowardice in the world is to follow others, to imitate others. Then you remain artificial. Then you are never a real rose, just a plastic rose which looks like a rose but is not a rose. It will not have any fragrance and it will not have any aliveness, and it will not dance in the wind and sing in the sun. It will be dead! IMPUDENT AS A CROW....

A VICIOUS GOSSIP....

Why do people gossip? What must be the reason behind it? Why do they go on biting each other's backs? This is the way of cunningness. They are not sincere people, they are not authentic people. They don't say what they want to say to you, but they have to say it; otherwise they will remain burdened with it. Hence gossiping. They can't say the truth to your face, they have to say it behind your back. And they say it with a vengeance, naturally.
They have to repress themselves in front of you, they have to smile and show a false face; and they feel that they are being insincere, they feel they are being ugly, they feel that they are being cowardly. They will take revenge. And this is their way of taking revenge: they will gossip about you, they will say things about you, they will invent things about you. And they will invent things about themselves too; what they are not, they will pretend to be. They will magnify your faults and they will magnify their glories.

Sokolow, aged seventy-five, rushed into a doctor's office. "You gotta give me a shot so I can be young again," he pleaded. "I got a date with a young chicken tonight!"
"Just a minute," said the physician. "You are seventy-five years old. There is nothing I can do for you."
"But Doctor," exclaimed the old man, "my friend, Rosen, is eighty-five, and he says he has sex three times a week!"
"Alright," advised the doctor, "so you say it too!"

What you cannot do, you can at least say you do. Who is preventing you from saying it?

... VAIN, MEDDLESOME, DISSOLUTE.

These people are vain, empty, utterly empty, hollow, full of straw and nothing else. But they go on bragging about themselves, they go on declaring themselves to be great -- they find ways and means. And the easiest way to declare yourself great is to declare that others are nothing, to reduce them as much as possible. That helps you feel that you are somebody special. And these people are bound to be meddlesome, querulous, always ready to fight for trivia. Just watch yourself and watch others. What are people doing? Ninety percent of their energies are being wasted in being cunning, hypocrites, gossips, vain, meddlesome, dissolute. And, of course, when you waste so much of your energy in such stupid activities you cannot have any decisiveness in your life, you cannot be committed, you cannot become involved in anything. And your old habits will always come in to destroy all your commitments, your involvements. You will be just driftwood, you will be dissolute.

Many people ask me... they want to take sannyas, but they cannot decide. Who else can decide for you? My suggestion is: Decide this way or that, but never remain in indecisiveness. If you cannot decide for sannyas, decide against it -- at least decide something! But be decisive, because being decisive is of great importance.

What you decide is not so important; much more important is that you are capable of making a decision. And once you decide, then let the commitment be one hundred percent. That's the only way to become integrated; otherwise you will remain fragmentary. You will remain a crowd, you will never become a single individual. In fact, that's exactly

the meaning of the word 'individual': it means indivisible. If you are fragmentary you are not an individual. The whole process of individuation is the process of commitment, involvement.
Sannyas is a great commitment, the greatest in life, because you are moving into a world of which you cannot be certain at all beforehand. You are moving into such an uncharted sea that you don't know what is going to happen; there is no guarantee whether you will be able to reach to the other shore, whether you will be able to come back to the old shore again -- there is no guarantee. And the ocean is vast and it is always stormy... and the boat is so small! But just the courage to take a small boat and go into the uncharted....
The very phenomenon of risking your life makes you alive. The very risk gives you a new birth.
Buddha says: But then life will be difficult.

BUT LIFE IS HARD
FOR THE MAN WHO QUIETLY UNDERTAKES
THE WAY OF PERFECTION,
WITH PURITY, DETACHMENT AND VIGOR.
HE SEES LIGHT.

If you want to see light -- that is Buddha's word for God -- if you want to see truth and if you want to be liberated by truth, if you want to get beyond all this stupid misery that you have been living in for centuries, if you want to have wings to soar above the clouds into the vastness of the sky, if you want to whisper with the stars and dance with the whole cosmos... then life is going to be hard, because

growth is painful, growth is arduous. It is going uphill, it is going against gravitation. It is going against the crowd, it is going against tradition, it is going against convention. It is becoming free from all that keeps you in bondage.

But when you live in a prison you have many securities. For example, in a prison nobody can murder you; you are always guarded, more guarded than any king. Kings have been murdered, but prisoners cannot be murdered. Your bread and butter is safe. In a prison you need not be worried about employment, and everything will be supplied to you. You need not think about tomorrow, it is not your responsibility.

At breakfast time you will get your breakfast, at lunchtime you will get your lunch. It is not going to be much of a lunch but at least it is certain! And supper is going to be supper and never a dinner, but so what? People feel better in a secure situation, even though the security is poor. Insecurity creates great turmoil and anxiety in your mind.

This is the experience: that people who have lived in prisons for a few years don't want to get out, and if they have to come out, sooner or later they find ways to get in again. They are called jailbirds... because the outside life is too much trouble. Then you have to think about everything: where to live, where to find your work, search for work, for food. And everything seems to be too much of an unnecessary harassment. When you are in a jail, everything is supplied for you. You live like a king!

And that's why millions of people have decided to live in the jails called Hinduism, Christianity, Mohammedanism, communism, India, Pakistan, China, Japan... all kinds of

jails, political, spiritual, ideological. It seems to be very convenient to be a slave.

Hence Buddha is right: BUT LIFE IS HARD FOR THE MAN WHO QUIETLY UNDERTAKES THE WAY OF PERFECTION. If you want to grow towards the heights, if you want to be perfect, if you want to be total and whole, if you want to know what it is all about, then you will have to risk many securities, many safeties, many comforts. You will have to go into the unknown, into the dark night -- and sometimes without even a candle.

... WITH PURITY, DETACHMENT AND VIGOR. HE SEES LIGHT. You will have to learn the ways of purity. By purity Buddha always means innocence, the unburdened consciousness -- unburdened of knowledge, unburdened of scholarship, Vedas, Bibles, Korans. They all burden you, they give you a false sense of knowing; and the false sense of knowing becomes the barrier in knowing. If you really want to become a knower you will have to drop all knowledge, you will first have to become ignorant. That is purity: a mind without any content, a mind like a child's, a pure mind.

And detachment.... By detachment Buddha means, don't think of yourself as the body. If you think yourself to be the body you cannot undertake this adventure of finding yourself, because you have already become identified with your body. Don't be identified with the mind either. If you think that you know already, then you will remain confined to whatsoever you are.

Remain open: that is detachment. Don't say that "I am the body, I am the mind." Say that "I know nothing. The body

is there, the mind is there, but I don't know who I am. And certainly I am not my body."

As you go deeper into innocence you will be able to see that if your hand is cut off, your consciousness is not reduced that much -- it remains the same. Your leg can be cut off; your body is no longer the same, but your consciousness remains the same, it is not reduced. If your mind changes -- and mind continuously changes -- your consciousness does not change with your mind; it is an unchanging phenomenon. It is the only unchanging factor in existence; everything else is a flux. Only the witness remains permanent, absolutely permanent. It is eternal. Mind is time and you are timelessness.

But for that you will have to learn the ways of detachment and you will have to release great vigor, great enthusiasm and great energy. Ordinarily your energy is being wasted in unnecessary pursuits. You will have to cut your unnecessary pursuits. That is true sannyas.

Sannyas does not mean renouncing life but renouncing the unnecessary life. Just look, take note, watch, analyze, observe, and conclude how many things you are doing which are unnecessary -- how many things you go on doing because you have become accustomed to doing them. You have never thought about them, whether they are necessary or not. How much do you talk with people? Is it all necessary?

If you start watching you will be surprised: you will become more telegraphic, in words, in actions, in your pursuits. You will become very choosy. And you will be surprised that almost ninety percent of your activity was

futile; its only function was to keep you occupied. Its only function was a slow suicide. It was poisoning you.
When this ninety percent of your unnecessary activity is reduced, great energy becomes available to you. And only with such energy, such detachment and such purity can you create the right space in which light is seen.

Fenton's wife was going to have a baby and he could not get a doctor. The snow outside was eight feet deep, the telephone lines were down, and it was still snowing. He decided to go out and look for an M.D. He fought his way through the storm and saw a light which turned out to be a bar. He went in and began drinking heavily.
"What's the matter?" said Hymowitz, sitting on a nearby stool.
"My wife is going to have a baby," cried Fenton, "and I can't find a doctor...."
"I can help you," said the Jewish man.
"Are you a doctor?"
"I am a veterinarian. But you give me your address. I will go and get my satchel, and I will come over and do the job for you."
Fenton rushed home and soon Hymowitz arrived carrying his satchel. "Now don't worry about a thing," he said. "Get blankets and plenty of hot water." He went into the bedroom.
Twenty minutes later, Hymowitz came out, sweat pouring from his brow and said, "You got a hammer?"
"A hammer!" roared Fenton. "What do you want it for?"
"Don't ask no questions, get me a hammer."

Fenton brought him the tool and Hymowitz said, "Don't worry about nothing. Get plenty of hot water, lots of blankets!" He ran back into the bedroom.
Thirty minutes later he came out, stripped to the waist, perspiration pouring from his body. He said, "Hey, you got a chisel?"
"My God!" screamed Fenton. "First you want a hammer, now it's a chisel. What are you doing to my wife?"
"What do you mean, your wife? First I gotta open the satchel!"

The real work has not yet started -- even the satchel is not opened! And that's how your life is: you are born, but the real work has not yet started.
My function here is to supply you with hammers and chisels and a few vets too -- my therapists. The satchel has to be opened first. And it is hard work because you have learned how to remain closed; that has become your way of life. And to be open seems to be just impossible.
Yes, once in a while you open up, in a certain situation -- maybe in a therapy group, in a meditation, in a Sufi dance, in music -- once in a while, in a certain space, you allow yourself to open up. And then you see the beauty of life and the great joy pouring out of you. But then you become afraid, guilt arises. Suddenly you close again.
Almost every day I receive letters from sannyasins saying, "I am feeling very good, a great well-being is arising in me, but simultaneously I am also feeling guilty. Why?"
Somebody writes, "I am feeling very blissful, but also, side by side, a shadow is following my bliss. I am feeling guilty."

Why does this guilt arise? That guilt is the strategy of your old mind. The old mind is saying, "What are you doing, man? This is not your way of life. Close up! You are going beyond your limits. And I am giving you a warning -- then later on don't say to me that you were not warned."
So you take one or two steps beyond yourself and then rush back and close the doors. You have become so afraid of the fresh air. It has to be learned -- howsoever hard it is, but it has to be learned -- because that is the only way to be reborn, the only way to celebrate, the only way to know bliss and benediction.
Buddha says:

IF YOU KILL, LIE OR STEAL,
COMMIT ADULTERY OR DRINK,
YOU DIG UP YOUR OWN ROOTS.

But that's what people are doing continuously. We are all destructive. That's what he means when he says: IF YOU KILL.... Don't take it literally -- you are not murderers, but you are all killers. If you are destructive you are a killer. And the closed person is always destructive, he is never creative.
You can only be either destructive or creative. If your energies are not released into creativity they are bound to become sour, bitter, poisonous; and they will make you angry, full of hatred and violence. Then there are two ways for that violence to go: one is to be violent with others, and the other is to be violent with yourself. Buddha is against both, so am I.

The politician is violent with others. Adolf Hitler, Mussolini, Stalin, Mao -- these people are violent with others; they destroyed millions of lives. Mahatma Gandhi is totally different, he has not killed anybody -- he is the apostle of nonviolence -- but he is continuously destructive towards himself. His violence has turned upon himself. That's how your saints are created, your mahatmas are created. The politicians are sadists and the saints are masochists; both are psychologically ill.

IF YOU KILL, LIE.... And everybody is lying. If you are not being your true self, whatsoever the cost, howsoever hard it is -- if you are not being your true self you are lying. You may not be literally lying, you may not even be aware that you are lying, but if you are a hypocrite -- you smile when you are not feeling like smiling, you say hello to somebody when there is no heart in it -- it is a lie. When you say to somebody "I love you," just formally, you are lying.

That's why Buddha says: It is hard to be authentic, because even your own people will feel offended. Your wife will feel offended because you will not be continuously saying, "I love you, I love you." Once in a while you will say, "I hate you, I hate you more than I hate anybody else!" And your wife is not going to be sweet to you all the time. Once in a while she will throw things at you, destroy the crockery, nag you.

But if you live an authentic life you accept all this, in you and in others; you don't reject it. This is part of the life situation, this is how we grow. All sweetness and all politeness is phony, it is bourgeois. An authentic person is sweet and bitter; he loves, he hates. When you accept both

the polarities of your being you become authentic. Then you are not lying.

OR STEAL.... Very few people are thieves in the ordinary sense of the word; otherwise everybody is stealing. If you are pretending to be wise on borrowed knowledge it is stealing, it is a theft -- subtle, but it is theft.

COMMIT ADULTERY.... The meaning -- the ordinary meaning -- of the word 'adultery' is: making love to a woman you are not married to. But the real meaning of adultery is making love while you are not in love. She may be your own wife, but if you are not in love, then making love to her is adultery.

And man is a complex phenomenon: today you may be in love with your wife -- yes, even with your wife! I know it is difficult, it is hard, and it is very rare too, but it happens. Today you may be in love with your own wife, and then making love to her is prayer, is worship, it is communion with God. And this communion can happen even with some other woman to whom you are not married. If love is there then it is not adultery, and if love is not there, then even with your wife whatsoever you are doing is adultery.

OR DRINK.... Remember, all the buddhas are against any chemical drug that can make you unconscious, for the simple reason that you are already so unconscious.

Just the other day somebody had asked a question: "Jesus used to drink alcohol. What do you say about it?"

I can allow Jesus! He was so conscious that he could afford to drink once in a while. But I cannot allow you. You are already so unconscious, you are already so burdened; now, making you more unconscious will be dragging you towards hell.

In the East, particularly in India, there has existed a tremendously beautiful esoteric school of tantrikas. One of their very secret methods is that whenever a master thinks that a disciple is ready, he allows him to drink alcohol or take some other drug in small portions, in small quantities, slowly. As his meditation deepens he is allowed to drink bigger amounts. The only condition to be fulfilled is that he should remain conscious. Even under the influence of the drug he should remain conscious -- that is the only condition to be fulfilled. This is a rare experiment!
And a moment comes when a real meditator can drink as much... he can drink alcohol just like water and he will remain as centered as ever, as conscious as ever. That is the crucial test. That day the master says, "Now there is no need to drink at all. You passed through the test."
Buddha is talking about you. He is not giving these sutras to tantrikas, he is talking to the common man. Hence he says: IF YOU KILL, LIE OR STEAL, COMMIT ADULTERY OR DRINK, YOU DIG UP YOUR OWN ROOTS. He is not telling you to repress. He is simply saying, become more aware. Buddha was never in favor of repression. Repression is an unconscious effort; it never transforms you. It keeps you the same but repressed.

"Sinners!" shouted the evangelist, accusingly, at the tent full of true believers. "You are all sinners. Every one of you has something on his conscience, and one sin is just as bad as another. Stealing is as bad as lying. Ain't that so, Brother William?"

Brother William nodded his agreement.

"And adultery is just as bad as murder. Ain't that right, Sister Rose?"
"Can't rightly say, Preacher," replied Sister Rose. "I never killed nobody."

Young Maureen knelt in the confessional and whispered to the priest, "Ah, Father, I have sinned grievously. On Monday night I slept with Seamus. Tuesday night I slept with Timothy. On Wednesday night I slept with Dennis. Ah, Father, what shall I do?"
"My child," replied the priest, "go home and squeeze the juice from a whole lemon and drink it."
"Ah, Father, will this purge me of my sin?" she asked.
"No, child, but it will take the smile off your face."

Repression will do only that: it will take the smile off your face; otherwise, everything will remain the same.
Buddha is not for repression. He says: Become more conscious of your lying, of your destructiveness, of your stealing, of your adultery, of your becoming constantly unconscious and finding new ways of becoming unconscious. Beware, because you are digging up your own roots.

AND IF YOU CANNOT MASTER YOURSELF,
THE HARM YOU DO TURNS AGAINST YOU GRIEVOUSLY.

These are the ways that destroy the possibility of your ever becoming a master of your own being. And the man who is not a master of himself -- whatsoever he is doing to others

is destructive, and ultimately all that destruction rebounds on himself. Harming others he is harming himself, because he is sowing seeds which he will have to reap.

YOU MAY GIVE IN THE SPIRIT OF LIGHT
OR AS YOU PLEASE,
BUT IF YOU CARE HOW ANOTHER MAN GIVES
OR HOW HE WITHHOLDS,
YOU TROUBLE YOUR QUIETNESS ENDLESSLY.

Share whatsoever you have, but share for the sheer joy of sharing; don't think of others. People, even in being religious, even in practicing spirituality, are always comparing and competing with others. Somebody is fasting for one day and you fast for two days, just to show him that you are higher, holier.

In a small town they had just erected a fine new church. All it needed was a set of chimes. So Father McLain went around collecting donations for the chimes.
Deegan, the blacksmith, donated fifty dollars; Dugan, the contractor, came across with seventy-five; Donnelly, the undertaker, gave his check for one hundred.
When the priest got to Brennan's Bar and Grill, the owner did not like the idea of contributing two hundred dollars.
"But Brennan," said the priest, "just think -- Deegan, Dugan and Donelly gladly contributed to the chimes, and you should be represented with a donation."
"Well, Father, it is an awful lot of money."
"But think how proud you will feel, along with Deegan, Dugan and Donelly, when the chimes ring out."

The saloonkeeper finally agreed and when the chimes were installed, the reverend met Brennan on the street. He said, "Brennan, did you hear the chimes?"
"I heard them."
"What is the matter? Don't you like them?"
"Well, I hear them ring out Deegan, Dugan, Donelly; Deegan, Dugan, Donelly... but doggone it, I never hear anything that sounds like Brennan!"

People are so stupid that even when they are trying to be spiritual they continue their old ways of competition, of jealousy, of envy.
Buddha says: YOU MAY GIVE IN THE SPIRIT OF LIGHT OR AS YOU PLEASE, BUT IF YOU CARE HOW ANOTHER MAN GIVES OR HOW HE WITHHOLDS, YOU TROUBLE YOUR QUIETNESS ENDLESSLY. Never think of the other in the world of spiritual growth -- just think of yourself. Be utterly selfish in that way. Don't compare, otherwise you will never be able to attain to stillness and silence; you will be continuously disturbed.

THESE ENVYING ROOTS! Buddha says,
DESTROY THEM
AND ENJOY A LASTING QUIETNESS.

If you can destroy jealousy, envy, competitiveness, you enter into a world of lasting quietness.

THERE IS NO FIRE LIKE PASSION,
THERE ARE NO CHAINS LIKE HATE.

ILLUSION IS A NET,
DESIRE A RUSHING RIVER.

Beware of lust, unconscious sexuality. When sex becomes conscious it has a totally different flavor. It becomes tantra, it is no longer sex. When sex becomes conscious it is love, it is no longer lust. Love brings freedom, and lust simply creates prisons for you.
THERE IS NO FIRE LIKE PASSION, THERE ARE NO CHAINS LIKE HATE. ILLUSION IS A NET, DESIRE A RUSHING RIVER. Beware of desire, because it is going to drown you. It has drowned so many many people, and it has drowned you many many times in the past. This time be alert. Don't allow desire to drown you and don't allow unnecessary wastage of energies. Because this is my observation: that the weaker you are spiritually, the more desires will be powerful in you. The stronger you are spiritually, the more energy you have spiritually, the less is the power of desire able to drag you, to drown you. And illusions and illusions... that's all desires are. That's what your mind is. It is never satisfied; it only goes on creating newer and newer nets for you to be caught in. It goes on postponing the moment of your becoming free -- it goes on alluring you for the tomorrow.

Becky's greatest dream was to make love with Mick Jagger. After spending the night with a man, her best friend Jane would ask her about the experience, and the reply was always the same: "It was good, but it was not Mick Jagger." Finally Becky's dream came true and she got a chance to sleep with Mick Jagger.

The next day her friend Jane was eager to hear the report, but when she asked Becky how it was, Becky replied, "It was good, but it was not Mick Jagger."

Nothing is ever going to satisfy you. Even Mick Jagger will not be Mick Jagger! It is your illusion that you project on Mick Jagger. The real Mick Jagger is just as ordinary as any Harry, Tom, Dick... or is it Tom, Dick, Harry? I always get confused between these three people!

HOW EASY IT IS TO SEE YOUR BROTHER'S FAULTS,
HOW HARD TO FACE YOUR OWN.
YOU WINNOW HIS IN THE WIND LIKE CHAFF,
BUT YOURS YOU HIDE,
LIKE A CHEAT COVERING UP AN UNLUCKY THROW.

DWELLING ON YOUR BROTHER'S FAULTS MULTIPLIES YOUR OWN.
YOU ARE FAR FROM THE END OF YOUR JOURNEY.

Because the reason -- the basic reason -- of dwelling on your brother's faults is to make your own faults look smaller. You magnify others' faults so that you can say, "I am far better than them," so that you can feel, "There is nothing much to be changed in me. Look at people, how ugly they are!"
When everybody is so ugly, you start feeling beautiful. When everybody is so materialist, you start feeling spiritual. It is a trick, a strategy, to hide yourself from your

own eyes. And remember, while you are hiding your faults, they are growing inside of you like cancer.
Just do the opposite. Don't bother about others' faults, that's not your business at all. Just look at your own faults, watch them, observe them -- because observing them you will be able to be free of them. In fact, the deeper the observation, the more is the possibility of those faults disappearing from you on their own accord, just as dewdrops disappear in the early morning sun.

THE WAY IS NOT IN THE SKY.
THE WAY IS IN THE HEART.

Don't look upwards! When you pray you look upwards, as if God is there. Buddha says: Look inwards, because God is there.

SEE HOW YOU LOVE
WHATEVER KEEPS YOU FROM YOUR JOURNEY.

A very important indication for the seeker: See how you love your own chains, see how you love your own faults. See how you protect and defend your own misery. SEE HOW YOU LOVE WHATEVER KEEPS YOU FROM YOUR JOURNEY.
Jealousy.... You say, "How can I live without jealousy?" Just the other day, somebody had asked, "You teach us not to be jealous, but then without competition what will life be? Without competition there will be no progress!" Now he is trying to hide his competitiveness and his jealousy behind the great word 'progress'. And not only are YOU

jealous, even animals are. In fact, jealousy is a very animal desire.

The rutting season had begun and the veterinary surgeon was on the farm giving the cows artificial insemination. By the time he got to the last cow he had no sperm left so he began to pack away his equipment.
The cow slowly turned her head towards him and with big, mournful eyes, said, "Not even a kiss, Doctor?"

Watch yourself! SEE HOW YOU LOVE WHATEVER KEEPS YOU FROM YOUR JOURNEY.

BUT THE TATHAGATAS,
"THEY WHO HAVE GONE BEYOND,"
HAVE CONQUERED THE WORLD.
THEY ARE FREE.

The buddhas, the TATHAGATAS, those who have gone beyond the world -- listen to what they say. They say: Real progress is in being nonambitious. Real growth is in being without envy. The moment your jealousies disappear totally, you have arrived home.
THE WAY IS NOT IN THE SKY. THE WAY IS IN THE HEART. Look within. Watch how many jealousies, how many angers, how many lustful desires are boiling there. Just watch them!
And this is the greatest contribution of Buddha -- that he has said, and proved beyond doubt because it has worked for thousands of people -- that a deep observation of anything that is wrong in you is enough; you need not do

anything else. Just be aware of it and it disappears. It disappears just as you bring light into a room and the darkness disappears.

ALL THINGS ARISE AND PASS AWAY.
BUT THE AWAKENED AWAKE FOREVER.

Become aware, awake. Then you will see that everything comes and goes, all things come and pass. Life is a flux. Your consciousness is the only thing that is immovable, that is eternal. To attain it is freedom. To attain it is the goal of life. If you miss it you have missed your life and you have missed a tremendously great gift, a great opportunity.
Enough for today.
The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 7
Chapter #4
Chapter title: A real man is unpredictable
14 December 1979 am in Buddha Hall

The first question:
Question 1
BELOVED MASTER,
WHEN THE MOMENT COMES THE LEAF LETS GO ITS TENDER HOLD AND GREETS ITS DYING WITH INNER GRACE. IS IT THEN THAT THE WAY IS OPEN FOR LIFE TO EMBRACE ITS OWN E'ER THE LEAF TOUCHES DOWN?

Yes, Amitabh, that's the secret of life and death both, the secret of the secrets: how to allow existence to pass through you totally unhindered, unobstructed, how to be in a state of absolute nonresistance. Buddha calls it TATHATA -- suchness.

The ego is resistance. Let-go means disappearance of the ego. When you are just a hollow bamboo, existence sings millions of songs through you. It transforms you into a beautiful flute. But you have to be a hollow bamboo, utterly empty, so there is nothing to obstruct the flow.

A total yes is sannyas, an unconditional yes: yes to all, to life and to death -- because death is not against life but is life's ultimate culmination, its highest peak. Yes to joy and yes to sadness too, because joy cannot exist without sadness. Joy is possible only if sadness creates the background. They are joined together so intrinsically that they are inseparable. And man's whole effort is to separate them. Man goes on trying to do the impossible -- he wants to live without death. Now that is utter stupidity! Life implies death; death is at the very core of life. The only way to deny death is to deny life too.

So the people who have tried to deny death have died; before death has come they are no longer there. They have not lived at all. In denying death they had to deny life too, because the more you live the more you become available to death. When life is at the peak, death is the closest. Avoid death and you will have to avoid the peaks of life. You will have to live in a lukewarm way, neither dead nor alive, which is far worse than death itself.

And so is the case with all the polar opposites: destroy one and the other is automatically destroyed. You cannot save the other; they are like two aspects of the same coin.
Seeing it, Amitabh, a great understanding arises. One relaxes. One says yes, to life, to death, to darkness, to light, to sadness, to joy, to all that is without any choice. That choiceless understanding is enlightenment, is buddhahood.
You say, "When that moment comes the leaf lets go its tender hold and greets its dying with inner grace...."
That's how YOU have to learn to die. The way of the leaf is the way of the sannyasin too. And your hold has to be tender; otherwise it will be difficult to let go. Your hold has to be almost not a hold at all. Your hold cannot be a clinging. Only those people cling who don't understand this polar game of existence, and their clinging destroys all. They have to die, but their death becomes graceless. They have to die, as everybody else, but their death becomes agony.
The word 'agony' comes from AGON -- agon means struggle. Agony means struggle. They die fighting. The whole fight is an exercise in futility: they are not going to win, but still they go on trying. Millions of people have tried and failed; still we are such fools, we go on repeating the same pattern. We still hope that "Maybe I am the exception, maybe I can manage somehow."
Nobody has been able to manage, not because they have not tried enough, not because they have not tried strongly, but because it is not possible in the very nature of things. They have done all that can be done, nothing has been left undone, but death is bound to happen -- in fact it has

already happened in your very birth. To be born is one pole; the other pole is hidden in it.
One starts dying the moment one starts breathing. The first moment of birth is also the first moment of death. Yes, it takes seventy, eighty years to complete the process. Death does not come suddenly after eighty years; it grows, it grows every moment. It is growing now.... Life is one wing, death is another wing, and both wings are yours. And you are trying to fly with one wing? This is how you create misery for yourself, failure and frustration. Accept both.
Let your hold be tender, so tender that it can be dropped at any moment and there will be no struggle in dropping it, not even a moment's delay -- because even a moment's delay is enough to miss the point, to miss the grace of it.
My work here consists of teaching you how to live and how to die, how to be joyous and how to be sad, how to enjoy your youth and how to enjoy your old age, how to enjoy your health and how to enjoy your illness. If I teach you only how to enjoy your health, your joy, your life, and the other part is neglected, then I am teaching you something which is going to create a division in you, a split in you.
I teach you the totality of existence. Don't possess, don't hold anything, don't cling. Let things come and pass. Allow things to pass through you, and you remain always vulnerable, available. And then there is great beauty, great grace, great ecstasy. Your sadness will also bring a depth to you, as much as your joy. Your death will bring great gifts to you, as many as life itself. Then a man knows that this whole existence is his: nights and days, summers and winters, all are yours.

In remaining vulnerable, open, relaxed, you become a master. That's a strange phenomenon, very paradoxical: in remaining surrendered to existence you become victorious. And these moments will be coming to you again and again. My whole effort is to bring more and more of such moments, such penetrating moments, for you. Don't behave stupidly, don't go on repeating old strategies, old patterns of your mind. Learn new ways of being.
And the greatest thing to learn is not to hold onto anything: to your love, to your joy, to your body, to your health. Enjoy everything -- your health, your body, your love, your woman, your man -- but don't cling. Keep your hands open -- don't become a fist. If you become a fist you become closed -- closed to the winds and the rains and the sun and the moon, closed to God himself. And that is the ugliest way to live; it is creating a grave around yourself. Then your existence is windowless. You go on suffocating inside and you are suffocating because you think you are creating safety and security for yourself.

I have heard an ancient Sufi parable:
A king was very much afraid of death, as everyone is -- and the more you have, the more, of course, you are afraid. A poor man is not as much afraid of death. What has he got to lose? What has life given to him? He remains unconcerned. That's why in poor countries you will see again and again a great indifference about death, poverty, starvation. The reason is, people have lived in such poverty for so long that now they are not so worried about death. Death comes to them as a relief -- relief from all the miseries and anxieties, relief from starvation, suffering, poverty.

People coming from richer countries think, "Why are they so indifferent to death?" The reason is simple: there is nothing to cling to. Their life has not given anything to them. Their life is so poor that death can't take anything away from them; it can't make them poorer than they already are. But the more you have, the more you become afraid of death. The richer the society, the more fear of death.

In poor societies the taboo is sex, and in richer societies the taboo is death. That is an indication whether the society is rich or poor -- you can just look at what their taboo is. If they are very much against sex that means they are poor; if they are very much against death, even afraid to mention it, that simply means they are rich. Hence it is a very difficult encounter between poor countries and richer countries -- their taboos clash.

This is happening every day here, because my people have come from all over the world and the poor Indian society has the taboo against sex. Sex is their problem, sex is their fear. Birth is their fear, not death. They think of how to stop birth, they ponder over birth control methods. In richer countries the scientists go on searching how to postpone death. In poor countries the problem is how to postpone birth.

So the king was very much afraid, naturally. He had so much and death would take everything away; and he had wasted his whole life in accumulating. How to protect himself? And in accumulating so much wealth he had created many enemies and they were always in search of an opportunity to cut off his head, to shoot him.

He took advice from old, wise people of his country. They told him to make a castle with only one door -- no windows, no other doors, just a single door to enter into and to come out of. He would be safe. And on the door he could place a one-thousand-strong security force so it would be impossible for anybody to enter.

The idea was appealing. He made a big castle with no windows, no doors, except the one door which was guarded by one thousand warriors.

The neighboring king, his friend, was also afraid of death. He heard about this castle and he came to see. He was very much impressed. He said, "I will immediately start working, I will immediately create a castle for myself -- this is so safe and so secure!"

When his friend was departing -- the king had come out of the castle to say goodbye to him -- he again appreciated the castle. While he was appreciating the castle, a beggar sitting by the side of the road started laughing loudly. Both the kings were shocked and they asked him, "Why are you laughing? Have you gone mad? And don't you know how to behave in the presence of kings?"

The beggar said, "I could not control myself. Excuse me! But I used to be a king myself, and let me tell you the truth of why I am laughing. I have been watching, because I beg here on this road. I have been watching... the castle is being built, but I am puzzled: I say to you, there is only one mistake, one error, which is going to prove fatal."

The king said, "What is that mistake? You tell us, we will correct it." The king was ready to listen, and not only to listen but to correct it.

The beggar said, "You do one thing: you go inside and tell your people to close the door also, forever, because this door is going to prove dangerous. Death will enter from here! These one thousand warriors will not be able to prevent death, they will not even be able to see it. So close the door completely. Instead make a wall, and you be inside the castle and you will be safe forever! Nobody can kill you, not even death can enter in."
But the king said, "That means I will be already dead! If I cannot come out, what is the point of living?"
And the beggar said, "That's why I am laughing. You are ninety-nine point nine percent dead! Only one door is left, so only that much you are alive."

The more safe you are, the more dead you are. And this is not a beautiful death, the graceful death of the leaf, of the rose petal falling towards the ground, moving back to the source. It is an ugly death, man's invention. A natural death is beautiful; man has made it ugly. Man has made EVERYTHING ugly; whatsoever man touches becomes ugly. If he touches gold it turns into dust.
Amitabh, let this understanding penetrate as deeply as possible. Let this become your very core, your insight. Yes, it is so. Don't possess, don't hold tight. Remain relaxed, remain nonpossessive. If something is available, enjoy it; when it disappears, let it disappear with gratitude -- gratitude for all that it has done for you, with no grudge, with no complaint. And you will know the greatest joys of life and death, light and darkness, of being and nonbeing both.

The second question:
Question 2
BELOVED MASTER,
IN EXISTENCE WHENEVER AN ENLIGHTENED PERSON APPEARS, BOTH THE BAD AND THE GOOD FORCES START FUNCTIONING. AS HISTORY TESTIFIES, OFTEN THE BAD FORCES WIN. A JESUS IS CRUCIFIED, A SOCRATES IS POISONED, A MANSOOR IS CHOPPED, BUDDHA, MAHAVIRA ARE STONED. AS SUCH, A LARGE PART OF HUMANITY REMAINS IN UTTER DARKNESS. BELOVED MASTER, WILL THIS STATE OF AFFAIRS REMAIN AS IN THE PAST? WILL THE SAME PHENOMENON CONTINUE AFTER YOU LEAVE? PLEASE THROW SOME LIGHT.

Dharma Bhikkhu, the first thing to understand is: don't divide existence into good and bad, into God and Devil, into forces of good and forces of evil. That division is a wrong way to look at reality. Existence is one. In existence Jesus and Judas are not separate, but players in the same drama. Can you think of Jesus without Judas? You think Christianity was founded by Jesus alone? Then you are utterly wrong -- fifty percent by Jesus, fifty percent by Judas. And in fact, Judas has played a more important role than Jesus himself.
Hence I don't call Christianity "Christianity"; I call it "Crossianity," because the cross has become the symbol. And who is responsible for the cross? Judas is responsible for the cross. Without Judas, the story of Jesus will lose all its glory. Judas gives the contrast; he is the blackboard on

which Jesus becomes a silver line. He is the black cloud, and Jesus shines forth as a lightning energy -- but without the black cloud you will not be able to see the lightning either.

Do you see stars during the day? They are there, but you can't see them. To see them you will need the dark night -- the darker the night, the more shining are the stars. The night is more starry because more and more stars appear as the darkness deepens. Will you say that darkness is against the stars? It enhances them, it nourishes them.

So the first thing to remember, Dharma Bhikkhu, is that existence is not divided into two camps. It is one game, it is one play; we are all players in it, and the enemy is as much needed as the friend.

It is not accidental that before Jesus was caught he kissed Judas and washed his feet. Christians think this is just saintliness, holiness. My observation is: it is understanding; it has nothing to do with saintliness or holiness. A tremendous understanding!

Jesus is saying, "Although Judas is going to betray me, he has to fulfill his role and I have to fulfill mine -- and we are part of the same drama." This is the Eastern insight: that the forces of light and the forces of darkness are not really separate, they only appear so.

If Socrates was not poisoned you would have forgotten him long ago. And he was going to die anyway, so the people who poisoned him helped his work, they really served his cause. They made his name immortal.

There have been many Sufi mystics of the same status as al-Hillaj Mansoor, but how many names do you remember? Do you remember even the name of the master of

Mansoor? All names have been forgotten. Mansoor has become an eternal light, for the simple reason that he was killed, brutally killed -- yes, chopped into parts. Jesus' death compared to Mansoor's looks very human, compassionate. Mansoor was killed part by part. First his legs were cut off, then his hands, then his eyes were taken out, then his tongue was cut out, then his head was cut off -- in parts, in pieces.

But Mansoor became the most precious name in the whole Sufi tradition; and the tradition is rich: Bahauddin, Jalaluddin, Hassan, Rabiya, Mansoor's own master, Junnaid, and thousands of others who have become enlightened.

These two traditions in the world have created the most enlightened people: one is Zen, born out of Buddha's insight, and another is Sufism, born out of Mohammed's insight. These two traditions have created the greatest light in the world. But you cannot find a single name in Zen compared to Mansoor, for the simple reason that no Zen master was chopped up, killed, crucified.

If Jesus has conquered almost the whole world -- because almost half of humanity is under his impact -- what is the reason? Is Mahavira in any way lagging behind in his enlightenment? Is Kanad not capable of transforming the whole world? They are as capable as Jesus, but they don't have their Judas -- the cross is missing. They died in their beds, they died in an ordinary way. As far as their inner being is concerned they died in an extraordinary way, but who is going to see and understand it? Jesus' death becomes such an historical phenomenon, so significant, that history is divided at that point: before Jesus and after

Jesus. Jesus becomes the line of division. Nobody else has been so significant. Why?
And you say, Dharma Bhikkhu, "Often the bad forces win." No, never. In the first place, the good and the bad are not enemies -- playing a game of hide-and-seek. And in the second place, the good always wins because the good is bigger than the bad. Jesus is far bigger than Judas, and Socrates is far bigger than the people who poisoned him, and Mansoor is far bigger than the people who killed him. Good is infinite; bad is just a part in it, a small part -- intrinsic, necessary, inevitable, but a small part. It serves good.
No, by Jesus' crucifixion the forces of evil have not won -- they can't win, it is impossible. God is always victorious. His ways are strange: sometimes he conquers you in such a strange way that you can't see the point immediately. He conquers through Jesus by crucifying Jesus -- a strange method, a mysterious way, but such are the ways of God. And thirdly, it is always going to remain the same; about that, there is going to be no change. And I don't think that there is any need for any change either; it is perfectly right. It is far more beautiful to die on the cross than to die in Sassoon Hospital!* Just the idea of dying in Sassoon Hospital is frightening. I am not afraid of death, but I am afraid of Sassoon Hospital!

The third question:
Question 3
BELOVED MASTER,
I AM A STRONG MAN, BUT I CANNOT FIND A WOMAN WHO TRULY LOVES ME. WHAT IS

MISSING IN ME? I HAVE COME HERE TO FIND A SOULMATE. CAN YOU HELP ME?

Sudhiro, maybe... but before I can help you to find a soulmate I will have to create a soul in you, which is far more difficult! You may be physically strong; that does not mean that you have a soul.

Soul is only a seed; you don't have actual souls within you, just possibilities. And without a soul, people start searching for a soulmate! Only a SOUL can attract another soul. If you have a soul, then some soul is bound to be attracted towards you; you will find the soulmate.

But one never thinks that way. And the idea that you are a strong man may become an obstruction, because a strong man ordinarily is one who is more animalistic. That's our idea of strength: a man who looks more like an animal. Whenever I see the pictures of Mr. Universe I am simply puzzled -- I can't see any beauty, they look utterly ugly; all muscles and nothing else! They look more like animals than men.

And this is not health either, because they all die early and they all die with dangerous diseases, for the simple reason that they force their bodies in a certain mold. They don't love their bodies; their bodies are tense. By the time these Mr. Universes are forty they are on the verge of dying and they succumb to great illnesses, incurable, because they themselves have created those illnesses. They have been forcing their bodies, manipulating their bodies. They have succeeded, but at a great cost.

Strength, in the ordinary mind, means aggressiveness. And a woman needs a little more tenderness, not aggressiveness.

And who knows, Sudhiro? You may just be carrying this idea that you are a strong man and you may not even be that. It may be just an ego idea, a fantasy.

Moe and Sophie had been married for twelve years. One night in bed Moe said, "Lift up your nightgown."
Sophie did not answer.
Moe tried once again. "Hey, be a good girl. Lift up your nightgown."
Sophie still did not reply.
Moe stormed out of the room, slamming the door. Sophie got up and locked it. For half an hour Moe walked the living room. Then he strode back to the bedroom, pushed on the door, and found it was locked.
"Open the door," he pleaded. "I am sorry I got sore. Open the door!"
Sophie did not answer.
"If you don't open the door I will break it down!"
"Look at my athlete!" shouted Sophie. "A nightgown he can't lift up, but a door he will break down!"

So I don't know how strong you are. Maybe you are able to break doors -- that won't help. You will have to learn the other art! And I don't know, Sudhiro, how old you are -- because you must have been searching long; otherwise you would not have reached here. And if you have been failing for your whole life you must have become crystallized into certain patterns. You may be aggressive, you may be a pretender, you may be less interested in love and more in conquering a woman.

There are many people who go on doing that: they go on counting how many women they have conquered. There are women also -- now only in the West but soon they will be in the East too -- who go on counting, as if love is a question of quantity!

A man was making love to a woman and he asked her, "Am I the first man to make love to you?"
And a long silence followed. The man asked, "Have you heard me or not?"
She said, "I have heard, but I am counting."

There are people who keep count: how many women they have conquered, how many men they have conquered. If you are interested in conquest you are not interested in love. And when slowly slowly, life starts slipping out of your hands, when death starts knocking on your doors, you become frightened. Suddenly you become alert that you have missed something beautiful.
Love is one of the greatest experiences in life -- and many miss it. They may reproduce children, they may have married many times, but love is a totally different phenomenon. It needs a great sensitivity, it needs a soul. And when time passes and energies starts waning and death comes closer, you are in a panic.
That's exactly my feeling reading your question, Sudhiro -- that you are in a panic.

Two little old ladies were chatting over the backyard fence. The first one boasted, "I went out with old man Cain last night and I had to slap him twice."

"To stop him?" asked her friend.
"No," she giggled, "to start him!"

But it is good that you have come here. If you cannot start, we can slap you! Something is always possible. One thing that you need is: rather than searching for a soulmate, become a soul, become more conscious.
When love is unconscious it is only lust and nothing else -- a beautiful name for an ugly thing. When love is conscious, only then it is love. But how many people are conscious? When love is meditative, only then it is love.
And a meditative love will attract a meditative love energy. You get only what you deserve, remember, neither less nor more. You always get exactly that which you deserve. Existence is very just and very fair. So if you are not getting a soulmate, it is not going to help to frantically search for one. Rather look in. You are missing something in you -- you are missing love qualities. You are not tender, you are not sensitive, you are not conscious. And you don't know how to give without asking anything in return. Your love is a demand, there is a condition to it. It is a kind of exploitation. You want to use the other's body, and no woman is ever happy if she is used -- she hates it.
Millions of women hate their husbands for the simple reason that they feel used, as if they are just machines for your sexual lust to be relieved so that you can have a good night's sleep. No woman can ever respect you if she feels she is being used. Each being is an end unto himself. Never use a woman, never use a man, never use anybody. Nobody is a means for your purposes. Respect -- love is a sharing, it is not using the other, it is not trying to snatch something

from the other. On the contrary, it is giving wholeheartedly for no reason at all, just for the sheer joy of giving.
And then suddenly you will find one day you have found someone with whom your energies are in harmony, in accord. And it is a beautiful experience even to find a single person with whom you are in accord. And here you can find many persons with whom you are in accord.
You can't imagine my ecstasy, because I am in accord with all of my sannyasins, in deep accord, a tremendous harmony. Then love reaches its highest peak. It is no more sexual, it is pure prayer. And when love is prayer, you have found the soulmate.
But if your love is lust you can't find a soulmate, you can only find some woman's body. And the body is not going to help fulfill your longing. You need attunement with the soul, with the inner being, with the interiority of the woman or of the man. At least with one person if it happens, great joy arises. And then when you know the art, it can happen with many more people. And that's what friendship is.
My effort here is to create a commune where thousands of souls are in such deep friendship, in such love, as if they are all soulmates. We can release such great light into the world through that energy field! We can start such a revolution in the world, we can ignite such fire, that it will go on burning in the future, down the centuries, helping people to be transformed, to be reborn.

The fourth question:
Question 4
BELOVED MASTER,

I HAVE COME ACROSS A STATEMENT BY R.D. LAING THAT MADNESS IS NOT BREAKDOWN, IT IS BREAKTHROUGH. OUR MEDITATION CAMPS, WHENEVER THEY ARE CONDUCTED, ARE SEEN AS A BREAKDOWN, EVEN BY PSYCHIATRISTS. IS IT JUSTIFIED AND ETHICAL FOR PATIENTS OF DEPRESSION TO BE GIVEN DYNAMIC MEDITATION? PLEASE ADVISE. I AM MERELY A SURGEON.

Krishna Teertha Bharti, R.D. Laing is bringing a radical change into the world of therapy. He is not an ordinary psychiatrist, he is a revolutionary psychiatrist. He understands me and what I am doing here. He goes on sending his books to me. He reads what is happening here, what I am saying, what I am teaching. He has been meeting with sannyasins in London -- he is immensely interested. But he is a revolutionary and his insight is great, and I agree with him in toto. He is right: madness is not a breakdown, it is a breakthrough.

But one thing I would like to say: all madnesses are not breakthroughs. But every madness can be transformed into a breakthrough -- and that should be the work of the therapist. Even if the madness is a breakdown, the function of the therapist is to help the breakdown to be transformed into a breakthrough. Otherwise, what is your purpose? What are you doing?

Up to now, the function of the therapist has been to normalize the person, to bring him back to his old self. And what was his old self in the first place? It is his old self that has brought this state of madness. If you bring him back to

the old self you are simply postponing the same thing happening again. Sooner or later he will again become mad. Maybe you are helping him for temporary relief. Unless his breakdown becomes a breakthrough you have not been a real help to him.

My methods of meditation are methods for future psychotherapy. The orthodox, the ordinary psychiatrists will be against my methods, because they cling to the old idea. They are afraid of the breakdown -- I am not afraid of the breakdown. Breakdown simply means the change has started. Breakdown simply means all the old strategies, all the old securities, have failed. Breakdown simply means that your old personality is of no use anymore. You need a new being, a new birth.

When the child is born out of the womb he must be thinking -- if he can think -- that this is a breakdown, because his whole world is disappearing. The womb, its coziness, its warmth, its safety, security -- no worry, no responsibility -- all that is disappearing. And the child has to pass such a narrow passage, he must be feeling that he is dying. And then he has to learn a new way of life from ABC. It takes twenty-five years for us to educate him to function rightly in the society.

But our society is abnormal, our society is neurotic. It has been dominated by neurotic politicians, neurotic priests, for centuries. So we convert each child into a neurotic -- Hindu neurotics, Mohammedan neurotics, Christian neurotics. We change every child into a fanatic, and the more fanatic he is the more we praise him. The more he says, "Hinduism is the only religion, the only right religion, the only true religion," Hindus will praise him.

That's how Ayatollah Khomeini is being praised by foolish people in Iran. He is a lunatic -- he needs a breakdown! -- but he is being praised as a great leader, a revolutionary leader. Down the centuries, fanatics have been praised.

If somebody says, "India is the greatest country in the world, the most religious, the most sacred land," people will praise him. They will say, "Look how devoted he is to the country." He is simply mad -- he needs therapy!

Because we have praised these kinds of neurotic attitudes, approaches, and we have condemned others... if somebody does not praise Mohammedanism, Hinduism, Christianity, we think he is a traitor. If somebody is not a great nationalist we think he is a traitor. We have condemned the sane people and we have praised the insane. Naturally, the crowd has remained insane.

The whole world needs a breakdown! But just a breakdown is not going to help. Before the world goes through that breakdown -- and the day is coming closer every day -- methods and devices have to be invented, innovated, which can transform the breakdown into a breakthrough.

That's what my meditation techniques are: a preparation for the future, a preparation, an absolutely necessary preparation, for something which is going to happen.

Humanity IS on the verge of a breakdown -- we have come to the very end of the tether. Now there is no more, we cannot go on any longer in this way. The old patterns have been outlived; they are all outdated.

Your psychiatrists and your psychoanalysts will be against me, because they serve the past and I have no love for the past, not at all. I love the present, and through the present I prepare for the future. The past is so ugly, it is not even

worth looking at. In a better future we will stop teaching people about past history, about Alexanders, Genghis Khans, Nadirshahs, Tamerlanes, because even to mention them to the children is wrong. Even to give them an idea that such people have existed, that man can fall into such degradation, is poisoning their minds.

But your psychoanalysts, psychiatrists, are in the service of the past; hence they will be against my methods. Their whole effort is somehow to patch up people. If some hole appears they simply patch it up, if some wound appears they cover it up. They keep you functioning efficiently as a clerk in an office, as a deputy collector, as a police inspector, as a stationmaster, etcetera. They are not interested in your humanity. Their interest is only that you should remain a functioning member of society, mechanically useful, that's all.

My purpose is totally different: I want you to be a human being. I want you not only to be a human being but to rise towards being divine.

You ask me, Krishna Teertha Bharti.... He is a surgeon, a doctor; naturally this question has arisen in his mind. You ask me, "Is it justified and ethical for patients of depression to be given Dynamic Meditation?"

What else can be more justified and more ethical -- because to be a sufferer of depression simply means he has repressed too much. Depression is nothing but repression. He is depressed so much because he has not been allowed to express himself. Dynamic Meditation is expression. In expressing himself, in catharting all that has been repressed in his unconscious, he will be unburdened, he will become saner, healthier.

Two robbers broke into a bank in a small town.
"Alright," said the bigger man. "Line up! We are gonna rob all the men and rape all the women!"
"Wait a second!" snapped his partner. "Let us just grab the dough and beat it!"
"Shut up and mind your own business," said the spinster from behind the counter. "The big fella knows what he is doing!"

We have made everybody repressed, pushing down all kinds of things. They are boiling within.

Before she left a friend's house Aunt Emma was warned that a sex maniac was loose in the neighborhood. That evening when she returned to her apartment, she cautiously looked under her bed, in her closet and behind the draperies.
Then Emma switched on the light. "Well, he is not here!" she sighed. "Damn it!"

Everybody who has been brought up in our societies needs some methods to vomit anger, sex, greed, jealousies, envies. You are sitting on a volcano... and the volcano can erupt at any moment! If catharsis is allowed -- and that's what Dynamic Meditation is all about -- the volcano will disappear. You will become saner.
I am not saying you will become more normal, but I am saying you will become more sane. Now, the two may not coincide; in fact they cannot -- because by the normal we really don't mean the normal but we mean the average. It is

a wrong use of the word. 'Normal' should mean one who lives according to the norm, one who lives according to the natural, spontaneous -- he is normal. But people are not allowed to live naturally and spontaneously. They are forced to live an average life as others are living -- and the average is thought to be normal.
That's why I say I make people saner. They will be normal REALLY, but they may not coincide with your idea of the normal. They will not be average, certainly -- they will be higher than the average. They will have more insight into life, more joy in their lives, more freedom in their lives, more rebellion too -- more freedom and more rebellion. And the society and church are against freedom. They don't want you to be free, they want you to be slaves. Their whole vested interest is in your being always a slave. Hence they are all against me. I can understand, I am not at all surprised by their anger against me. Their anger is natural, because whatsoever I am doing here is going to sabotage their whole structure, and sometimes just a hole in the boat is enough to sink it. And my effort is to make as many holes as possible!

The last question:
Question 5
BELOVED MASTER,
IS MAN PREDICTABLE?

Tosho, man is not predictable -- if he is a man. But very few men are really men -- they are machines. Machines are predictable. Man has freedom. You cannot predict Buddha, but you can predict the so-called ordinary people. They are

predictable -- they go on doing the same thing again and again. You know what they have been doing up to now and according to that you can predict what they are going to do tomorrow.
Small children are not predictable because they are not yet converted into machines.

Preparing to give a small boy an aptitude test, a psychiatrist told his nurse to put a pitchfork, a wrench and a hammer on the table.
"If he grabs the pitchfork he will be a farmer. If he grabs the wrench he will be a mechanic. And if he grabs the hammer he will be a carpenter," the doctor explained.
The boy fooled everyone -- he grabbed the nurse.

Man has become so mechanical that even animals sometimes behave in a more unpredictable way than man.

Experimental psychologists like to tell a story about a professor who investigated the ability of chimpanzees to solve problems. A banana was suspended from the center of the ceiling, at a height that the chimp could not reach by jumping. The room was bare of all objects except several packing crates placed around the room at random. The test was to see whether a lady chimp would think of first stacking the crates in the center of the room and then of climbing on top of the crates to get the banana.
The chimp sat quietly in a corner, watching the psychologist arrange the crates. She waited patiently until the professor crossed the middle of the room. When he was

directly below the fruit, the chimp suddenly jumped on his shoulder, then leaped into the air and grabbed the banana.

Tosho, man -- a real man -- is not predictable, because he lives moment to moment. He does not live out of the past and he does not live out of any ideology for the future. He simply lives THIS moment. He responds to the situation, he is responsible; hence he is not predictable.
My sannyasins have to become unpredictable. The more unpredictable you are, the more you are human.
Enough for today.
The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 7
Chapter #5
Chapter title: Truth is that which is
15 December 1979 am in Buddha Hall

IF YOU DETERMINE YOUR COURSE
WITH FORCE OR SPEED,
YOU MISS THE WAY OF THE LAW.

QUIETLY CONSIDER
WHAT IS RIGHT AND WHAT IS WRONG.
RECEIVING ALL OPINIONS EQUALLY,
WITHOUT HASTE, WISELY,
OBSERVE THE LAW.

WHO IS WISE,
THE ELOQUENT OR THE QUIET MAN?
BE QUIET,
AND LOVING AND FEARLESS.

FOR THE MIND TALKS,
BUT THE BODY KNOWS.

GRAY HAIRS DO NOT MAKE A MASTER.
A MAN MAY GROW OLD IN VAIN.

THE TRUE MASTER LIVES IN TRUTH,
IN GOODNESS AND RESTRAINT,
NONVIOLENCE, MODERATION AND PURITY.

FINE WORDS OR FINE FEATURES
CANNOT MAKE A MASTER
OUT OF A JEALOUS AND GREEDY MAN.

ONLY WHEN ENVY AND SELFISHNESS
ARE ROOTED OUT OF HIM
MAY HE GROW IN BEAUTY.

A MAN MAY SHAVE HIS HEAD
BUT IF HE STILL LIES AND NEGLECTS HIS WORK,
IF HE CLINGS TO DESIRE AND ATTACHMENT,
HOW CAN HE FOLLOW THE WAY?

THE TRUE SEEKER
SUBDUES ALL WAYWARDNESS.
HE HAS SUBMITTED HIS NATURE TO QUIETNESS.

HE IS A TRUE SEEKER
NOT BECAUSE HE BEGS
BUT BECAUSE HE FOLLOWS THE LAWFUL WAY,

HOLDING BACK NOTHING, HOLDING TO NOTHING, BEYOND GOOD AND BEYOND EVIL, BEYOND THE BODY AND BEYOND THE MIND.

The way of Gautama the Buddha is the way of let-go; it cannot be determined by willpower. Willpower is only a beautiful name for ego power. The existence of the will is nothing but a by-product of the ego. The ego itself is a shadow, hence willpower is a shadow of a shadow. The very idea of having a will of one's own is against existence. It creates a rift between you and the whole. The whole has will -- how can the part have a will of its own? The part can win, not against the whole but with the whole. The part can win, not by winning but by surrendering.

The path of Buddha is of total surrender: total surrender to the dhamma, to tao, to the universal law, to God. These are different names for the same phenomenon. We are living in a cosmos, not in a chaos. Everything is as perfect as it can be; nothing can be improved upon. The very idea of trying to improve upon things is sheer stupidity. Those who have known, they have known the absolute perfection of existence.

Then what is left? To dissolve in the whole and celebrate! This cannot be done as a determination on your part, because if YOU determine, then you remain there behind your determination hiding in disguise. If YOU determine, how can you dissolve? YOU cannot surrender -- if you surrender, it is not surrender.

Then what is surrender? How is it going to happen at all? Surrender is the understanding that the ego is false. In that

very understanding, the ego evaporates -- is not found anymore -- and the surrender has happened. Not that it has been done by you; it happens without your doing. Only then is it true, authentic; it has immense beauty and tremendous power, because then you become a vehicle of the whole. You are no longer a part, you simply represent the whole.
You are the wave in the ocean -- and the wave in the ocean is the ocean itself! If the ocean contains the wave, the wave contains the ocean in a similar way. They are inseparable, they are one. The wave is the manifestation of the unmanifest, a finite expression of the infinite. So are you just a wave. The moment you start thinking yourself separate, the wave has gone insane.

The first sutra:

IF YOU DETERMINE YOUR COURSE
WITH FORCE OR SPEED,
YOU MISS THE WAY OF THE LAW.

The ego is always aggressive; it can exist only through aggression. It creates such fuss, such dust, such smoke, that you can't see. It makes you blind. It whirls you round and round, it makes you dizzy. That's why the ego is always hankering for more and more power, more and more force. It wants to do things with absolute force.
The ego is a fascist, it is totalitarian, it is dictatorial. It does not want any rebellion against itself. It immediately destroys any possibility of you becoming free of it. Just the seed of a rebellion... and it starts destroying it. It is

constantly watching. It is constantly trying to keep you so occupied that you never become aware of the great slavery you are living in. And the ego is very cunning: it convinces you that "I am you."

So whenever the idea of dropping the ego arises you start feeling as if you are losing your identity. The ego is not your identity. It is because of the ego that you are not able to know who you really are. The ego is the barrier. It keeps you running and it keeps you at such a speed, in such a hurry, that you don't have any time to think things over, to ponder, to meditate, to see what you are doing, why you are doing it.

It does not give you any time to see. It keeps you crazy, engaged, constantly engaged in one desire or other. Before one desire is spent it creates ten more. It keeps new desires ready so there is never a gap, never an interval left between two desires -- because in that gap you will be able to see and recognize the stupidity of your life, the utter madness of your life. And once you have seen it you cannot remain part of it anymore. You will jump out of it! You have seen that the house is on fire.

Buddha says: IF YOU DETERMINE YOUR COURSE WITH FORCE OR SPEED, YOU MISS THE WAY OF THE LAW. You miss the whole point of existence, because existence is available in all its beauty and benediction only to those who are living in a relaxed way -- not with force, not with any speed; who are not rushing, running, who are not ambitious, who are not at all engaged in some not-yet future. It is available to those who are at rest, at home with the present moment, so relaxed as if there is no other time.

This moment is all.... In that relaxed state, tao opens its doors.

Buddha's name for tao is dhamma. In English there is no real synonym for tao or dhamma, hence it has been translated as 'the law'. It is a poor word. 'The law' does not really indicate the meaning of Buddha's word 'dhamma'. Dhamma means the nature of existence. Dhamma means the harmony of existence. Dhamma means that which holds the existence together. Dhamma means the universal interconnectedness. It is a multidimensional word, tremendously pregnant. To call it "the law" is to reduce it to a one-dimensional word.

And why do we miss the point of existence, the very point which can make us blissful, which can make us free from all misery? We miss because we are in such a hurry. Strange! Ordinarily we think the man who is moving with speed will reach sooner, and the man who works with great force is going to achieve. Yes, that's how it happens in the world; but in the deepest realm of existence just the reverse is the case.

If you go with speed you will miss; if you are in too much of a hurry you will not be able to see. Your eyes will remain clouded, you will remain tense. You will not be able to see that which is, because your mind is so full of desire, of ambition, of achievement, you can't see that which is. You are always hankering for that which should be. Ordinarily, the "ought" has become more important than the "is," the "should be" has become more important than "that which is." And God is that which is, truth is that which is.

Hence, Buddha says: Relax, let go, rest.

QUIETLY CONSIDER
WHAT IS RIGHT AND WHAT IS WRONG.
RECEIVING ALL OPINIONS EQUALLY,
WITHOUT HASTE, WISELY,
OBSERVE THE LAW.

Much is missed in the translation: QUIETLY CONSIDER.... Buddha's word is not 'consider' -- he says meditate, quietly meditate. But in English, to meditate means to consider, to think concentratedly. To meditate means to meditate UPON something. There is an object, you have to contemplate about it. Meditation in English has the connotation of concentrated thinking on a certain object.

But the Buddhist meaning of meditation -- DHYANA -- is totally different. It has nothing to do with any object in particular; it has something to do, certainly, with you, but not with the object. It has something to do with the consciousness, not with the content. It is a totally different orientation. The content is outside, the object is outside, and consciousness is inside. The English word 'meditation' is extrovert; the Buddhist word 'meditation' is introvert. When Buddha says meditate he means don't think -- it is just the opposite of the English meaning. He says: drop all thinking and see. That is the only way to know things as they are... because if you are thinking, you are bringing your prejudices in. If you are thinking, you are bringing your past conclusions in. If you are thinking, your mind is functioning -- and mind is past, and the past never allows you to see the present. Thinking has to stop for meditation

to be. Thinking has to evaporate totally. In that state of no-thought you can see.

But to the Western mind, the state of no-thought seems as if you will fall asleep. What will you do if there is no thought? The Western mind is constantly DOING something. It can keep itself awake only if it is occupied, doing something. It is a doer. And that is the difference between the Eastern and the Western approach.

The East has stumbled upon a totally different kind of experience -- the experience of no-thought and yet being fully awake. This was the greatest revelation, one of the most important contributions to the world. The West knows thinking and sleep. You are doing something either with the body or with the mind; if you have nothing to do with the body or the mind you go to sleep, then sleep takes over. Rest, in the West, becomes sleep; rest, in the East, is a state of wakefulness without thought. It is neither sleep nor thinking; it is a totally different thing from both. Thoughts have disappeared....

The Western psychologists say: If there is no thought, how can there be consciousness? Western psychology insists that consciousness is always consciousness OF something; it can't exist by itself. Logically it is appealing, convincing, but existentially it is absurd.

Consciousness can exist without any thought -- I say it by my own experience. It is not a question of my conclusion through a thought process, it is my experience. It is the experience of all the buddhas of the past: consciousness CAN exist without thought. That is the only possibility of liberation; otherwise there will be no possibility -- either

you are occupied with thoughts or you fall asleep and become occupied with dreams.

And you go on moving in this vicious circle: dreams, thoughts, dreams, thoughts.... Dreams are pictorial thoughts, thoughts are verbal pictures; they are not much different. Dreams are a little primitive, thoughts are a little more sophisticated, but they do the same thing. They keep you focused on the outside, they never allow you to experience your own subjectivity.

That subjectivity is your truth. And the only way to know it is to be in total rest -- as one is in sleep -- and yet be totally aware, alert, and without any thoughts. This is samadhi, this is the ultimate state of dhyana -- meditation. This is what Buddha means when he says: QUIETLY CONSIDER WHAT IS RIGHT AND WHAT IS WRONG.

Now, if you consider what is right, what is wrong, you miss. You are bound to start thinking, "What is right and what is wrong?" And what will you think about? You will start chewing over many thoughts that have been provided to you by the society. The society has taught you, "This is right and that is wrong," and you will start chewing them again. Maybe you will make some new combinations, you will color and paint and decorate them, but basically, essentially, they will be impositions from others. It is not your own experience. Hence Buddha can't mean thinking. He says: meditate quietly. Be silent and see. And in that seeing you will know -- without any logical process you will simply know: This is this. This is good and this is bad. Not that you have to decide it according to the Bible or the Koran or the Gita. If you have eyes you know where the wall is and where the door is. Do you have to think about

it? Each time you go out of your room do you have to think again and again where the door is and where the wall is? You simply go out of the door without thinking at all, because you can see! But if you are blind, each time you will have to think again, "Where is the door?" You will have to grope for the door.

Thinking is a blind state, it is a groping in darkness. Meditation is a state of having eyes, you are capable of seeing. You simply see what is right and what is wrong. And when you see what is right and what is wrong you can't do the wrong, you can't go against the right.

A meditator naturally follows that which is good -- not that he decides to follow it -- and naturally avoids that which is bad. Not that he decides to avoid it; a meditator never takes any vows -- there is no need. A man with eyes never takes the vow that "I will always enter from the door, go out from the door. I promise you, God, that I will never try to enter from the wall. Believe me, I am a man of my word, I will keep it, although I know there will be many temptations." If somebody is saying that, you will laugh. "What nonsense he is talking! What temptations?" Have you ever been tempted by the wall to get in and out through it? No such temptation is there.

When one can see clearly, good results. It is so natural, it is so spontaneous, you can't say that you have decided it. You can't say that you have used your will. You can't even say that this is your act. All that you can say is that this is how things are happening, not that you are doing them, you are only allowing them to happen. Then life has such a relaxed joy, because no tension follows it, no strain. The achieving

mind is no longer there, hence there is never any frustration.

QUIETLY CONSIDER WHAT IS RIGHT AND WHAT IS WRONG. But in the English translation it becomes just the opposite. If you simply cling to the English words it means think, ponder, consider, what is right and what is wrong.

RECEIVING ALL OPINIONS EQUALLY, WITHOUT HASTE, WISELY, OBSERVE THE LAW. Buddha says: Don't have any prejudice. And we are so full of prejudices, we are bundles of prejudices. And whenever we think that we have come to a conclusion, it is just a deception -- you have again come to a prejudice which has already been put inside you by the society, by the church, by the state. You are victims of so many vested interests, which are all sitting around you with greedy eyes to exploit you, to suck your blood and soul.

Watch, the next time you feel that you have understood something, observed something. Go back and try to see: is it some past prejudice that has again popped up in a new form, in a new format, with new words? And you will be surprised: it is so.

The head doctor at the hospital was making his rounds and he passed before a group of newborn babies. "What's the matter with this little fellow? He seems awfully puny and underweight."

The nurse said, "He is one of those artificial insemination babies, and I am afraid he has been coming along rather slowly."

"Confirms a pet theory of mine," said the doctor. "Spare the rod and spoil the child!"

That's what you go on doing. Peter's principle says: If the facts do not conform to the theory they must be disposed of. He also says: If you cannot convince them, confuse them.

And that's what your great scholars go on doing. They cannot convince anybody, but they can certainly confuse. They have confused the whole world. That's what your theologians have done, your priests have done. The world lives in such confusion because of these great scholars, priests, professors, philosophers, pundits; and they have devoted their whole lives to confusing you. They are not convinced themselves of what they are saying, but when they become capable of confusing you they enjoy the ego trip. It is very satisfying to confuse somebody because you become superior. And there are always foolish people who are ready to become victims of words -- beautiful, fine words. And systems made of words are nothing but houses made out of playing cards.

George Bernard Shaw used to say: Build a system that even a fool can use and only a fool will want to use it.

Every religion tries to convince the lowest denominator, the ordinary man. They can't succeed in convincing, because they themselves are not convinced. Conviction comes out of truth, not out of thinking, not out of studying. Conviction comes out of experience. They are themselves not convinced, but they have become very very skillful, efficient, in using words, making great systems out of words. They can confuse people. And there are millions of

fools who are ready -- ready to be confused, and they think that their confusion is their conviction.
That's why there are so many Christians -- all confused about Christ. Whenever somebody says, "I am a Christian," I immediately translate it that he is confused about Christ. When somebody says, "I am a Buddhist," I know that he is confused about Buddha. Because if you are NOT confused about Christ you will not be a Christian, you will be a christ! If you are convinced of the truth of Christ, you will be a christ not a Christian. If you are convinced of the truth of Buddha, if YOU have experienced it, you will be a buddha not a Buddhist.
Fools are many and they can be exploited by these clever, cunning people. Scholars are clever and cunning people. They are experts in using fine words with such skill that you cannot see the loopholes. Because you can't see the loopholes you start believing in their words. But no belief ever delivers you from your misery, no belief becomes salvation -- Christian, Hindu or Mohammedan. Belief as such is a bondage.
Buddha says: RECEIVING ALL OPINIONS EQUALLY.... Without any prejudice, without any opinion already arrived at, without any a priori.... Just listen to, and watch, all kinds of things. Be a pure mirror -- that is meditation. And without haste, because if you are in a hurry you will jump upon the conclusion. You are not really concerned with truth, you are more concerned with a conclusion, because the conclusion gives comfort, the conclusion gives you a security, the conclusion makes you feel that you know. It covers up your ignorance, it makes you feel sure and certain.

Hence people are so ready to become part of any church. They are not ready to become free. Even if sometimes they leave a church, they leave only to join another church. The Hindu becomes the Mohammedan, the Mohammedan becomes the Christian, the Christian becomes the Hindu. And this way they go on moving from one church to another, but they remain the same people because their approach remains the same.

There are only two approaches: one is of the mind, the other is of meditation. The approach of the mind remains confined to the world of beliefs, and the approach of meditation is the approach without thoughts, without beliefs, without prejudices.

WITHOUT HASTE, WISELY, OBSERVE THE LAW.

Don't be in a hurry. In hurrying you may decide something which is not true. Just for the longing to make a decision, you may conclude, you may start believing. A real inquirer is ready to wait, he is very patient. Even if it takes lives he is ready to devote lives.

Truth is worth devoting as much time to as you can. One should not be in the mind in any way or have any hurry; otherwise he is bound to fall victim to some false commodity. In the name of truth, he will have something bogus.

Buddha says: ... WISELY, OBSERVE THE LAW. Again the problem arises: OBSERVE THE LAW makes it appear as if Buddha is saying, "Follow the Ten Commandments." No, he is not saying that. Again he is saying: Observe your nature, your self-nature, follow it. Be yourself, be authentically yourself. Risk everything for being yourself. It is comfortable not to be yourself, because when you are

ready not to be yourself people are very happy with you. You follow them, you imitate them, they become your leaders -- religious, political, etcetera. But when you try to be yourself you are nobody's follower and nobody is your leader.

My sannyasins are not my followers, just friends, fellow-travelers. I am not their leader, I am not leading them towards anything. I am simply a poet singing my song, a musician playing on my sitar. You enjoy it! It is not a question of being convinced by me. When you listen to the birds in the morning you don't become convinced of the truth of their song... just the beauty.

My effort is to share my joy, my beauty, my experience with you. And I am grateful that you allow me to be with you. That you allow me to hold your hand in deep love, I am grateful. But you are not my followers, just my friends. I am not your leader, I am not your guide. I have become awakened, true -- and you are fast asleep. I can wake you up. But if somebody wakes you up in the morning he does not become your leader and does not become your guide. Just a friend! And a friend in need is a friend indeed. And that is the greatest need: that you are asleep and somebody is needed to wake you up.

"Follow the law," in Buddha's vision, means follow your self-nature, dhamma, tao.

WHO IS WISE,
THE ELOQUENT OR THE QUIET MAN?

Buddha asks: WHO IS WISE? The clever, the cunning, the man who is very skillful with words, the man who can

make great systems of thoughts, great structures which have all the explanations for all the questions? Is that man wise? Or the one who is silent? Is that man wise who demystifies existence and supplies all the answers to you? Or the man who mystifies existence again through his silence, through his being, through his presence, through his love, through his sharing?

Certainly, that man is wise who mystifies existence again for you; with whom you again start looking at things with wonder, with awe, with whom you again start listening to the sermons of silence and songs of stones. That man is wise with whom you again become capable of being innocent like a child, with whom you again become capable of dancing in the wind, in the sun, in the rain. That man is wise, because he brings you closer to nature, and to be closer to nature is to be closer to yourself.

He does not give you a certain code, a morality, a pattern to live by. He does not impose a discipline upon you. He simply shares his vision, insight, clarity, and things start becoming clear to you. And out of your clarity you start living. Of course, your life is going to be unique, it is not going to be an imitation of the master. If it is an imitation, you miss the point, you miss the master. It is going to be unique; it will have its own flavor, its own fragrance.

WHO IS WISE, THE ELOQUENT OR THE QUIET MAN?

BE QUIET,
AND LOVING AND FEARLESS.

Three things Buddha says: Be quiet -- learn to be silent more and more -- AND loving, because if your silence is not loving it will make you insensitive. Then your silence will be that of a cemetery -- dull, dead. It will not be a silence which can celebrate, it will not be a silence which can sing and dance. It will not be a silence which can bloom in a thousand and one flowers. Hence, Buddha immediately says: it should be loving.

And love is possible only if you are fearless; if you are afraid you cannot be loving. The man who is afraid of anything -- death, the police, the magistrate, the government -- the man who is afraid of anything can't love. And all fears are basically fears arising out of death. The fear of the policeman is also the same, because he can kill, he can shoot you. The fear of the government is nothing but the fear of violence -- the government can kill more powerfully than anybody else. What is the fear of the magistrate and the law? -- because the magistrate has the power to send you to the gallows or he can give you a life sentence. You are afraid. But deep down all fear is of death... and death is a myth. It has never happened, it never happens, it is never going to happen.

The meditator comes to know the falsity of death, and in that very moment all fear disappears; he becomes fearless. Remember, Buddha is not saying be brave, he is saying be fearless. That is a totally different dimension. There are three words to be understood. One is the coward, who is continuously afraid; everything makes him fearful, whether valid, invalid, possible, impossible. He goes on living in the fears of his own imagination, he creates his own nightmares.

Then there is the brave man, who is the opposite of the coward. And we have praised the brave man very much, but the brave man is nothing but the coward standing on his head; he is the same type of man. It is not that the brave man has no fears -- he has fears, but in spite of them he goes on fighting, he goes on moving in a direction where he knows there is fear. But the fear gives him a challenge; to fight with the fear becomes his ego trip. He is the brave man.

Buddha is not talking about the brave man. He is saying simply: Be fearless. When you are fearless you are neither a coward nor brave, because both are rooted in fear. The coward has succumbed to fear and the brave is trying to win over fear, but both are concerned with fear. And the fearless one has simply dropped the whole thing. He is neither brave nor cowardly. He knows there is no death, there is nothing to be afraid of and there is nothing to be brave about.

This is a different dimension, a transcendence of the duality of cowardice and bravery.

Be fearless, be loving, be silent, and you will be wise. This is his definition of wisdom.

FOR THE MIND TALKS,
BUT THE BODY KNOWS.

The word 'body' can give you a wrong connotation again. What Buddha means is: the mind talks -- the mind is a part. And when he says the body knows, he means the WHOLE knows. Buddha always used the word 'body' for the whole; it is not the same as when YOU use the word 'body'. When

you use the word 'body' it is a part; body, mind, soul, these are three parts in your mind, in your thought processes. This is how you have divided yourself. When Buddha says the body he means your wholeness: "This very body the Buddha, this very earth the Lotus Paradise." When he uses the word 'body' he means your wholeness, your totality. The mind talks, your totality knows.

The mind is useful if you have known. Then the mind can be used as a beautiful instrument to convey, to communicate. After all, Buddha himself is using these words through the mind, but when you have known, mind is a beautiful instrument. Without knowing, you may have studied much from the scriptures... and your mind becomes a gramophone record. You go on repeating others. Avoid that.

It is better to be ignorant and be yourself than to be very knowledgeable, because all knowledge that is not yours is far worse than ignorance -- it keeps you unaware of your ignorance. If you become aware, something can be done. If you become aware, ignorance can be dissipated.

GRAY HAIRS DO NOT MAKE A MASTER.
A MAN MAY GROW OLD IN VAIN.

Just becoming old does not mean that you have become a wise man. Age in itself does not make anybody wise. One may grow old; that does not mean that one has become a grown-up. Growing old and becoming grown-up are totally different phenomena.

A young reporter was interviewing old Harry Blackwell on his one hundred and first birthday.
"Tell me, Mr. Blackwell, if you had your life to live over again, would you still make the same mistakes?"
"Sure as hell would!" came his emphatic reply.
"You mean you would not do ANYTHING differently?"
"Sure would. I would start sooner."

This man must have been at least sincere. Otherwise old people become cunning, insincere, dishonest.

Sunday was to be the day of Joe's wedding, and he and his father were enjoying a nightcap together. Lifting his glass in a toast to his father, Joe asked, "Any advice before I take the big step, Dad?"
"Yes," the father said, "two things. First: insist on having one night out a week with the boys. Second: don't waste it on the boys."

People go on growing in age but not in maturity. They don't become really ripe; they remain as childish as anybody else. And when you are a child and are childish it is not so embarrassing, but when you have become old and you are childish it is very embarrassing. They hide it, but deep down they are the same person, nothing has happened -- because nothing ever happens without meditation. Just accumulating experience of the outside world does not transform you. It makes you very well informed about many things, but information is information, it is not transformation.

THE TRUE MASTER LIVES IN TRUTH, IN GOODNESS AND RESTRAINT, NONVIOLENCE, MODERATION AND PURITY.

The true master is not one who knows about truth; the true master is one who lives in truth, who IS truth. The Upanishads say, "AHAM BRAHMASMI -- I am God." al-Hillaj declares, "ANA'L HAQ -- I am God!" They are saying, "We are not talking about truth, we have BECOME it." Unless you become the truth your wisdom is not true wisdom, it is only mere knowledge. You can go on exhibiting it as wisdom, but you are not fooling anybody except yourself.

THE TRUE MASTER LIVES IN TRUTH.... And when you live in truth, when truth is your very breath, then goodness follows as a shadow.

And the word 'restraint' is again not a right translation. Buddha means discipline: a discipline not imposed by others, a discipline that arises out of your own being, out of your own understanding, out of your own truth.

The wise man lives as truth, as goodness; his whole life is that of discipline. He does not try to live in any controlled way; he simply lives according to his nature -- and that is his discipline. He lives in nonviolence. He cannot hurt anybody, because to hurt anybody is to hurt oneself. Now he knows all is one. He lives in moderation.

That is Buddha's very specific contribution: the middle path. Buddha says: Avoid the extreme, because it is on the extreme that anxiety arises. You can indulge in an extreme way and you will suffer. You can renounce the world, become another kind of extremist, and you will suffer.

Extreme always brings suffering. To be in the middle is to be beyond suffering.

When the traveling salesman's car broke down, he stopped at a farmhouse and was invited to sleep with the farmer's daughter. They went to bed and he made a pass.
She said, "Stop. Stop that or I will call my father."
He tried again. She said, "Stop, or I will call my father."
But she moved closer.
Finally he succeeded.
Shortly after, she tugged on his pajama sleeve and said, "Could we do that again?" He obliged.
A little later she woke him up and asked if they could do it again. He obliged.
The third time she woke him up and asked if they could do it again he said, "Stop that or I will call your father."

Indulge to the extreme and you will suffer. Or renounce to the extreme and you will suffer. Buddha is a very down-to-earth man; he says remain in the middle, exactly in the middle is the way. There you become balanced.
... NONVIOLENCE, MODERATION AND PURITY. All these things follow naturally if you are wise -- not knowledgeable, remember, but wise. Mind becomes knowledgeable, meditation brings wisdom.

FINE WORDS OR FINE FEATURES
CANNOT MAKE A MASTER
OUT OF A JEALOUS AND GREEDY MAN.

ONLY WHEN ENVY AND SELFISHNESS

ARE ROOTED OUT OF HIM
MAY HE GROW IN BEAUTY.

You may have a beautiful face, fine features; you may have a very articulate way of expressing yourself, of communicating your ideas, you may be very good with words. These things do not make a master; cannot, because if you are jealous and greedy you remain the same.
ONLY WHEN ENVY AND SELFISHNESS ARE ROOTED OUT OF HIM MAY HE GROW IN BEAUTY.
A real master is truly beautiful, but that beauty is not of the body. It is something inner that starts radiating out of the body. Yes, his body has a certain aura, a light around itself, a coolness, a grace -- but they arise from his innermost core. They arise from his center and spread towards the circumference. But just having a beautiful body does not mean that you are wise.
Yes, a man of truth is bound to find some way to communicate it, he has to. It is inevitable, because when truth is known, a deep urge is felt to share it. When you have the truth you will find words, but just having beautiful words does not mean that you have found the truth.

A MAN MAY SHAVE HIS HEAD
BUT IF HE STILL LIES AND NEGLECTS HIS WORK,
IF HE CLINGS TO DESIRE AND ATTACHMENT,
HOW CAN HE FOLLOW THE WAY?

One can become a renounced beggar, one can become a monk, a nun -- that is not going to help. Unless something

in your inner being changes... a radical change is needed. Superficial changes won't do.

THE TRUE SEEKER
SUBDUES ALL WAYWARDNESS.

What is waywardness? Your mind moving to the past and to the future, your mind going in all directions, your mind never being herenow: that is waywardness. A TRUE SEEKER SUBDUES ALL WAYWARDNESS.

HE HAS SUBMITTED HIS NATURE TO QUIETNESS.

He surrenders everything to the present moment and its silence.

HE IS A TRUE SEEKER
NOT BECAUSE HE BEGS
BUT BECAUSE HE FOLLOWS THE LAWFUL WAY....

Remember again: by lawful he means the natural.

HOLDING BACK NOTHING, HOLDING TO NOTHING....

The true seeker holds back nothing, he gives everything that he has. He shares totally his love, his joy, his experience -- and he holds to nothing, he clings to nothing. He need not cling to anything: the whole universe belongs to him, the whole kingdom of God is his.

BEYOND GOOD AND BEYOND EVIL,
BEYOND THE BODY AND BEYOND THE MIND.

He lives a transcendental life, in the world and yet not of the world; lives in the body but is not identified with it; lives in the mind but never for a moment finds himself deluded that he is the mind. He is neither the mind nor the body.
Living in the world, doing all that is needful, he remains transcendental. He is like a lotus leaf or a lotus flower -- in the water and yet untouched by it.
Enough for today.
The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 7
Chapter #6
Chapter title: Don't take enlightenment seriously
16 December 1979 am in Buddha Hall

The first question:
Question 1
BELOVED MASTER,
HOW DID YOU BECOME ENLIGHTENED?

Prem Christo, one never becomes enlightened -- one IS enlightened. One simply remembers it. It is not an achievement, but only a recognition. You are as much enlightened as I am, nothing is missing. You have not lost your god, it is impossible to lose him. He is our very life; without him we cannot exist for a single moment.

So the question is not how to find him. The question is how to become more alert, aware of that which already is the case.

Enlightenment is not a process of becoming, it is a discovery of being. You don't grow towards enlightenment; hence it is never gradual -- growth is gradual. It is an explosion -- sudden, instantaneous. It happens in a single moment... it can happen any moment.

You are only asleep, not unenlightened. You have to be awakened. So remember it: never think in terms of becoming. Becoming is desire, and desire is a hindrance, desire is a dream. If you want to become enlightened you will never be enlightened. Don't make it a goal, an object for desire, because all goals bring future in. And when the future comes in you are in a turmoil. That is what your so-called unenlightenment is. When there is no goal there is no future. When there is no desire, there is no possibility of dreaming. And the moment dreaming stops, sleep disappears.

The state of that no sleep, no desire, no dreaming, no goal, IS enlightenment. Suddenly you find yourself utterly perfect. And one starts laughing, because one was searching for something which was never lost; one was seeking something which one has already been. How can you find that which you already are? It is impossible to find it. That's why enlightenment seems to be such a difficult process -- because it is not a process at all, hence the difficulty.

The masters down the ages have simply been devising methods to wake you up, to shake you up, into enlightenment. They have used all kinds of methods, all

kinds of devices. But all those devices are arbitrary; they have no intrinsic value of their own. Their value depends on the master and his artfulness, his skill. If somebody else is going to try those devices they won't work. It is not a science, it is an art, a knack.

The Zen master may slap you, may throw you out of the door, may jump upon you and beat you, but it works only in the hands of a Zen master. If YOU do it you will find yourself beaten, that's all, or in jail. A Zen master has a totally different vision of life, and slowly slowly, he creates a certain energy field around himself where the device starts functioning. It cannot function anywhere else.

The Sufi master uses his own devices, they were great device-makers. The most important Sufi tradition is called Naqshbandi; NAQSHBANDI means the designers, the devisors. And strange devices they have invented. For example, Jalaluddin Rumi's Sufi dance, whirling, a very strange device. In his hands it worked tremendously, because when you really whirl you become disidentified with the body. That's why children enjoy whirling very much; they feel a great upliftment.

But for that, certain preparations are needed; certain food, certain patterns of sleep, certain exercises have to precede it. Otherwise, if you start whirling suddenly, you will simply feel nausea and nothing else; you may fall sick. No enlightenment is going to happen through it. Everybody cannot do it. A preparation is needed for the device to work, because the device is arbitrary, it is a hothouse plant. When the master is alive he gives his life to his devices. The moment he is gone, only dead formulas are left. And people go on repeating those formulas for centuries. All

those formulas appear stupid later on. In the hands of the master they had a golden touch; without the master, without the awakened one, they are just empty exercises.
Remember it: that the great masters cannot be imitated. They are unique and they should not be imitated.

A diplomatic dinner was being held at the embassy in Paris. Among the guests was an elderly dowager. She had overindulged in food, as was her wont, and as a result belched loudly. In the embarrassed silence that followed, an Englishman, seeing a countryman in difficulty, gallantly pretended that he was the offender and apologized for the faux pas profusely.
The difficult moment passed, but not for long. Once again a hearty belch rose through the murmur of polite conversation. This time a Frenchman, not to be outdone by the suave Englishman, apologized for the offensive interruption and received admiring glances for his quick thinking.
An American observing all this determined not to be outdone and placed himself in the vicinity of the dowager so that he could do honor to HIS country. Inevitably, the poor lady belched again and the American cried out, "That's alright, lady, this one is on me!"

Avoid imitation! That's what has happened to all the great devices invented by the masters. People go on imitating literally, not understanding the spirit -- and the spirit is the real thing to understand, not the letter.
Hindus go on repeating methods invented by people like Patanjali, Manu, Yagnavalka. Thousands of years have

passed, but the orthodox mind clings to the letter; it is afraid to change anything. And without understanding the spirit of it, it goes on repeating like a parrot. And situations go on changing.

Now Patanjali cannot be applied to modern human beings exactly as he has taught to HIS disciples. Five thousand years have passed, man is no longer the same. If you want to apply Patanjali you will need another Patanjali to shift many things, to change many things, to drop many things, to add many things. He will have to create the whole methodology again, because man does not exist for any methods -- all methods exist for man.

No system is so valuable that man can be sacrificed to the system; all systems have to serve man. If they serve, good; if they become useless, out-of-date, irrelevant, they have to be dropped -- with deep reverence, with gratitude -- they have done their work.

But the human mind is such, it always loves the past. The more ancient a method is, the more it is loved. In fact, the more useless it is: it can't change you, it can't help you to change.

Each time a new person becomes aware of his innermost being, listen to him, and while he is alive be available to him. It is going to be hard to be available to the alive master, because he will not only be teaching you words, he will be cutting chunks of your being. It hurts, because you have gathered so much unnecessary garbage around yourself; it has to be cut, mercilessly cut. Only then can your essential being be revealed in all its beauty.

A farmer gathered his sons around him and demanded, "Which one of you boys pushed the outhouse into the creek?"
The culprit did not step forward. "Now, boys," said the farmer, "remember the story of George Washington and the cherry tree. It is true that young George chopped down that tree, but he told his father the truth and his father was proud of him."
Whereupon the farmer's youngest son stepped forward and admitted that he had pushed the outhouse into the creek. The farmer picked up a switch and proceeded to whip his son soundly.
"But Pa," protested the boy tearfully, "you told me that George Washington's father was proud of him when he confessed to chopping down the cherry tree."
"He was, son," replied the farmer, "but George Washington's father was not sitting in the cherry tree when his son chopped it down!"

The situation has changed... and you go on repeating old formulas. First watch the situation. Hence, methods that have worked before are not going to work now.
Enlightenment is the most simple thing, but because man is very complex -- and as time passes man becomes more and more complex -- he will need more and more complex methods.
I must be the first enlightened person who is using therapeutic groups as a help to meditation, for the simple reason that in the past man was so simple there was no need for him to pass through therapies first. He was healthy in a way, saner in a way, authentic, truer, sincere and honest.

Modern man is cunning, very cunning, and very repressed, so much so that he himself is not aware what he has repressed in his being. And modern man is very clever, he is not simple. He is so clever that he can go on deceiving even himself. By deceiving others continuously he has become skillful in deceiving. The skill has become so ingrained that now no conscious, deliberate effort is needed for him to be cunning. He can simply be cunning without any effort on his own.
This changed situation demands new methods, new approaches, new windows, so new that your mind is at a loss what to do. If your mind knows what to do, the device cannot be of any help. The mind, when it is unable to find a way out, is at a loss -- that is the great, precious moment when something of the beyond can happen.

A little old bearded Jew accidentally brushed by a Nazi officer and knocked him off balance.
"Schwein!" roared the German, clicking his heels.
"Solomon," said the Jew, bowing politely. "Pleased to meet you."

You see the cunningness, the cleverness!

Liddell walked into a Chinatown tavern and said to the Oriental behind the bar, "Hey, Chink, give me a drink!"
Ten minutes later Liddell called out again, "Alright, Chink, give me a drink!"
A short time passed and once again Liddell shouted, "Say, Chink, give me a drink!"

"Listen," said the Chinese bartender, "I have held my temper, but you come behind the bar and see how you like to be insulted."
The two men exchanged places. "Okay," said the Oriental. "Now, you Nigger, give me a jigger!"
"Sorry," said the black, "we don't serve Chinks in here."

The modern man cannot be helped by Patanjali or Moses. It will need a totally new approach.
That's exactly what I am doing here. You need therapies so that much garbage can be thrown out of you. Therapy is catharsis; it brings you face-to-face with your own unconscious. No old method has ever been able to do it -- it was not needed in the first place, it was unnecessary. Sitting silently, doing nothing was enough. But now, if you sit silently doing nothing, that is not going to help.
In the first place, you can't sit silently -- so much turmoil is inside. Yes, from the outside you can manage to sit just like the Buddha, a marble statue, still, but deep down are you still? The body can learn the trick of being still, but the mind is not so easily overcome. In fact, the more you force the body to be still, the more the mind rebels against it, the more the mind will try to pull you out of your so-called stillness. It takes the challenge and explodes on you with a vengeance, and all kinds of thoughts, desires, fantasies, erupt.
Sometimes one wonders where all these things go when you don't meditate. The moment you sit for a few moments' silence, all kinds of nonsense things start floating in your head, as if they were just waiting; when you sit for meditation they will come.

It was not so in the past. The primitive man was simple, the primitive man never needed anything like a Primal Therapy group. He was already primitive! You have become so civilized that first your civilization has to be taken out of you. That is the function of Primal Therapy: it makes you again primitive, it brings you to the point of innocence. No primitive man ever needed anything like Encounter; his whole life was an encounter!

But now, when you want to hit, you say hello and when you want to kill, you smile. And not only is the other deceived, you also believe that your smile is true. And people are so polite that they tolerate you, they accept you, they don't look at what you are doing. If you don't interfere with them they leave you alone. Everybody is living a double life: the social life, which is formal, and the private life which is just the opposite.

You will need some processes in which you are brought to your authentic self so your duality is dropped, so that you can for the first time see who you are. Your morality, your so-called religions, they all teach you a kind of duality, they all make you pseudo. They talk about truth, but that is mere talk. They don't make you true, they make you polished, polite, civilized. They teach you how to be formally good. They give you a beautiful surface and they don't take any care of your inner being which is your real you. And you tend to forget your real you.

Enlightenment is seeing your real being. And you have become so accustomed and attached to the unreal. You have to be hammered back into your reality.

I have devised dynamic, chaotic methods just to give you again a glimpse of your pure childhood when you were as

yet uncontaminated, unpolluted, unpoisoned, unconditioned by the society; when you were as you were born, when you were natural. The society molds you into certain patterns. It destroys your freedom. It takes all other alternatives from you; it forces a certain alternative to you. It forces and pressures you in so many subtle ways that you have to choose it. Of course, it also gives you the idea that you are choosing it.

I have heard:
When Ford started manufacturing cars he had only one color, black. He would show his cars to the customers and he would say, "You can choose any color, provided it is black!"

That's what people are doing to their children. You can be anybody you like, provided you are a Hindu or a Mohammedan or a Christian. Provided you behave like this, you are free, you are absolutely free. They go on creating a facade of freedom and go on creating simultaneously a deep slavery.
You need to be thrown back to your reality. And sometimes even cruel methods are needed. Zen masters beating their disciples: you can't say this is a very compassionate method. It is a cruel method, but it is arising out of great compassion. And sometimes what cannot be taught can be provoked by the master by slapping your face.

A man went into a store to buy his wife a gift. When he received the package from the clerk he started to leave, but then turned suddenly and slapped the clerk across the face.

No sooner had he done it than the man began to apologize profusely. The clerk was naturally taken aback, but he could not doubt the sincerity of the man's apologies.
"Perhaps," suggested the sympathetic clerk, "you ought to see a psychiatrist."
A few months later the man reappeared at the store. He made a purchase but made no attempt to do the clerk any harm. "I took your advice, young man. I went to see a psychiatrist."
"How did he cure you?" inquired the clerk.
"Well," replied the man, "right after I paid him for my first visit I slapped him in the face."
"Then? Then what happened?"
"He slapped me back."

You get it? And that cured him, that was the treatment. That brought him back to his senses. Sometimes it is needed, and only a cruel method can become a breakthrough.
A chaotic, a dynamic meditation, is a very cruel method. It is not like sweet prayer, it is bitter, but it can cleanse much dust off your being. It can bring great awakening to you. It can become your first satori. Just a hundred-percent commitment is needed.
Christo, you ask me, "How did you become enlightened?" The first thing: I never became enlightened. I had always been enlightened just as you are, just as everybody is. All that happened is, I recognized it. And the journey was as arduous as you can imagine. It was more arduous than it is for you, because I had no master to guide, to indicate.

In India there are thousands of pseudo teachers. Masters have disappeared long ago. India has become so pseudo a country that today there exists no other country which is as pseudo. India is unique, incomparable! But this was going to happen for a certain reason, for a certain historic inevitability it was going to happen.

India has produced Patanjali, Gautam Buddha, Mahavira, Nagarjuna, Bodhidharma, great masters, and when you produce great masters, naturally imitators arise. Imitators can arise only when the real exists; when the real is not in existence you cannot have the false. If there is real currency, then you can have false notes, but if there is no real currency at all then you cannot have false notes. The false is possible only because of the real.

And economists say that there is a law: the false currency tends to put the real currency out of work. It pushes the real currency out of its function. You can observe it, it is a simple law. If you have two ten-rupee notes in your pocket, one real and one false, first you will try the false because you want to get rid of it first -- the sooner the better. The real can be used any time, but the false, who knows? Somebody may catch hold of you.

So you will be in a hurry to push the false into circulation so it moves away from you and you are freed from the burden. If all the people have false notes, they will hide the real notes in their treasures and the false will become the currency.

And that's exactly what happens in the world of spirituality too: the true masters become nonexistential, nonfunctioning, and the untrue become leaders of men... for simple reasons. One is that the true master will never fulfill

your expectations; hence you will like more to be with a false teacher because he will fulfill your expectations. He will be more than willing. He wants to catch hold of you, he wants you to be his disciple. He will be ready, very much ready, to fulfill your expectations so that you don't leave him.

The true master lives according to his light. You cannot expect anything from him. Unless you are ready to drop all your expectations you can't live with the true master. The false master will always buttress your ego. He will say, "You are great, you are virtuous." He will give you small tricks to feel virtuous: "Go every Sunday to the church and you will be virtuous, religious, spiritual." Now, just by going to the church every Sunday do you think you become spiritual? Is spirituality so cheap? But he will give you cheap things which you can easily purchase and feel great. With the true master, real work has to be done. The real master works on you just like a sculptor, with the chisel and hammer in his hand. He starts dismantling you, because that is the only way to transform you, to give you a new birth. He starts killing you! A real master is a death, because only after death is there a possibility of resurrection.

I was without a master. I stumbled in darkness on my own. It was hard work, it was maddening, because nobody was there even to give me hope, any guarantee -- even to give me just simple sympathy that I am on the right track. I was moving into the uncharted sea without anybody encouraging me.

You are far more fortunate. I can tell you when you are right and when you are wrong. I can tell you, "Go on, you

are on the right track, the moment is not far away when things will start changing; the spring is just on the way. Any moment it will be here. In fact, the first flowers have started appearing. You may not be able to see those first flowers. I can see."

Now in medical circles there is great discussion and great hope that sooner or later we are going to find ways in which a disease that is going to happen after six months can be predicted beforehand. It has become possible through Kirlian photography. It gives the photograph of your body energy, and it shows where the body energy is going wrong. Six months before you may actually fall ill, Kirlian photography starts giving you indications. If those indications can be well understood, you can be treated before you are ill. Then you will never be ill.

A master can see flowers which are going to happen to you after a few days, which are not yet visible to you or to anybody else -- but can be visible to the master. He can recognize the signs, the invisible indications. He can decipher the language of the unknown and the unknowable. He can tell you, "Go on!" Buddha says to his disciples again and again, "CHARAIVETI! CHARAIVETI! Go on! Go on! Don't be worried. I can see the dawn is not far away."

You can only see that the night is becoming darker and darker, but when the night is really dark, that is only an indication that the dawn is very close, that soon on the eastern horizon the sun will rise. But this can be seen only by one who has seen the sunrise before.

I worked hard in every possible way, but the day I came to know who I am was a great surprise. I had never thought

about it, that it was going to be so. God was never missed, I had only forgotten the language. God was already there, always has been there; god is our innermost nature. The day I recognized it I started laughing. That day I knew that life is a great joke -- god playing a great joke, a great game of hide-and-seek; but a game all the same. Don't take it seriously.
Christo, don't take enlightenment seriously. Take it playfully. And the more playful you are, the closer you will be to it.

The second question:
Question 2
BELOVED MASTER,
DO I EVER SEE ANYBODY OR ANYTHING AS THEY REALLY ARE?

Prem Shanta, mind is incapable of seeing. Mind is blind -- blind with a thousand and one prejudices, blind with concepts, ideologies, philosophies, religions, blind with your past experience. Your eyes are so much covered with dust, layer upon layer, that you can't see that which is. And whatsoever you see is your interpretation of reality, not reality itself. You never hear what is said to you, you never see what confronts you. You see that which you want to see; you see that which you are capable of seeing. And you hear that which you want to hear; you hear that which you already believe in.
Your mind continuously goes on screening; it allows only that which fits with it, it does not allow anything in which does not fit with it. It is on a constant vigilance; it guards.

I am talking to you here: three thousand people, that means three thousand meanings! When I am saying anything I am saying it with one particular meaning, but when it reaches to you it takes an individual color -- you give it your own color. Immediately it is something else. Unless you learn how to listen without the mind, how to see without the mind....
That's what meditation is all about: putting the mind aside, seeing without any prejudice, without any a priori conclusion, without any conclusion at all. When your eyes are functioning just like mirrors, simply reflecting that which is, neither condemning it nor appreciating it... when your eyes are nonjudgmental, when you don't say, "This is good, this is bad. This should be, this should not be" -- when you don't say anything, you simply reflect... then you see that which is -- otherwise not, ordinarily not.
You have to disappear to see the reality as it is. If you are there, the more you are there, the less you see the real.

A number of showgirls were entertaining troops at a remote army camp. They had been at it all afternoon and were tired and very hungry. At the close of their performance, the major asked, "Would you girls like to mess with the enlisted men or the officers this evening?"
"It really doesn't matter," spoke up a shapely blonde, "but we've just got to have something to eat first."

Preoccupied mind! They are hungry, the hunger is too much there. Now everything they hear they will hear through this hunger.

Fast one day and then go to M.G. Road, and you will see only restaurants, hotels, and you will not see anything else. And for the first time you will start smelling food smells coming from the restaurants and hotels. And you have passed the same road many times, but you have never smelled so intensely. Fast two, three days and your nose becomes so sensitive to food odors, to the aroma of food, that you will be surprised -- your nose has never been so sensitive.
If you are hungry and you look at the full moon, you may see just a chapati! It is impossible to see the full moon.

The Jewish lady and her son were walking along the beach when a tidal wave crashed on them. When the water receded the boy was gone.
"Ah Merciful Father," the mother pleaded. "Please return my beautiful child. I will be so grateful -- I will never cheat on my income tax or my husband again, I will stop smoking, I will do anything -- anything!"
Just then another wave loomed up and her small son was standing there. She clasped him to her bosom, looked at him a moment and once again turned her eyes heavenward. Looking up she said, "But he had a hat!"

Now, the Jewish mind... she can't forget the hat! The son is back -- so what! Where is the hat?
Everybody has a certain mind. All minds are your choices. When you look without the mind you look without any choice. Then you are choicelessly aware. That's the real way to see things as they are.

Shanta, ordinarily you don't see the real existence, you only project your ideas. That's why you go on missing the great beauty that surrounds you, the splendor that is all over. You cannot see god, not because he is absent but because your mind is so full of ideas ABOUT god -- Christian ideas about god, Hindu ideas about god, Jewish ideas about god. You can't see god if you go on carrying these ideas.
God is a simple reflection; it is not a philosophy, it is not ideology. Knowingly, unknowingly, we are all full of ideologies -- political, religious, social -- and we go on looking through them.

A politician was bitten by a dog, and a few days later his doctor told him that the lab tests were positive, that the dog had rabies, and that he too was infected.
The politician pulled out a notebook and began writing furiously.
"Now, take it easy," said the doctor. "No need to start writing your will. You will pull through."
"Will, hell!" snapped the politician. "This is a list of the people I am going to bite."

Now before he forgets, before he really goes insane, he wants to make a list. A politician is a politician, even if he is on the verge of going mad! He must be making the list of all his political enemies. He is not much concerned about his own problem -- he wants to use his problem to create problems for others. He is much more concerned about who he is going to bite; he wants to be ready for that. That is the basic political mind: the political mind is not interested in

himself; it is more interested in harming others, how to topple others, how to destroy others.
The religious person is much more interested in his own joy. The politician is much more interested in seeing others miserable; his joy is only in seeing others miserable. Now, such a mind is incapable of seeing anything good in life -- impossible. He can't see any beauty, he can't see any grace. He has none, how can he see it? You can see only that which you are.
And if you want to see that which is, then you have to disappear completely. You have to be utterly empty, a nobody, a no-mind, just an empty space. Then life bursts forth with all its splendor.

The third question:
Question 3
BELOVED MASTER,
I AM UNABLE TO UNDERSTAND WHY GAUTAMA THE BUDDHA RENOUNCED HIS BEAUTIFUL WIFE.

Kamalesh, it seems you must be a bachelor!
Murphy's definition of a bachelor: A rolling stone who gathers no boss.
Murphy's definition of marriage: A man is incomplete until he is married; then he is really finished.

You don't understand what poor Buddha suffered! Only married people know it, but very few married people have the courage to say it.

I have heard an anecdote:

Maxim Gorky, Anton Chekhov and Leo Tolstoy, the three great Russian novelists, were sitting on a bench in a park and chitchatting. Naturally they started talking about the phenomenon called woman.
Chekhov was very bitter; he was abusing women like anything. Gorky was also not in any way sympathetic. When they both were finished they asked Tolstoy, who was keeping quiet. Tolstoy said, "If you really want to hear the truth you will have to wait."
They said, "What do you mean by 'You will have to wait'? How long?"
He said, "I can't say how long, but you will have to wait. I can say the truth only when one of my legs is in the grave. I will say the truth and jump into the grave! Then I don't want to be outside the grave, because if my wife comes to know about it then my life, which is already hell... I don't know what will happen to me!"
And remember, the same is the case with women: if you ask them, they will tell the same stories about the husbands.

There is an ancient Arabic saying:
The gods gave man fire, and he invented fire engines. They gave him love, and he invented marriage.

Marriage, up to now, has been such a suffering! It is because of marriage that monasteries have existed -- the whole credit goes to marriage! Otherwise there would be no monks and no nuns. It is seeing the ugliness of marriage, millions of people simply decided never to get into it, or even those who had already got into it escaped.

The woman has suffered much, but her suffering has been of a different quality: she has suffered because her freedom has been taken away from her. Man has dominated her, made her a slave. Man has also suffered... because remember one simple law of life: If you make others suffer, the suffering is bound to rebound on you. Man made the woman a slave, physically... and the woman? She made the man a slave spiritually. In fact, man's suffering has been much deeper than the woman's suffering.
There is now the Women's Liberation movement. Some daring men are needed to start a Men's Liberation movement, because man's slavery became spiritual -- and spiritual slavery is far more dangerous.

Murphy's definition of cooperation: An exchange between a woman and a man in which she coos and he operates.

Kamalesh, you seem to be absolutely unaware of the phenomenon of marriage -- which is destructive to both man and woman. Love is creative, marriage is destructive. But love is not dependable: this moment it may be there and the next moment gone. And man wants permanent things; he is obsessed with permanent things. He wants security, safety, he wants to cling. Hence love is not reliable, so he created marriage.
Marriage is a plastic flower. Love is a real rose, but the real rose is beautiful in the morning; by the evening it is gone. Nobody can say when it will disappear, when the petals will start falling. Just a strong wind and it is no more, just a strong sun and it is no more. But the plastic flower will be there; come rain, come sun, come anything, the plastic

flower will be there. In fact, plastic is the only permanent thing in the world.
Now ecologists are very much worried about plastic because you cannot destroy it. You go on throwing plastic bottles and containers and they all go on accumulating in the earth or in the sea. Sooner or later they will surround the whole earth and they will destroy the fertility of the earth, because they cannot melt, merge, become one with the earth.
The real flower goes back to the earth, becomes earth again. Then again a new flower will arise. But the plastic flower sticks, remains forever. It is dangerous; it is a hindrance in the circulation of life processes.
Marriage is a plastic flower -- marriage is an institution. And who wants to live in an institution?
If Buddha escaped, you should not be worried; it is understandable. He must have suffered!

"Daddy, what is polygamy?"
"Polygamy is a situation in which a man can have more than one wife."
"Okay. So what do you call a situation in which a man can have only one wife?"
"Monotony, my son, monotony."

Marriage is monotonous, it is utter boredom. Two persons are just hooked with each other.
Buddha was courageous -- at least he escaped. Not much of a courage, but some courage still is there: he escaped.

I am teaching my sannyasins a far more courageous way: don't escape, but try to live in love. And start forgetting the whole idea of marriage -- slowly slowly.

A recently divorced man was feeling so depressed he decided to consult a psychiatrist. The doctor listened to his complaints and then had this to recommend, "I think you ought to get married again, Mr. Jones.... Buy a house, have some kids; live like other men. You will be back to your old self in no time."
"No thanks, Doc," said Mr. Jones. "I would rather commit suicide."

Once you have known the ugliness of marriage there are only two possible ways. One is, escape from it like Buddha, which I don't approve of because that doesn't change much. Yes, it helps Buddha -- he gets out of it -- but the world continues the same.
My own suggestion is, drop the very concept of marriage -- live in love. And if love continues, good; if it disappears, good. What is the harm in it? Anything that appears one day is bound to disappear one day; that's how things are -- the way of things, the natural way. Allow it. Don't cling, don't be possessive. Live passionately while it is there, and when it is gone it is gone. Feel grateful for all that it has done to you. Say goodbye. Don't complain, don't have any grudge.

The newspaper account of George's tragic death read: "His friends could give no reason why he should have committed suicide. He was a bachelor."

Kamalesh, you must be a bachelor! One thing is good about being a bachelor: you will not commit suicide. And if you commit suicide you will leave everybody in a puzzle. Nobody will be able to figure out why. You are not yet experienced about this so-called relationship business. You seem to be utterly inexperienced. Hence you say, "I am unable to understand why Gautama the Buddha renounced his beautiful wife."

Certainly he had a very beautiful wife, but beauty of the body is so superficial that within a week you start not looking at it. You start ignoring it, you start forgetting it. Ask any husband for how many years he has not looked at his wife's face -- and he used to think before that she is a beautiful woman. Ask any wife how long she has not looked at her husband's face. Years may have passed.

Do a small experiment: close your eyes and try to remember your wife's or your husband's face. You will not be able to remember it. You may be able to remember the face of your neighbor's wife, but not your own wife; it is almost impossible. If you can do it you are a rare specimen, you are a wonder! It does not happen. If you try to remember your wife's face, everything will go dizzy. Thousands of other faces will appear, but not your wife's face. Why?

You have not looked at the poor woman for years, for the simple reason that marriage makes things so certain. Marriage makes things so dead and dull. Marriage takes all surprise and wonder away. Marriage makes you take your wife for granted, your husband for granted. What is the need to look at your wife? She will be there tomorrow and

the day after tomorrow and forever. You look at people when you know you may not be able to look at them again. Marriage kills; it makes something tremendously beautiful very ugly.

Yes, Buddha had a beautiful wife, but then he became tired -- tired of the whole repetitive game. He was a very alert man, intelligent. If he was as stupid as millions of others are he would have lived without any effort to go through a radical change. He would have simply repeated the whole circle of life -- eating, drinking, reproducing -- he would have lived and died. But he became aware that life can't be only this repetition. Life must be something more, life has to be something more. There must be some hidden secret in it which we are missing because of our repetitiveness.

He escaped not exactly from the wife: he escaped to know the truth of life. It was not basically escaping from the wife; it was not an escape FROM but an escape FOR. That's why, when he attained the truth, the first thing he did was to come back to the palace to share his new vision, his insight, with his wife. He remembered her.

He felt that this much he owed to her. He had come to ask her forgiveness because he had escaped, left her. He had not even asked her permission. He had not even told her that he was going away. He escaped like a thief and had come back to apologize. A man of great grace: even after becoming enlightened he came to apologize to somebody who is not enlightened.

His disciple, Ananda, said to him. "This does not look right, an enlightened person going to the unenlightened to apologize, to ask her, 'Forgive me.'"

Buddha said, "I know it does not look right, but this much I owe to her. I have to complete, finish things; otherwise something remains hanging. And more than that, my going to her will help her to come to me; otherwise -- she is a very proud woman -- she will not come to me. And she will go on carrying that grudge, that wound; she will suffer unnecessarily. And what I have found I am going to share with everybody, why not with my wife? What wrong has she done to me?"

He went to his wife. The wife was very angry, naturally. She shouted, screamed; she did all that a woman will do in such a situation. And Buddha stood there utterly silent, not even uttering a single word. Then suddenly she became aware that he has not said a single word. She wiped her tears, looked at Buddha, saw that he is so silent and so beautiful, and a totally different kind of beauty: the beauty of the inner. He is radiating, he is luminous.

She asked him, "Why are you not answering me?"

Buddha said, "How can I answer? I am no longer the same person that had left you. You look at me, you observe! Look into my eyes, feel my presence! I am not the same person -- that person is dead. I am a totally new being, I am reborn! And I have come to share my joy, my finding, with you, because I love you. And the old love was not love, it was exploitation; this new love is really love. The old love was just lust. Now I want to give all that I have known to you, for no other reason, but just for giving's sake. Just sharing will make me so blissful. If I can help you in any way I will feel tremendously obliged."

The wife became a sannyasin; she was initiated.

You ask me, Kamalesh, "I am unable to understand why Gautama the Buddha renounced his beautiful wife."
In fact he has not renounced the wife: he has renounced the whole marriage system, he has renounced the old way of life. The wife was just a part of it. He renounced the way he had lived up to that moment.
When he left his palace he was twenty-nine years old; when he came back, twelve years had passed... he had become enlightened. He had come to know the truth, the meaning, the significance, of existence. He had come to know the great celebration that goes on and on: the celebration you call God. He had come to share his celebration with his wife, with his child, with his father, with his stepmother, with his friends. Whosoever was ready, he was ready to give to them. And he transformed their lives.
Gautama the Buddha is the only man in the whole history of human consciousness who has transformed so many people. The debt of humanity is immense, unpayable.

The last question:
Question 4
BELOVED MASTER,
WHEN YOU SAY, "WAKE UP, BE CONSCIOUS, COME OUT OF YOUR DREAMS!" -- AND TO MAKE IT CLEAR YOU GIVE EXAMPLES -- INSTEAD OF GOING DEEPLY INTO IT WE LAUGH AS IF IT IS A JOKE. HOW DO YOU FEEL?

Abhinav Bharti, I also laugh! But I am not allowed to laugh loudly in front of you, because that is against the art of telling jokes. The joke teller must be serious. But I laugh in

my room! When there is nobody, I have a hearty laugh. And in fact, this whole thing is a joke: your misery, my enlightenment.
Enough for today.
The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 7
Chapter #7
Chapter title: The silence of a song
17 December 1979 am in Buddha Hall

SILENCE CANNOT MAKE A MASTER OUT OF A FOOL.

BUT HE WHO WEIGHS ONLY PURITY IN HIS SCALES,
WHO SEEKS THE NATURE OF THE TWO WORLDS,
HE IS A MASTER.

HE HARMS NO LIVING THING.

AND YET IT IS NOT GOOD CONDUCT
THAT HELPS YOU UPON THE WAY,
NOR RITUAL, NOR BOOK LEARNING,
NOR WITHDRAWAL INTO THE SELF,
NOR DEEP MEDITATION.
NONE OF THESE CONFERS MASTERY OR JOY.

O SEEKER!
RELY ON NOTHING
UNTIL YOU WANT NOTHING.

Silence has been praised down the ages as one of the most important factors for inner transformation; but silence alone is neither enough nor beneficial. Silence alone can be tremendously harmful. Silence alone is a negative state, it can make you more dead than you are. It can destroy the joy of inner being, it can be an obstruction for the growth of a celebrating soul.

Silence is beautiful only if it is rooted in awareness; if it is not rooted in awareness, then it is utterly empty. With awareness silence has a depth, a plenitude, a fulfillment, a contentment, an overflowing joy. With awareness silence blooms, releases great fragrance; without awareness the silence is utterly empty and dark, dismal, sad.

Silence can be either of the cemetery or of a sunrise. Silence can be of a bird on the wing, or it can be that of a corpse. Both are silences, but diametrically opposite. The silence of a corpse has to be avoided, the silence of a flower has to be imbibed. The silence of the flower will make you a flower, the silence of the corpse will make you a corpse. Both look the same from the outside. Don't be deceived by appearances -- always look for the essential, for the very core.

Two things can appear similar from the outside and may be just the opposite of each other. The seeker has to be very cautious, very conscious on each step; because the false is easy to attain. It is very easy to become dead, and very difficult to be overflowing with life.

That's why millions of monks and nuns have followed a false path -- they have become silent. You can go to the monasteries and you will find people who are silent, but their silence has the taste of death. Their silence is not the

silence of a song, of a dance; their silence is not divine. In fact they have fallen rather than risen higher, soaring upwards. They have fallen so much, they have become just dead rocks. Their silence has not been a transformation, it has been a suicide. And because it has not been a soaring up high, you will find all kinds of foolishnesses still in it, waiting for their opportunity, for their moment to explode. The foolish person can become silent. It may deceive many, they may think, "He has arrived." But he is simply hiding his foolishness, his stupidity, his unconsciousness behind a beautiful facade of silence.

An ancient Sufi parable says:
Four persons decided to go into silence. They moved into a cave; they wanted to live in silence for three months, because they had heard so much about it -- they had become so much intrigued. They were so ambitious to gain something out of it. It was not understanding that had brought them to the cave. It was greed, it was desire, ambition.
Hence within minutes everything was exposed. Just within minutes the first man said, "I wonder whether I have put the candle out or not? It will be a sheer wastage, there is nobody in the house."
The second one said, "You fool! You have spoken! And we have taken the vow of silence."
The third one laughed and said, "You are a greater fool! If he had spoken, what was the need for you to speak?"
And the fourth one said, "Thank God, I am the only one who has not spoken yet."

Just by being silent nothing changes, you remain the same. Transformation comes through awareness. Awareness brings a silence of its own, very alive, throbbing with eternity, full of a song. It is not sad and not serious because it is not dead, it has a dance to it. It is tremendously beautiful, it is positive, existential. It does not make you just a hollow thing. It makes you so full that you start overflowing with joy. You become so fulfilled that you cannot contain your contentment within yourself, you have to share it. You become a cloud full of rainwater. You have to shower it.

But out of a hundred so-called seekers, it is only once in a while that a rare seeker comes to know the difference between the real silence and the unreal silence. How can the fool within you be dropped by being silent? Yes, it will not be expressed, but it will be there. In fact it will become more and more powerful -- unexpressed it will accumulate energy. And any moment, any opportunity, and you will show it; you will be unable to hide it forever.

It was discovered in an apartment building, that exactly fifty apartments were rented by Jewish families and fifty by Christian families. Word got around and thereafter, for years, whenever a Jew moved out, another Jew rushed into his place, and likewise the Christians. Thus the balance was maintained. Once, however, the Jews were faster than the Christians and the numbers became unbalanced -- fifty-one to forty-nine. After that the Christians started moving out until at last the building was ninety-nine percent Jewish.

A movement arose among the tenants for an all-Jewish building. A committee was formed and Mr. Ginsberg, as

spokesman, went to visit Mr. Gallagher, an Irish bachelor. When he came home, Mrs. Ginsberg asked what happened.
"Well," replied Mr. Ginsberg, "Gallagher says he has made love to every woman in the building except one, and won't move out until he makes love to her."
"Hm," mused Mrs. Ginsberg, "it must be that lousy, stuck-up Mrs. Pincus."

The first moment, and your fool will be out. How long can you keep it down? How long can you sit upon it? How long can you be on guard? Just a little relaxation and it will be out.

Buddha says:

SILENCE CANNOT MAKE A MASTER OUT OF A FOOL.

A strange statement from a buddha, because silence has been praised so much; but the buddha says the truth as it is. He does not care about the tradition.
In India, silence has been one of the most praised qualities for centuries. The Jaina monk is called MUNI -- muni means "the silent one." His whole effort is to be silent, more and more silent. Buddha says, "But don't be a fool, just silence is not going to help." It may help you keep your foolishness to yourself, but the foolishness will go on accumulating, and sooner or later it will be too much. It is bound to come out, and it is better to let it come out in small doses every day, rather than accumulating it, and then having it come like a flood.

This has been my own observation, too. The people who have remained silent for a long time become very stupid, because their silence is only on the surface. Deep down there is turmoil. Deep down they are the same people, with greed, jealousy, envy, hatred, violence -- unconscious, with all kinds of desires.

Maybe now they are desirous of the other world, greedy for the other world, thinking more of paradise than of this world and the earth. But it is the same thing, projected onto a bigger screen, projected on eternity. In fact, the greed has become a thousandfold. First it was for small things: money, power, prestige. Now it is for god, samadhi, nirvana. It has become more condensed and more dangerous.

Then what has to be done? If silence cannot make a master out of a fool, then what can make one a master? Awareness. And the miracle is, if you become aware, silence follows you like a shadow.

But then that silence is not practiced; it comes on its own accord. And when silence comes on its own accord, it has a tremendous beauty to it. It is alive, it has a song at its innermost core. It is loving, it is blissful. It is not empty; on the contrary, it is a plenitude. You are so full that you can bless the whole world and yet your sources remain inexhaustible; you can go on giving, and you will not be able to exhaust the source. You have stumbled on God already -- but it happens through awareness.

That is Buddha's very significant contribution, his emphasis on awareness.

Silence becomes secondary, silence becomes a by-product. One does not make silence a goal -- the goal is awareness.

If you take care of the rosebush, if you give it the right amount of water, sun and shade, roses are bound to come in their own time. You need not be worried about the roses. Silence is a rose, awareness is the rosebush. You take care of the rosebush, don't be too much concerned about the rose. If you are too much concerned about the rose without thinking about the rosebush, there is every possibility you will purchase some plastic roseflowers. A practiced silence is a plastic phenomenon, it is false, pseudo, deceiving others and deceiving yourself.

SILENCE CANNOT MAKE A MASTER OUT OF A FOOL. And what does Buddha mean by a fool? Who is foolish? He does not mean the unknowledgeable person, he does not mean the uneducated, uncultured. The fool can be very much cultured. The fool can have a Ph.D., the fool may have accumulated great knowledge, learning. In fact, fools are known to do such things, for the simple reason that they are afraid of their own foolishness and want to cover it up. A Ph.D., a D.Litt. becomes a good cover.

The fool becomes a great philosopher, a great scholar. Instead of knowing he becomes knowledgeable. Instead of seeing light he knows more about light. And slowly slowly, he convinces himself that knowing about light is knowing light, knowing about God is knowing God, knowing about love is knowing love. It is not so. He remains confined to the empty words. He will be verbose, he may know fine words. He may use language skillfully, he may use logic to prove his ideology, he may be a skillful logician. But nothing of these things changes his foolishness, he remains a fool all the same.

Then what is foolishness? The word that Buddha uses, the original word, is MULHA, which has been translated as the "fool." In fact it should be translated as "one who lives in unconsciousness," one who lives like a sleepwalker, who lives mechanically, who goes on moving through many things, but all his gestures are empty. He lives without knowing why, he goes on rushing without knowing where. He is not even aware of who he is -- he has not tasted his own consciousness. And because his inner being is in darkness, he remains foolish in whatsoever he tries to do. His knowledge, his learning, his scholarship, are of no avail.
One who lives unconsciously, like a somnambulist, is a fool; one who lives consciously starts changing from foolishness towards wisdom. Again let me remind you: wisdom is not knowledge. Wisdom is consciousness, and the man who attains to the perfection of wisdom, perfection of consciousness, is called a master by the Buddha.
SILENCE CANNOT MAKE A MASTER OUT OF A FOOL.

On his honeymoon, Abe was so overtaken with gratitude towards Becky, that he wanted to give her something. Having nothing else at hand, he reached into his wallet and gave her twenty dollars. Thereafter it became a family ritual. Each time Abe would make love to Becky, he would give her some money, the amount varying according to how his business was going.
Years passed, the Depression came and business got really bad. For weeks and months Abe did not make love to

Becky. Finally, in desperation, she asked, "Abe, what is the matter? Don't you love me anymore?"
Abe told her the truth, that he was nearly bankrupt. "Don't worry, darling," she replied, and lifting up the mattress, she revealed thousands and thousands of dollars. "All the money you gave me, I put in the bed," she said.
"Ah," he screamed hitting his forehead, "I should have given you all my business."

An unconscious man can't always be on his guard. There are moments when the secret comes out. You can deceive, but only for a time -- you cannot deceive forever, at least not your wife.
And how can you deceive God himself? How can you deceive existence? With existence you have to be absolutely true, because before existence you are utterly naked. Existence knows you through and through, you are transparent. It is better not to hide, because if we don't hide, there is a possibility that we may start changing our life patterns, our ways, our styles.
And there are only two styles:
One style is unconsciousness -- I call that the worldly style. And the other style is that of consciousness -- my name for that style is sannyas. Sannyas simply means a committed effort to live consciously.

BUT HE WHO WEIGHS ONLY PURITY IN HIS SCALES,
WHO SEES THE NATURE OF THE TWO WORLDS,
HE IS A MASTER.

Who is a master according to Buddha? ... HE WHO WEIGHS ONLY PURITY IN HIS SCALES.

Remember always, with Buddha purity is never a moral concept. He is not a priest, he is not a politician. He is a man who has gone beyond all dualities -- the duality of good and bad included. Then what can he mean by purity? By purity he always means innocence, just like a small child who knows nothing of what is good and what is bad. The sage also becomes a child again, but he goes beyond. The child is below the duality, and the sage is beyond duality. One thing is similar, that both are not part of the world of duality, of the world where everything is divided into polar opposites: good and bad, night and day, love and hate, life and death, this world and that world, the sinner and the saint.

The sinner is one who knows what is good and what is bad, but follows the bad. The saint is one who knows what is good and what is bad, but follows the good. And the sage is one who knows what is good and what is bad, but has gone beyond both and is no longer interested in those divisions. He lives in a choiceless awareness. That is purity.

To live without any choice means to let God live through you. If you choose then you don't allow God to live through you. When you stop choosing, when you simply surrender to the whole, when you say, "Thy will be done," you are no more a chooser, no more a doer, you become a medium. Then God lives through you, then whatsoever happens is divine; it is neither good nor bad, it is simply divine. Out of choiceless awareness, actions become divine.

BUT HE WHO WEIGHS ONLY PURITY IN HIS SCALES, WHO SEES THE NATURE OF THE TWO

WORLDS.... Religious people go on talking about this world and the other world. They condemn this world: this is momentary, this is a flux, nothing abides, everything changes, everything turns into dust. They go on condemning this world in every possible way, and they go on praising the other world. But Buddha says that this world and that world are both parts of your projection; you have projected the other world against this world. Because you see this world is impermanent, you project a permanent world. That is a desire on your part, it has nothing to do with reality.

You would like to have a permanent world where things abide, where everything remains as it is. You are afraid of change, hence you create an unchanging world. You call it paradise, heaven; nothing changes there, time exists not. This world is temporal, that world is nontemporal. This world is made of dust, and that world is made of gold. But dust or gold are all your projections.

It is out of the misery of this world that you have created your paradises; and if you look in the scriptures of all the religions, you can easily detect the projection. Whatsoever is missing here, you have placed it there. Whatsoever you don't like here, you have not put into the other world. Whatsoever you like here, but you are afraid that it will be taken away by death or by circumstances, you have made absolutely eternal there.

For example, in heaven nobody ever grows old -- everybody remains young. Have you ever seen an old angel in any picture? They are all boyish-looking. In Hindu mythology the heavenly women never grow beyond the age of sixteen; that is a desire. In Hindu mythology the

APSARAS, the heavenly women, don't perspire, no deodorants are needed, no perfumes are needed. Their bodies are made of gold. But what kind of a woman is it if her body is made of gold? Would you be able to love a woman whose body is made of gold? -- a wish fulfillment. In Hindu mythology there are trees in heaven, wish-fulfilling trees. You just sit underneath the tree, you wish anything and it is immediately fulfilled, instantly. These are desires, unfulfilled desires, unfulfilled dreams. We are so frustrated here that we project a world.

Karl Marx is right in that way when he says that religion is the opium of the people. Yes, the so-called religions have functioned as the opium. They keep people intoxicated with the other world, they help them somehow to tolerate the suffering that is present in this world. It is only a question of a few days -- then comes death and deliverance. And then you will live in God's presence for ever and ever, in eternal joy.

Buddha never talks about the other world; he says this world and the other are both projections of our mind. One should get rid of both, one should turn inwards rather than looking outwards. This world is outside, that world is outside; both are exterior to you, and both are objects of desire. And any object of desire is bound to bring frustration. Any expectation is bound to turn into frustration. Expectation is the beginning of frustration, the very seed. Beware of it!

Buddha says, one who knows this is a master, and one who lives in choiceless awareness, neither choosing this nor that, is a master. He is really a king; otherwise everybody is a beggar. If you have desires you are a beggar. Desiring

means begging; you are constantly begging for this and for that.
Just look at your mind, the mind is a beggar. Drop the mind and you will be surprised: your consciousness is the master. But the mind lives through division, it always lives through the polar opposites: it puts that against this, and then goes on choosing. Mind means choice, choice means unconsciousness. Consciousness means choicelessness, and to be choiceless is to be free from all desire, is to be free from all projection, is to be free from all imagination, is to be free from future.
And the moment you are free from the future, the present suddenly bursts forth in all its splendor before you; its glory is infinite, its joy is unbounded, its ecstasy is inexpressible. It transforms your beggar into a master.

HE HARMS NO LIVING THING.

The master cannot be violent, he can only be love, pure love; he cannot harm, it is impossible. Why? Many religions have been teaching nonviolence. Buddha does not teach nonviolence; again, it is a by-product, a consequence of being a master. He does not say, "Be nonviolent so that you can be a master." He says: Be a master, so that you can be nonviolent. That's where he differs from ordinary religious thinking. He brings a very extraordinary insight of tremendous import.
If you understand his insight, you will have understood the essential core of real religion. If you practice nonviolence, you will remain violent; at the most, your surface will become nonviolent. You will paint it in beautiful colors;

but behind it, behind all those rainbow colors, you will be the same person, the same violent person.
Why does violence exist in man? Because we can't see ourselves as part of a universe, we see ourselves as separate. In that separation is violence. If I am separate from everybody else then of course I have to fight for my own survival.
Charles Darwin says: Life is a struggle -- a struggle to survive, and only the fittest survive. So you have to fight tooth and nail, you have to fight with your total energy, only then can you survive; otherwise, you will be eaten, destroyed. And if you look outside, it seems so.
Politics proves Charles Darwin. Everybody is fighting with everybody else; and how can you be nonviolent if you are continuously fighting? Man is so cunning that he can change, transform his nonviolence also into a weapon. He can make a weapon out of it, he can start fighting nonviolently.

I have heard a story:
A young man, a Gandhian, a follower of Mahatma Gandhi, was in love with a woman. The father was very much against him, the woman herself was very much against the man -- she hated even to see his face. But he was determined, he was a man of willpower, and he was very nonviolent. So he did a nonviolent trick.
He went to the woman's house, sat at the door and declared that he would fast unto death, unless she married him. A very nonviolent method: fasting unto death. You are not harming anybody. That's what Mahatma Gandhi was doing his whole life: fasting unto death. But is it nonviolence? It

is violence, pure violence. Of course you are not destroying the other, you are destroying yourself; but the threat that "I will destroy myself," is a threat of violence. And you leave the other absolutely undefended.

The woman was very much perturbed, disturbed, what to do? If this man dies, she will feel guilty her whole life that she has been the cause of the death of a young man. The father was also very much disturbed. And newspapers were writing and praising the young man: how nonviolent he is, how Gandhian he is. The father was getting crazy -- what to do, what not to do? Somebody suggested, "You inquire of some older Gandhian, some method must be there, some antidote."

He went to an old Gandhian who told him, "No, don't be worried. I know. You do one thing, a very simple thing." He whispered a secret in his ear and the father was very happy -- and the trick worked. The old Gandhian said, "You go to an old prostitute I know, you tell her to come to your house, sit by the side of the young man, and let her declare that 'I am fasting unto death unless this young man marries me.'"

And that very night the young man escaped and was never seen again.

Nonviolence in the hands of politicians is bound to become violent. It is only a beautiful name for an ugly phenomenon. This is not Buddha's approach, although Gandhians go on declaring that Gandhi is the greatest nonviolent man after Gautam Buddha. He is not; he has no understanding of Buddha and his insight. He is purely and simply a politician. His politics are also very subtle -- his

politics are very cunning, devious. But he is not religious at all. His whole approach is political.
If you practice nonviolence -- and he practiced it his whole life -- the nonviolence will be false. It cannot be practiced. Anything -- nonviolence, wisdom, silence, love, compassion, joy, none of these beautiful qualities can be practiced. If you practice them you falsify them. They come on their own; all you need to do is to be more and more aware.
On the tree of awareness many flowers bloom: the flower of love, the flower of truth, the flower of compassion, the flower of nonviolence. Why? -- because the more you become aware, the less you can believe in the separation. The more you become aware, the less you are an ego. When you become totally aware, you disappear -- you become part and parcel of the whole. Then how can you be violent? To whom? There is nobody else, with whom are you going to fight?
Violence or nonviolence is not the question at all. There is nobody else to fight with. It is all oneness, this whole universe is one God and we are part of it. Seeing it, knowing it, realizing it, compassion and love start flowing. HE HARMS NO LIVING THING.

AND YET IT IS NOT GOOD CONDUCT....

Remember these words, their import, their significance. They are very pregnant. AND YET IT IS NOT GOOD CONDUCT.... "Remember," Buddha is saying, "I am not talking about good conduct."

THAT HELPS YOU ON THE WAY.

Good conduct can give you only respectability. Good conduct can help you attain a pious ego, good conduct will make people praise you. They will call you a saint, your ego will be very satisfied; but good conduct can't help you on the way. In fact it is going to hinder.

The more respectable you become, the less rebellious you are. The more respectable you become, the more and more afraid you are of going against tradition, against conformity, against convention. The more respectable you are, the more you are a slave; a slave of the society and the church, a slave of the state, a slave of others -- because they start dominating you. They start in subtle ways telling you what to do and what not to do. Then they reward you with respect. That is bribery. By rewarding you, they are saying, "Look, if you go on doing the same thing, we will reward you more. If you don't do the same thing, if you go astray, we will withdraw our respect. We will condemn you." They respect you for the simple reason that you fulfill their desires and their expectations, that you become just a part of the dead tradition, an example of all that has been dead for a long time. You become a slave to the past.

AND YET, says Buddha, IT IS NOT GOOD CONDUCT THAT HELPS YOU ON THE WAY... because your good conduct is only practiced by you; it has not arisen from your own innermost core, you are following the conditioning. You are following whatsoever has been forced upon you. If you are a Hindu you will follow a certain conduct that Hindus expect of you. If you are a

Mohammedan, you will follow certain other conduct which has been forced upon you.
Ayatollah Khomeini, whose real name is Ayatollah Khomeiniac, goes on telling his followers: Be martyrs, we are martyrs -- if you die fighting for religion, you will be born into paradise. JIHAD, religious war, is the surest and the most easily available way to reach to God; every other way is a very long way. To die in a religious war is a shortcut.
Now many people, mad people, are following this lunatic. Yes, he is Khomeiniac. But this has been always so. These maniacs, these lunatics, fanatics, have dominated humanity. They go on promising you a beautiful future after death. It is a beautiful business, because nobody comes back to say whether it really happens or not. It is dealing in invisible goods.
You can have good conduct according to a certain society but you will still remain as unconscious as you were before. By being a Mohammedan or a Hindu or a Christian you don't become conscious. If you become conscious you CAN'T be a Hindu or a Mohammedan or a Christian. How can you be so foolish as to be a Hindu, to be a Buddhist, to be a Jaina? -- impossible! You will not have any adjective to you. You will simply be a human being, a divine being. That's more than enough, what else is needed?
But following so-called good conduct, you will remain the same unconscious person.

Joe was out all night with a dazzling blonde. He came home at dawn and tried to appear quietly sober, as his wife eyed him with suspicion.

"Joe, where is your underwear?" she said as he was undressing.
"My God," he cried with aggrieved dignity, "I have been robbed."

Your whole life is lived in such an unconscious way. You can practice good things, you can do good things, give service to people, you can donate to charity. You can even become a Mother Teresa of Calcutta, but your life will be the same. Yes, you will get a Nobel Prize, and you will be honored all over the world. The world consists of fools and only the fools are honored.
Just look at the irony: Jesus is crucified and Mother Teresa is given a Nobel Prize. Socrates is poisoned and Mother Teresa is given a Nobel Prize. Maharshi Raman was not given a Nobel Prize. J. Krishnamurti has worked his whole life as nobody has ever worked, for a better human being, for a better, conscious world. But he has not been given a Nobel Prize, his name has never even been considered for it.
George Gurdjieff, one of the greatest masters, who transformed people's lives into light, was not given a Nobel Prize. Mother Teresa is not a Raman Maharshi, she is not a J. Krishnamurti, she is not a George Gurdjieff. But why is she honored? Because she fulfills your requirements: she serves beggars, orphans, widows. And that is your idea of a saint -- that he should serve. He should serve all kinds of fools, then he is a saint. Then other fools will respect him. You are unconscious, your expectations are unconscious and there are people who will fulfill them. You will respect them, you will call them saints. Now, Mother Teresa has no

taste of awareness, no experience of ecstasy, but that is not the point for people. The point is how many hospitals she runs, how many orphans she has raised -- as if the world is not already much too overpopulated. How many old people does she serve, how many old people have survived through her efforts?
These things have nothing to do with real religion; these are social services. She is really serving the status quo, that's why she is respected. The Nobel Prize was not given because she is religious or a mystic. The Nobel Prize was given because she serves the capitalist system, she serves the status quo, she serves the vested interests. She is not a revolutionary, but a reformist. She is not a rebel.
Unless you become capable of seeing the beauty of rebellion, the beauty of a Jesus, Socrates, Buddha, you will not understand what real religion is.

The tensions of life were threatening to get a stranglehold on Bill; so after he had finished a good dinner, he relaxed mindlessly in a soft chair next to the stereo, with a stiff drink in his hand. His wife knew nothing of his nervous state, and climbed onto his lap with the thought of trying to wheedle a fur coat out of him.... She snuggled and murmured and fondled.
"Good heavens, Ethel," he exploded. "Get off. I get enough of this at the office."

You just watch yourself: what you say, what you do, what you hear, what you see, and you will be surprised -- you are always surrounded by smoke. A subtle smoke surrounds you, and you see through that smoke, and everything

becomes distorted. Buddha's simple message is, first be aware. He says: AND YET IT IS NOT GOOD CONDUCT THAT HELPS YOU UPON THE WAY....

NOR RITUAL....

Going to church every Sunday, doing your PUJA, your worship every morning, saying your prayer every night before going to bed... these are all rituals, dead rituals that you go on repeating; you have become habituated to them, they are just habits. If you don't do them you feel as if you are missing something. If you do them you don't gain anything at all.

A man said to a psychiatrist, "Look, I have everything I need -- a good house, a beautiful wife, successful children, a lovely job, but still my life is humdrum."
"Well," said the psychiatrist, "you are suffering from too much routine. You must bring novelty into your life. When do you usually make love to your wife?"
"Always at bedtime," replied the man.
"That's the trouble. You are too settled. Try grabbing your wife passionately at some unusual time. Fling off your clothes when you come into the house and get her. Then come back next week and report what happened."
"So," said the psychiatrist the following week, "how was it?"
"Well," replied the client, "the bridge club loved it, but it was still humdrum."

Just by changing your outer routine nothing is changed. You go to the church, you can change -- you can start going to a temple. You were repeating one mantra, you can change -- you can start repeating another mantra. You were a member of the Lions Club, you can become a member of the Rotary Club. Christians become Hindus, Hindus become Christians in the hope that by just changing outer forms something is going to be changed in their life. But the inner remains the same.

Unless the inner changes, your life is going to remain humdrum. And a humdrum life can never know the flavor of the divine, can never know the taste of the wine of God.

NOR RITUAL, says Buddha....

NOR BOOK LEARNING....

You can learn as much as you want. The psychologists say that each single human brain is so capable of learning that it can accumulate all the knowledge contained in all the libraries of the world; a single human mind is capable of storing all the knowledge possible. You can become a walking ENCYCLOPAEDIA BRITANNICA, but that is not going to help. You will know the words, but words are words. The word 'fire' is not fire; don't try to cook your food on the word 'fire'. The word 'love' is not love either, and the word 'God' is not God.

But people become so much obsessed with words -- they become so much obsessed that if somebody says anything against the Bible, you are ready to be killed or kill. And bible is just a word; the word 'bible' simply means "the book." It does not mean anything else.

If somebody says anything against the Vedas, Hindus become mad. Words have become so important, more important than your life. The whole history is full of blood and bloodshed just because of words. Buddha says: Beware, don't get too much entangled in words.

A Jewish mother was very unhappy because her son did not like BLINTZES. In desperation she consulted a psychiatrist who suggested that if she showed Sammy, step by step, how blintzes were made, he might come to love and understand them. Eager to try out the suggestion she took Sammy into the kitchen the very next day.
"Look, Sammy," she said, mixing the dough. "Eggs, milk, flour. You like eggs and milk and flour, don't you Sammy? Taste a little."
The little boy, with a sour expression, grudgingly tasted a bit of each. She rolled out the dough and fried it into cakes.
"Taste a little," she urged him, and again he tasted a bit.
Encouraged, she went on mixing the cheese and cinnamon and sugar.
"Look, Sammy, cheese, cinnamon, sugar. You like them, don't you Sammy?"
"Yes, Mom," he replied.
Really encouraged now, she placed the cheese mixture in the middle of a cake. Cautiously she folded over one corner.
"Okay, Sammy?"
"Okay, Mom."
The she folded a second corner.
"Okay?"
"Okay."

The she folded the third corner and finally the fourth one. "Blintzes!!! Yech!!!" screamed Sammy, and ran out of the kitchen.

And it is not so only with children. It is so with your great theologicians, philosophers, thinkers -- just words. Buddha says: NOR RITUAL, NOR BOOK LEARNING....

NOR WITHDRAWAL INTO THE SELF.

Buddha must be the first enlightened master who has said this so clearly. Now modern psychology has rediscovered it. I say rediscovered it because they are not aware of Buddha's statement. They think that introversion is a kind of disease. Buddha is saying exactly the same thing. He is saying: NOR WITHDRAWAL INTO THE SELF. Introversion is a disease, so is extroversion. The real man of awareness is neither extrovert nor introvert -- he simply is. When needed he goes out, when needed he goes in; he is fluid, flexible. He is not focused and fixated. There are extroverts who can't go in, and there are introverts who can't go out. Both are ill, both are pathological. NOR WITHDRAWAL INTO THE SELF is going to help you on the way....

NOR DEEP MEDITATION.

Let me repeat.... You will be surprised, because Buddha is one of the greatest meditators of the world. And Buddha is responsible for the greatest stream of meditation that has

flowed up to now. He is the very source, but still he is such a sincere man that he says: NOR DEEP MEDITATION.

NONE OF THESE CONFERS MASTERY OR JOY.

Why not even meditation? -- because meditation is a method. Meditation can cause a certain state of the mind, but it cannot make you available to the uncaused. It may prepare the ground, it may cleanse the ground, but it cannot bring the flowers. It is as if you prepare the ground for a garden: you remove all the rocks, all the weeds, all the roots, all the grass. You prepare the ground, but that's not enough. If you prepare the ground and then sit under a tree and wait for the roses to come, they will not come. Meditation is only a negative method; it helps you to prepare the ground. It removes the barriers, but then you have to sow the seeds -- only then will flowers be coming. Meditation is creating the ground, awareness is sowing the seeds. Only meditation with awareness can help you on the way; and then there is mastery, and then there is joy.

O SEEKER!
RELY ON NOTHING....

To make it absolutely sure that you don't rely on anything, he has said: AND YET IT IS NOT GOOD CONDUCT THAT HELPS YOU UPON THE WAY, NOR RITUAL, NOR BOOK LEARNING, NOR WITHDRAWAL INTO THE SELF, NOR DEEP MEDITATION. NONE OF THESE CONFERS MASTERY OR JOY.

But who knows? -- you may find something else. Hence, to make it absolutely clear, categorically clear, he says: O SEEKER! RELY ON NOTHING.

Reliance on anything brings dependence, dependence brings slavery, slavery is misery. Don't depend, not even on meditation. One day, even meditation has to be transcended. Don't depend even on the master, because the master can only point the way, YOU have to follow the path. The master cannot go with you.

Buddha is reported to have said: If you meet me on the way, kill me; if I come in your way as a hindrance, kill me immediately. Don't have any hesitation... that I am your master.

How can you kill me?... He is saying something very metaphorical. He is saying, "Deep in meditation, the last thing to be dropped is the master." Everything can be dropped easily, but the more the master helps you to drop things, the more you become attached to the master himself; and the love for the master is so pure, and so ecstatic, it brings such joy, that it is very difficult to drop the master at the last moment. And the last moment is the last barrier. The master has to be dropped, you have to go alone -- absolutely alone into the unknown. RELY ON NOTHING....

UNTIL YOU WANT NOTHING.

Go on dropping your desires, even the desire for being a master, the desire for being blissful, the desire for knowing God, the desire for nirvana. All desires have to be dropped.

Mind is so cunning: you can drop one desire and it immediately supplies you with another. And it may supply you with a more subtle desire. The gross desire can be understood by everybody, the subtle desire is more difficult to understand. For example, the desire for God is not thought to be a desire worth dropping. No Christian will say, no Jew will say, no Mohammedan will say, "Drop the desire for God." Drop all desire FOR God, but don't drop the desire for God.
It is only Buddha, the only man in the whole history of human consciousness, who has said the whole truth -- truth in its absolute purity, truth and nothing else. He is so insistent on the truth, that he says you will have to drop the master, and you will have to drop all kinds of desires. Otherwise, mind is very innovative, very creative, imaginative. You drop one thing and it immediately says, "Good. Now seek this, seek truth, seek God."
Now nobody can raise any objections about seeking God -- Buddha raises objections to that, too.

After numerous complaints from the neighbors, Harry sadly agreed to have a veterinarian render his cat fit to guard a sultan's harem.
"I will bet," said one neighbor, "that that ex-tom of yours just lies on the hearth now and gets fat."
"No, he still goes out at night. But now he goes along as a consultant."

If you cannot do anything, at least you can function as a consultant; but the going continues. Nothing has changed, the operation has failed.

Remember, if you are a real seeker... and this is a strange paradox: if you are a real seeker, you will have to drop all seeking as such. Otherwise you will go on seeking one thing after another, and there is no end to it.
When all seeking stops, you are suddenly at the very center of your being. Seeking drives you outside, seeking takes you away from yourself. Jesus says: Seek and ye shall find. Knock and the doors shall be opened unto you. Ask and it shall be given.
Buddha will not say that. Buddha will say, "Seek and you will not find. Knock and the doors will never be opened for you. Ask and you will not be given."
Then why does Jesus say so? Is Jesus not a buddha? Jesus is also a buddha, but the difference of their statements is because of the audience. Jesus is talking to ordinary people, and Buddha is talking to very evolved disciples. Jesus is talking to the crowds. If he had said to them, "Seek and ye shall never find," they would not have understood him. They would have thought him mad, absolutely mad.
Seek and you shall not find? Ask and it shall not be given to you? Knock and the doors shall not be thrown open unto you? He was talking to ordinary people, hence he has to use very ordinary expressions.
Buddha is talking to adepts, initiates. Jesus was not so fortunate as Buddha. Jesus' disciples were very ordinary, even those twelve apostles were very ordinary, unconscious people. Buddha had thousands of BODHISATTVAS, thousands of disciples who were just on the verge of becoming buddhas any moment. Thousands were just on the verge of bursting into a flame of eternal light. He could talk without any fear of being misunderstood; hence he

says: RELY ON NOTHING UNTIL YOU WANT NOTHING.
The greatest moment in life is when there is no desire left inside you, when desirelessness settles, absolute desirelessness. In that very moment all is attained, because all has always been there inside you. It was because of desires that you were running hither and thither, not looking inside. When all running has stopped, suddenly your own truth explodes with all its beauty, with all its benediction upon you.
Listen to Buddha, meditate over his sutra. It will give you great insight -- insight into desire and its futility. It will help you to drop all desires. And the moment you are desireless you have arrived home.
Enough for today.
The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 7
Chapter #8
Chapter title: Be in it; don't be of it
18 December 1979 am in Buddha Hall

The first question:
Question 1
BELOVED MASTER,
AT DARSHAN ON YOUR BIRTHDAY I LOOKED AT YOU, A STILL POOL OF SERENITY, AND EVERYTHING ELSE HAPPENING AROUND YOU WAS IRRELEVANT. IT WAS SUDDENLY SO CLEAR THAT THIS -- SITTING SILENTLY AMIDST THE CHAOS AND FERVOR -- WAS YOUR TEACHING; THAT YOU ARE THE WAY.

Prem Pramod, so at last a ray of light has entered into your darkness -- an insight, a glimpse. Now don't lose track of it! It is very difficult to get it and very easy to lose it. In fact, the mind and its ways are so old that soon you start suspecting whether the glimpse was true or you had only imagined it.

And the mind tries to convince you that it was sheer imagination, that you projected it, that it was just an idea. Maybe you became hypnotized by the situation. Maybe you became overwhelmed by so many people in such joy, in such ecstasy. Maybe you were touched by the flood of energy around you. Soon the mind will start creating doubts. Go on remembering. These insights are rare.

Yes, Pramod, that's exactly what my teaching is: Be in the world, in all its absurdities, in all its nonsense, noise, and yet remain cool, aloof, detached. Be IN it, but don't be OF it. Let it happen all around you -- there is no need to escape from it, there is nowhere to escape. And even if you escape somewhere, that is not going to transform your being; your mind will remain the same. The best way is to use the opportunity of the world.

The world is an opportunity, a great opportunity, a tremendously valuable gift of God. It is a teaching device. Be in it and yet so far away, so transcendental, that nothing of it reaches to the core of your being. Only your circumference is touched by it, but your center remains aloof.

Be the center of the cyclone: that's exactly my teaching. The world IS a tale told by an idiot, full of fury and noise, signifying nothing. But it is very easy to get caught into the

net, because the fool is not only outside, the fool is also inside. Your mind is part of the tale told by an idiot and your mind would like to find some meaning it it -- whereas none exists. The mind cannot remain without finding some meaning; if it cannot find, it invents it. Otherwise it feels empty, it feels something is missing.
There is no meaning in the world; all meaning is in the very center of your being. The world is simply noise, there is no music. Music is in the deepest recesses of your being -- and that music has to be heard in all the noise of the world. Then the noise of the world functions as a backdrop, a background; it becomes a context. You can hear the inner music more clearly because of the noise. Then the noise is no longer a disturbance, rather a help.
That's why I don't teach renunciation: I teach rejoicing.

The second question:
Question 2
BELOVED MASTER,
I HAVE HEARD THAT SWAMI PREM CHINMAYA IS SO ILL, SO WEAK, THAT HE IS BEING GIVEN BLOOD. WILL IT NOT BE RIGHT THAT OUR SANNYASINS DONATE BLOOD IN SUCH CASES?

Avinash, don't be worried! The blood of a nonsannyasin is not going to disturb Prem Chinmaya. Blood is blood; it is neither sannyasin nor nonsannyasin -- and it is not thicker than water.
Yes, there are stories which create worry....

Because of his rare blood type, Gaffney was selected to be the donor for an English king who had been seriously ill. The first transfusion helped enormously. A second brought the stricken monarch back to consciousness.
The third was in progress when the king jumped up in bed and shouted, "The hell with the King of England!"

But these are only stories -- blood cannot do that!
And Prem Chinmaya is faring well: he is going very steadily in his consciousness. The body is weak, but the spirit is not weak. The flesh is weak, but the spirit is very strong. In fact, his illness has been a great blessing to him. He has learned more from his sickness than from anything else. He has become more and more silent, accepting, unfearing. Even if death comes now he will be able to receive it, welcome it as a guest.
I am tremendously happy with him! When seven, eight years ago he had come to me, he was suffering from the same disease, but his fear was greater than the disease. The body has to go one day; nobody can live here forever. What excuse one chooses to go is a private affair. One can choose cancer, one can choose tuberculosis, one can choose heart attack; and there are a thousand and one alternatives available. But those are all excuses. The basic thing is that one cannot live here for long; it is not our home.
We have to go in search of the home, and only those who can go silently, joyously, can find it; otherwise, you will immediately find yourself in another womb, back into the world. Unless you learn the lesson, you will be thrown back again and again into the world.

Eight years ago when he had come to me, the thing that was more disturbing was not the illness but his fear of death. All these eight years he has lived with death... it can happen any moment. But slowly slowly, as his meditation has deepened, as his love has deepened, as he has understood more and more that death is part of life -- you cannot deny it, and in denying it you will be denying life itself -- he has become more accepting. A great suchness has descended upon him, and that is significant -- more significant than life, more significant than death.

He will die one day, but now I am not worried about his death. He knows now how to die, he has learned the knack of it. Death will not be just an end but a great beginning for him. He will not be drowned by death; he will ride on it, he will go victorious. Hence there is no need to worry about him. And any blood will do. Blood is blood; it goes only into the body, it does not affect your soul.

But these ideas have existed for centuries: your food affects your soul, your clothes affect your soul.... These are all nonsense ideas! They affect you only if you are identified -- but then anything will affect you. If you are not identified, nothing affects you; you remain untouched. And that's the great experience: to feel untouched amidst all turmoil.

And I am tremendously happy with Prem Chinmaya: he has proved himself. And it is possible that because of his understanding, his life has been lengthened. Even doctors are a little puzzled how he is continuing; by all ordinary rules he should not be here anymore.

Amritam, our doctor, has also asked a question: How does Chinmaya go on pulling himself?

The reason is, he is no longer interested in pulling, that's why he goes on pulling himself. If death comes this moment, he will accept it. Because of this, death has become irrelevant. He has become absolutely free of the anxiety. It is anxiety that kills more; it is deep down anxiety that becomes destructive. Because he is no longer in anguish, he may live a few more years, he may live long. But whether he lives or not is no longer of any importance. The important thing has happened. If he lives he will live with a cool heart; if he dies he will die with a cool heart. He has learned the lesson.

Rejoice with him! Learn from him -- because everybody has to encounter his death sooner or later. And one can never be certain: you may be perfectly healthy, and tomorrow death may take you away. So health is no guarantee.

In fact, it happens more often that a perfectly healthy person dies more quickly than an ill person. Because the healthy person has no way of coping with illness, any illness can prove fatal. But a person who has lived long with illness becomes adjusted to it, he can cope with it; he knows the ways of death. The healthy person knows nothing, so it often happens that the healthy person will die with the first stroke and the unhealthy person may live long. His body has become seasoned, has become more tolerant of diseases.

But remember, that is not the point at all. Whether Chinmaya lives a few years or not has no meaning anymore. If he lives, good; if he goes, he can go with joy in his heart, because his life has not been meaningless, his life has not been futile.

The first flowers have started blossoming.

The third question:
Question 3
BELOVED MASTER,
CAN YOU CONVINCE ME ABOUT THE EXISTENCE OF GOD?

Sargam, why are you worried about God? What wrong has he done to you? Why can't you forgive him and forget him? Why remain so concerned about God? Be concerned more with life, with existence, and you will know God! In its right moment, life itself becomes luminous, existence itself becomes divine. It all depends on your inner clarity. If you can see clearly, ONLY God is. No proof is needed. If you can't see clearly, then no proof is going to be of any help.
There have been philosophers arguing for and against God for centuries, at least for five thousand years, with no conclusion in sight. They have not been able to come to any conclusion. Five thousand years of constant speculation, thinking, argument, logic, and what is the result? What is the outcome? It has all been an exercise in futility! And you still go on asking about proofs.
Proofs have been supplied, but they can be argued against, they can be disproved. Faults can be found in them for the simple reason that God is not an object which can be proved by logic. God is your subjectivity which is beyond logic, beyond thinking, beyond mind.
God is not a thing but an experience. And how can you prove the experience? Can you prove the experience of love? Nobody has been able to prove that love exists,

nobody can prove that beauty exists. Nobody can prove anything really valuable. It may be truth, it may be love, it may be bliss, it may be beauty; they are all beyond proofs or disproofs. Nobody can disprove either.

And God is the culmination of all the great values, the essential core of beauty, love, truth, bliss. God is the essential core of all these values; these values cannot be proved. How can you prove the essence of them? He is just a perfume -- not even the flower but just the fragrance.

But why does this desire arise? The desire arises because your mind says, "Unless God is proved there is no need to waste time for God or in meditation or in prayer." It is mind's strategy to keep you away from meditation, from prayer.

There is no need for God! If you want to meditate you can meditate without God. Buddha meditated without God; he had no belief in God. Mahavira meditated and became enlightened without any idea of God. God is not a necessity, God can be disposed of! But when Buddha attained to meditation he became a god. Mahavira became a god himself.

That's how it happens: you meditate and YOU will become a god, you will discover godliness in your own being. And that is the beginning of discovery. Then you start discovering it in others. Then slowly slowly, the whole existence is full of God, overflooded with God.

But ask for the proof first and you will miss the whole journey. Then the mind says, "First prove, then meditate." The mind has played a trick on you, the mind has befooled you. And it looks logical: before you start any inquiry, let it be proved. If God is, then meditation is significant;

otherwise why are you meditating? If God is, then prayer is significant; if there is no God, then prayer is futile.
I say to you: whether there is a God or not, prayer is significant. Prayer does not change God -- prayer changes you! Prayer has nothing to do with God; it has everything to do with you. The praying person becomes a totally different kind of person. Meditation has nothing to do with God, but meditation transforms you.
These are alchemical ways of transforming your interiority. And when your interiority is changed, is full of light and clarity, you will be able to see.
God can be seen but cannot be proved. Only small things can be proved, only things which are worthless can be proved. Be free of this desire for proof. It is a stupid desire.

Mary and Bob were in their upper berth on the train to Niagara Falls, and she kept repeating, "Bobby, I just can't believe that we are really married!"
From the lower berth bellowed a sleepy voice, "For Chrissake, Bobby, convince her -- we wanna get to sleep!"

Yes, of such things you can be convinced, but nothing higher, nothing deeper, nothing really valuable.
You ask me, Sargam, "Can you convince me about the existence of God?"
And what else do you think I am doing here? I am not arguing for God, I am not directly trying to prove the existence of God; but in an indirect way I am creating the right situation, the right milieu, the right context, where God can become available to you. That's what is going on here. I don't talk much about God because there is no need.

I talk about love, about meditation, about awareness, about mindfulness, and I talk about a thousand and one things. They all are significant in the sense that they will create the right atmosphere, the right climate for God to happen.
I am trying to create a buddhafield: a certain space in which you can grow into gods. My effort is not to give you a belief in God; my effort is to give you an experience of God. And belief is of no value because hidden behind belief there is always doubt. Only experience is of real help, because in experience there is no doubt left.
When YOU know, only then you know. I can silence you through logic, I can make you convinced through logical argumentation, but that conviction will be only intellectual -- somebody else may destroy it. If somebody else can argue in a better way against God, you will be at a loss; your whole belief system will collapse. But nobody can argue against your experience. If you have known, then the whole world can say there is no God, but still you know that there is God. And only such existential conviction is of any value.
Beliefs are for fools; the wise ones seek experience. Hence, please don't ask that I should convince you, that I should give proofs for God's existence. That is not my function. I am not here to convert you to a particular ideology. I am here to transform you to a totally new existence, a new way of life, a new way of vision.
God is not there somewhere outside you; hence science is never going to discover God. God is your inner nature. You will have to dive within. You will have to encounter your own self. You will have to go on seeking and searching in

your consciousness. And when you have reached to the center of your consciousness... the revelation!

The fourth question:
Question 4
BELOVED MASTER,
AH RAREST ONE, HOW IS IT THAT YOU GIVE SO MUCH?

Chaitanya Kabir, I would like to give you much more! But the real cannot be given in words. The real can be conveyed only through gestures, through silence, through presence. And sometimes even silence is not adequate enough; even presence, at the ultimate peaks, fails. The ultimate cannot be given in any possible way.
I go on talking to you, but it is not that which I would like to say. That which I would like to say to you cannot be spoken, and that which can be said is not really the thing that I would like to say to you. It is the ancient dilemma, the dilemma of the mystic. He knows, but he cannot say it; and whatsoever he says is not what he knows.
Lao Tzu says: The tao cannot be said, and if you say it, it is no more tao. Read instead of tao, "dhamma," and it becomes the statement of Buddha. Read instead of tao, "truth," and it becomes a statement of Socrates. The truth cannot be said -- it is so vast! -- but efforts have to be made. In those very efforts, a few people who are vulnerable, open, intelligent, may be able to have a little glimpse -- a faraway glimpse, of course -- but that glimpse will become a seed in them and will start growing.

And what I have to say to you is inexhaustible, hence I can go on speaking. For these five years I have been speaking nonstop, and yet I have not said anything -- not even a single word has been said! Hence I can go on speaking, because it can never be said.

One can ask, "Then why speak at all?" There is a reason to it: I have caught so many of you through speaking! If I was just sitting silently here, yes, a few people would have been here, but very few, because silence is a difficult phenomenon, the most difficult to understand. It needs tremendous intelligence; not only intelligence, it needs a certain silence in you too. Then only, two silences can commune. And the world does not teach you to be silent; it teaches you words, language.

I have to use words and language so that you become caught in the net. Once you are caught and cannot escape, then you will have to listen to my silence too. And once you have understood my words, you will start feeling the silence that surrounds those words. Those words are born out of silence; they carry something of silence in them, some fragrance around them.

But what I have been saying to you is only the most rudimentary; it is for the beginners. As you grow in understanding, as your silence deepens, my contact with you will be more and more of silence. Even while I am speaking, you will listen to the intervals between the words and you will read between the lines. You will not be so much concerned with the words, but with the wordless. You will be more concerned with the origin of it all.

Two hippies were crossing the Atlantic by steamship. They were out on deck, looking at the ocean, and one said, "Man, look at all that water out there!"
"Yeah, man," the second, farther-out cat replied. "And just think, like that is only the top of it."

Only the superficial, the surface, can be talked about; the depths remain hidden. But the surface can become an invitation.
Chaitanya Kabir, my words are only invitations -- invitations towards my being, invitations towards my presence. Hence, those who come here and remain nonsannyasins are bound to go empty-handed. They will accumulate a few words, they will become a little more knowledgeable; philosophically they will become a little enriched, but their being will remain the same. They will know more but they will not be more. Unless you become committed, unless you become involved, unless you risk all that you have, you will remain concerned only with the words.
The deeper your commitment, the greater is the possibility of moving towards the depths, because to move towards the depths is possible only when you are ready to die -- die as an ego, die as a person.
And that's exactly what transpires between the master and the disciple: the master is no more an ego; the disciple also slowly slowly becomes a non-ego, a nonentity, a nobody... and then they merge and meet, then they melt into each other.
I have chosen a flag for the new commune. The flag is of two colors: white and orange. The white represents the

master, the orange represents the disciple. And the flag has a full moon on it as a symbol. The full moon represents enlightenment. Enlightenment is light, but not like the sun; it is not hot, it is cool -- it is like the moon.

Enlightenment is not masculine but feminine, because enlightenment is a gift from God. You cannot be aggressive about it, you have to be just receptive, available, open, like a womb; hence the moon. And the moon is half red and half white; that represents the meeting and merger of the master and the disciple. The master is in the disciple, hence the moon is half red; and the disciple is in the master.

The master and disciple are not two. When they become one, when it is no longer a dialogue, when there is no question of I and thou, when the I and thou disappear into one unity, then silence is understood, then presence is understood. And then inexhaustible sources open up for you. Then you are moving into the ocean, the river is falling into the ocean.

These words are only invitations. Come along with me! These words are just to prepare you so that you can take a jump into the ocean. It needs guts, it needs daring, because jumping into the ocean means disappearing as you have known yourself up to now, losing your old identity. It is a loss in the beginning -- but not really, because the river loses itself as a river but becomes the ocean. It is a gain. The disciple losing himself in the master becomes a master; he attains to his true identity. And the master is only a door: from the master he moves into God himself.

That's why in the East, the master is conceived of as a god. That is very difficult for non-Easterners to understand, why

the master is conceived of as a god... because he is the door into the divine.
Chaitanya Kabir, I can understand your wonder. You say, "Ah rarest one, how is it that you give so much?"
But from my side I am not giving you so much, for two reasons. One is that you have to be prepared before you can be given. You can be given only as much as you can accept, digest. You can be given only that much which can become your blood, bones and marrow; more than that will cause indigestion, which will not be helpful to you but will be harmful.
And I would like to give you much more, but in the very nature of things it cannot be given. I am utterly helpless. I can shout, I can go on calling to you, "Come closer!"... because if you come closer, slowly slowly, my energy field will start vibrating with YOUR energy field. And when my heart and your heart are pulsating with the same beat, in the same rhythm, then the real communion has started.
But it is happening, slowly slowly. A few of you are coming closer, dropping your egos. A few of you are becoming more and more silent. A few of you are daring the ultimate, are getting ready to take a jump into the ocean from where no return is possible. Things are happening, but they take time.
And such an energy field has not existed for centuries; so many things have to be worked out from ABC. Such an energy field existed while Buddha was here. Such an energy field existed with Bodhidharma in China. Such an energy field existed with Zarathustra in Iran. Such an energy field existed with Jesus in Jerusalem. But for centuries this phenomenon has disappeared from the world,

and man has become too much worldly, too much interested in trivia, in the superficial, in the meaningless. Even if he goes to God, he goes for meaningless things. He does not go for inner transformation, he does not go to die and to be reborn.
You are here to die and to be reborn. Much is happening... much more is going to happen. As you become more and more ready, I will be showering more and more.
And it is inexhaustible because it is not mine, it has nothing to do with me. I am just a vehicle, a hollow bamboo. I am simply available to existence: whatsoever song it wants to sing through me, I am ready to sing it. I am simply a medium.
Use this opportunity as much as you can, because such doors open only once in a while and it is very easy to miss them. For stupid things one can miss them, and you can rationalize your stupidity easily.
Beware, be watchful....

The fifth question:
Question 5
BELOVED MASTER,
THERE IS RESEARCH IN THE WEST THAT SUGGESTS THAT MEN ARE HAPPIER BEING MARRIED THAN NOT, AND THAT THE SUICIDE RATE IS LOWER FOR MARRIED MEN. AND THAT THE REVERSE IS TRUE FOR WOMEN. PLEASE COMMENT.

Prabhudasi, there is a difference between the male mind and the female mind; their functioning is different. They

are polar opposites -- never forget that. Spiritually they are exactly the same, but physiologically they are poles apart; they function in different ways.

For example, man is more physical than woman, man is more extrovert than woman. The woman is more psychological and more introvert. That's why there are so many magazines like PLAYBOY with nude women on their covers and pictures of nude women inside -- and millions of copies are sold. So much pornography exists all over the world, but it is all a male idea. The woman is not as much interested in the nude man as man is interested in the nude woman.

When a man and a woman are in deep, loving embrace, the woman immediately closes her eyes. Kiss a woman, and she closes her eyes. But the man watches himself kissing the woman, watches the woman kissed, watches her reactions, watches continuously whether she is getting an orgasm or not. He remains more or less an outsider, a spectator. He is more interested in watching than in BEING in it.

The woman simply closes her eyes. She is less concerned with the man and what is happening to him; she is more concerned with her inner being, what is happening there. Hence, women are not interested in pornography; their real interest is in their inner processes. These differences are so great that they make for different life-styles.

Prabhudasi, you are right: modern research has certainly found a very strange-looking fact. But it is not really strange. Men are happier being married than not because when they are not married they simply feel lonely. When they are married, even if the marriage is miserable, it is

better than to be lonely; at least there is something to keep you occupied. Misery also keeps you occupied and man always wants to remain occupied -- something on the outside so that he need not go in, so he can keep his eyes open.

The woman is not so interested in the outside, so when a woman is unmarried she feels more alone than lonely. And she can enjoy her aloneness better than a man because she is more inner-directed -- she is more selfish, in a way. I am using the word with a very positive meaning: she is selfish, she is self-centered. The man is other-centered; he is constantly thinking of others.

The woman is thinking more about herself. At the most, she remains interested in the neighborhood -- who is fooling around with whom. She is not much concerned about Vietnam or Iran. She simply feels a little puzzled about why men are so much interested in Vietnam. What have you to do with Vietnam? It is so far away, why be bothered about it?

I have not come across a single woman who has asked me about proofs for God. It is so far away! No woman has asked me whether heaven really exists, is hell a reality? She is not concerned about these things. She is more concerned with things that are close to her; she is more concerned with her clothes than with God.

And man thinks all these feminine interests as stupid: when there are such great subjects, the woman is concerned about her clothes! She will not discuss communism and Karl Marx, Mao and Mahatma Gandhi. She, at the most, can listen to all these things out of politeness. Her interest is about where you got your sari, the texture of your clothes,

and who is looking beautiful. She is concerned with that which is close; her concern is for herself.

Hence, she can remain alone in a more healthy way than man; he feels very lonely. If he can't get his morning newspaper he starts freaking out! He has to know what is happening in the whole world. He can't be alone. Even in his aloneness he will create some imaginary beings -- God, angels -- and imaginary problems: How many angels can stand on the point of a needle? And he will be really into the problem; he will waste his whole life counting the angels, and he will argue to no end! The woman simply laughs. The woman deep down knows boys are just boys -- let them talk nonsense! They call it philosophy, theology -- they are very skillful in giving great names to stupid things. That's why man will commit suicide if he is lonely.

Marriage is a must for him; he needs a woman for many things. First, she gives him a grounding -- the woman is very earthly, earth-bound. In all the mythologies of the world she has been represented by the earth. The woman gives him roots into the earth; otherwise, without a woman, he is just without earth, without roots; hanging in the air. The woman gives him a nest, the woman becomes a home for him. Without the woman he is homeless, a vagabond, driftwood.

Still, there is going to be conflict, there is going to be misery, there is going to be constant nagging... it is inevitable because they are such polar opposites; their interests never meet. Hence the woman has to nag, otherwise the man will never fulfill HER desires -- and the man has to concede. Slowly slowly, if the man is intelligent enough, he becomes henpecked.

Only very stupid and stubborn people never become henpecked. A little intelligence and the man understands it: that it is better to listen to whatsoever she says and follow it. Otherwise twenty-four hours a day she will be after you. She will not leave you any rest. It is better to do whatsoever she is saying and be finished with it, so you can read your newspaper!

All that nagging and all that misery can be tolerated because the woman fulfills a certain very deep need: she makes you earth-bound and she takes care of your body. She is not much concerned about your soul -- that she leaves for you to think about -- but she nourishes your body. She nourishes, she cares, she loves; she makes you feel loved, needed -- she gives you a deep contentment. Without her, you simply don't know who you are. Without her you are always a lost child. She mothers you.

Hence it happens that married men are happier than unmarried men. It should not be so, because the unmarried man has no problems. The married man has problems, so logically it seems very strange that the married person should be happier than the unmarried. But life does not follow logic; life has its own strange ways. The unmarried man is without roots, without nourishment, without warmth. He is cold, living in a cold world; he goes on shrinking and dying. The woman gives warmth, gives life, makes him feel at home, helps him to remain together. Without the woman he starts falling apart.

But the woman can be more happy alone than married, because she can make herself rooted without the man; the man is not such a great need. She can be more independent than the man -- she IS more independent.

Just because the woman is more independent, down the ages man has tried to make her dependent in other ways -- economically, socially. Naturally, she is more independent and that hurts the man and his ego, so he has tried to make her dependent in some way; artificial dependence has been created for her. Economically she has been paralyzed, she has to depend on man. This is a consolation for man: if he depends on her, she also depends on him. It is a compensation and a consolation.

Politically, socially, she has been thrown out of the society; she has been forced to remain in the home so that man can feel that "I am not the only one dependent, she is also dependent on me." This is a psychological strategy of the ego, of the male ego. Otherwise, if the woman is given total freedom -- economic, social, political -- man will look really poor compared to her.

In matriarchal societies, man IS poor. There are a few tribes still existing on the earth which are matriarchal, where woman rules; the women are stronger, more confident of themselves, and men are weaklings.

Certainly the woman is stronger than man in many ways. She lives longer than man, five years longer than man. If man's average lifespan is seventy, then woman's will be seventy-five. She lives five years longer than man -- why? She must have more resistance. And after giving birth to ten, twelve children.... Just think of a man giving birth to ten, twelve children -- he will be finished long before! Just carry one child in your womb for nine months and you will commit suicide! Or if that is difficult, just try to bring up a child -- and either you will kill the child or you will commit suicide.

The woman has great resistance, great tolerance of things. The woman is more balanced; physiologically, chemically, she is more balanced. That's why she looks more beautiful -- her beauty has roots in her physiological balance.

It is like this: if people are created from two cells, one from the mother and one from the father -- each cell consisting of twenty-four smaller parts -- then man has two cells, one consisting of the full twenty-four while the other contains less. And the woman has two cells, both consisting of the full twenty-four, equally. The woman is more balanced. Man has an inner imbalance, hence goes berserk more easily, goes mad very easily. Any woman can drive any man mad, it is such a simple phenomenon! Women are ill less than men; men are ill more, they suffer more illnesses. One hundred fifteen boys are born for each hundred girls, and by the time they reach the age of marriage, fifteen boys have disappeared. By the marrying age there are one hundred girls to one hundred boys. Nature also gives birth to fifteen more boys knowing perfectly well that fifteen are going to die sooner or later. So by the time the boys and girls come to the marriageable age, the proportion will be the same.

Unmarried women are more at ease with themselves. If politically and economically they were not prevented, they would like, they would love to remain unmarried. Maybe that is one of the reasons why man has made them so helpless politically, socially and economically, so that they HAVE to decide for marriage; otherwise many women would like to remain unmarried. Even if they would like to become mothers they would like to become mothers

without marriage. Yes, there is a great need to be a mother in a woman, but there is no great need to be a wife.
Men's needs are more physiological; women's needs are more psychological. Hence the woman always feels as if she is exploited in marriage. And her feeling is true, because man's interest is sexual and the woman's interest is far more total; it is not just sexual. Sex may be a part in that totality. But man's interest is basically sexual; everything else is just decorative, it is not essential. He is continuously interested in sex.... The simple reason is that their sexualities are very different.
Man has a local sexuality; his sex is confined to the genital organs, it is not spread all over his body. The woman is totally sexual, her whole body is sexual; it is not genital. Hence a woman needs longer foreplay before she can go really into lovemaking.
And the man is always in a hurry; his love is nothing but a hit-and-run affair! The woman is not even warmed up, and the man is getting dressed and going away! The man is finished. His sexuality is genital. The woman is more total; her whole body has a deep sexuality in it. Unless her whole body becomes involved she can't have orgasmic experience. And if she can't have orgasmic experiences she becomes disinterested in sex. So wives are disinterested in sex. Man's whole interest is in sex.

The young executive greeted his attractive secretary warmly as he entered the office. "Good morning, Marge," he said, tossing his briefcase on his desk. "I had a dream about you last night."

Flattered, but wishing to appear aloof, she casually inquired, "Ah, did you?"
"No," her boss replied. "I woke up too soon."

Their understanding is different. The woman always feels cheated, used, as if she is a machine. She feels used as a means; it is humiliating. Hence marriage is very humiliating to the woman. It seems only a permanent kind of prostitution, nothing else. She feels as if she has been sold forever. And in the bargain what does she get? A repetitive life, with no creativity, with no joy, with no exploration; a slavery, a constant slavery and the constant humiliation of being used as a means.
Of course, if more married women commit suicide that is natural; more married women go mad, that is natural.

Lester was continuously nervous and tense, so he went to see his doctor. He was greeted by the lovely, red-headed nurse, and he told her his problem.
She said, "That's easy to fix." And she took him into a little room, relieved his tension and said, "That will be ten dollars, please."
A few weeks later he was nervous and tense again, went back to the doctor, and the doctor examined him and gave him a prescription for tranquilizers and said, "That will be five dollars."
"If it's all the same to you, Doc, I would just as soon have the ten-dollar treatment."

For men, sex is not a spiritual phenomenon but only a physiological release. For women it is a spiritual

phenomenon. Hence the woman always feels offended; unless love happens as part of a great spiritual experience she is unable to cooperate in it. Yes, she can be part of it in a cold way. It is because of this situation that millions of women have completely forgotten what orgasm means; they have become frozen. It is due to man's nonunderstanding about the difference.

Each man and each woman needs a great education about it -- that they are different; their physiologies are different, their psychologies are different. And they have to understand each other's psychology, each other's physiology. They have to be taught. Each university should help the students to understand each other's biology, spirituality. But nothing is being taught.

Sex is taboo: don't talk about it. People act as if we are born with all the knowledge needed. That is sheer nonsense! You may be able to produce children, that's possible, but that is not enough.

Sex has a far deeper significance. It is not only for reproduction; it has a multidimensional quality to it. It is also fun, it is play, it is prayer, it is meditation, it is religion, it is spirituality. Sex has the whole spectrum; it is the whole rainbow, all the colors from the lowest to the highest.

A great education is needed so that man can understand the woman and can help her to move towards orgasmic peaks, and the woman can understand the man and can help him. Marriage right now is based on ignorance, and it has been so for centuries. All knowledge about sex has been repressed. It has been discovered again and again, but it has been repressed again and again by the moralists, by the

puritans, by the priests, by the politicians, because they don't want you to become orgasmically blissful.
There is a danger for the politicians and the priests: if people are orgasmically blissful they won't go to the churches and to the temples because they will know a far higher and deeper form of prayer in their own lives. And if people are orgasmically blissful they won't follow stupid leaders into war. They will love life so deeply, they will not be so ready to be killed or to kill. Their respect for life will be so tremendous, their joy of life will be such, that they will feel grateful to God. They will not be in such a hurry to throw away life at any stupid excuse: Mohammedans fighting Hindus, Hindus fighting Mohammedans, killing each other.
The politicians and the priests both are agreed upon one thing: don't allow people to have orgasmic joy; otherwise they will no longer be slaves. It will become impossible to manipulate them; it will become impossible to reduce them to sub-human, mechanical persons. They will have a spirituality of their own and they will have such a rich life, they will not be ready to lose it so easily.
These priests and politicians have created such a repressive society and such a repressed man that the whole humanity is ill and abnormal.

Charlie entered the airline ticket office, and the girl behind the counter was as magnificently endowed with feminine equipment as any girl he could ever remember seeing. She was wearing a low-cut dress and bending low over the notations she was making. He stared at her.
She looked up and said, "What can I do for you, sir?"

Charlie heard his own breath hissing in his ears like steam, but tried to master the situation. He did, after all, need two tickets to Pittsburgh.
He finally spoke. "Oh, give me two pickets to...."

The whole humanity is boiling within. People are so afraid, they are just somehow managing to keep their faces together. Charlie's statement: "Give me two pickets to..." is not really complete. The complete sentence will be: "Give me two pickets to Tittsburgh." That is left out because the joke has been compiled by a man who must have been afraid himself. It is not a complete joke. "Tickets to Pittsburgh" becomes "pickets to Tittsburgh" -- and this happens to almost everybody.
Such an abnormal situation is created by centuries of repression. People don't talk about sex clearly -- they don't talk about sex at all. Even if they talk, they talk in roundabout ways, they talk diplomatically.

Mr. Ginsburg was walking home from the shop when he ran into Mrs. Cohen who said, "Mr. Ginsburg, your business is open."
He said, "You must be wrong. I just closed it."
Then he ran into Mrs. Goldberg who also said, "Mr. Ginsburg, your business is open." Again he denied it.
When he got home his wife told him his fly was open and then he understood. So he called Mrs. Cohen on the telephone and said, "Mrs. Cohen, when you told me my business was open, tell me, was the salesman in or out?"

Enough for today.

The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 7
Chapter #9
Chapter title: Man's absence is his freedom
19 December 1979 am in Buddha Hall

THE WAY IS EIGHTFOLD.
THERE ARE FOUR TRUTHS.
ALL VIRTUE LIES IN DETACHMENT.
THE MASTER HAS AN OPEN EYE.

THIS IS THE ONLY WAY,
THE ONLY WAY TO THE OPENING OF THE EYE.
FOLLOW IT.
OUTWIT DESIRE.

FOLLOW IT TO THE END OF SORROW.

WHEN I PULLED OUT SORROW'S SHAFT
I SHOWED YOU THE WAY.

IT IS YOU WHO MUST MAKE THE EFFORT.
THE MASTERS ONLY POINT THE WAY.

BUT IF YOU MEDITATE
AND FOLLOW THE LAW
YOU WILL FREE YOURSELF FROM DESIRE.

Gautama the Buddha worked hard for six years in all kinds of disciplines to arrive home, to know the truth of his being, to realize the meaning of life. But he failed utterly --

not because he was lacking in effort, not because he was not committed to the methods he was practicing, but because he was not meditatively in them. His efforts were, in a way, superficial; they were not arising from his own innermost core. On the contrary, they were imposed from the outside by others -- by tradition, by teachers, by scriptures.

After six years of arduous effort and frustration he realized this: "I can be transformed only when something becomes my own insight, when something comes out of my own vision. Borrowed visions won't do, borrowed methods won't help. Scriptures will make me a parrot, but they cannot make me the enlightened one."

After six years he changed his whole way of life: he started living from the within. And that became the turning point. That became the beginning of the endless journey into truth. That became the beginning of eternal joy, celebration.

It was natural. Everybody in the beginning follows others; that comes easy. You yourself don't know where to go, what to do, how to do it. You start asking the experts. And the problem is that in the spiritual inquiry there are no experts -- there cannot be, because each individual is so unique that expertise is not possible.

Expertise is possible if there is no individuality. About matter you can come to conclusions -- matter is predictable -- but about man you cannot come to conclusions in the same way.

Something about man remains unpredictable, and that unpredictable quality is his very essence. That's what makes him man; that is his freedom. He is not bound to the

law of cause and effect; he functions under a totally different kind of law. He can behave in such a way that it would have been inconceivable for you, seeing the situation, given the situation, to imagine. If you had predicted it, your prediction would have seemed like an absurdity. But man can function outside the law of cause and effect.

Then how to help man? -- how is a master supposed to help others? He helps not by giving detailed information, instructions; he helps only by indicating. He hints, he does not guide. That is one of the most essential things to be understood about Buddha: he is not a guide. He does not give you the whole map of the journey but only an indication, a vague, subtle hint. You need not follow him in all details. You can understand him and then you will have to work out your own life-style.

And I perfectly agree with him. He learned it the hard way; I have also learned it the hard way.

Listen to me -- listen with an open heart. Try to understand what is being conveyed to you, but don't follow it mechanically. Let it first become an understanding in you, then follow your understanding, not my instructions. My instruction can only help you to raise your eyes towards the sky. It cannot give you a fixed pattern of life; it cannot give you a discipline but it can give you the direction. And the difference is great: a direction is a totally different phenomenon; a description, a detailed description, makes you a slave.

Just an opening... fingers pointing to the moon are of immense help. You need not cling to the fingers, you need not worship the fingers. In fact, when you start looking at

the moon you have to forget all about the fingers. You will feel grateful, but you will not be an imitator. You will be an individual in your own right. You will be a free consciousness. That is Buddha's fundamental message.
He says:

THE WAY IS EIGHTFOLD.

Remember, it is only a hint. "The eightfold path" is simply a way of expressing his experience, giving you a certain direction. The essence of the eightfold path is in the word 'rightness'. Buddha uses the word 'rightness' about everything. He divides life into eight parts and he uses 'rightness' about each part: right food, right effort, right mindfulness, right samadhi, and so on and so forth. And it is not only a question of eight things; if you understand, then it has to be used as a direction.
Whatsoever you are doing can be done in a wrong way or in a right way; both the alternatives are always there. So you have to understand what he means by "rightness," the essence of it. You have to taste the flavor of rightness, then you can apply it in everything that you are doing. You are walking: you can walk in the right way and you can walk in the wrong way. You are talking: you can talk in the right way, you can talk in the wrong way. You are listening: you can listen in the right way, you can listen in the wrong way. If you are listening with all kinds of prejudices, that is a wrong way of listening; it is really a way of not listening. You appear to be listening, but you are only hearing not listening. Right listening means you have put aside your mind. It does not mean that you become gullible, that you

start believing whatsoever is said to you. It has nothing to do with belief or disbelief. Right listening means, "I am not concerned right now whether to believe or not to believe. There is no question of agreement or disagreement at this moment. I am simply trying to listen to whatsoever it is. Later on I can decide what is right and what is wrong. Later on I can decide whether to follow or not to follow."

And the beauty of right listening is this: that truth has a music of its own. If you can listen without prejudice, your heart will say it is true. If it is true, a bell starts ringing in your heart. If it is not true, you remain aloof, unconcerned, indifferent; no bell rings in your heart, no synchronicity happens. That is the quality of truth: that if you listen to it with an open heart, it immediately creates a response in your being -- your very center is uplifted. You start growing wings; suddenly the whole sky is open.

It is not a question of deciding logically whether what is being said is true or untrue. On the contrary, it is a question of love, not of logic. Truth immediately creates a love in your heart; something is triggered in you in a very mysterious way.

But if you listen wrongly -- that is, full of your mind, full of your garbage, full of your knowledge -- then you will not allow your heart to respond to the truth. You will miss the tremendous possibility, you will miss the synchronicity. Your heart was ready to respond to truth.... It responds only to truth, remember, it never responds to the untrue. With the untrue it remains utterly silent, unresponsive, unaffected, unstirred. With the truth it starts dancing, it starts singing, as if suddenly a sun has risen and the dark

night is no more, and the birds are singing and the lotuses are opening, and the whole earth is awakened.
Exactly like that, when you hear the truth really, totally, immediately something awakens in you. Truth has that immense impact. Hence Buddha will say: Right listening, right effort....
You can make efforts to the extreme, and then you will miss. You can make too much effort and you will miss, or you can make too little effort and you will miss. You can become enlightened only when the effort is exactly balanced, in equilibrium.
Buddha's word is SAMYAKTVA; it is difficult to translate. Only one of its meanings is rightness. Another meaning is equilibrium; and it has a few other qualities about it, too. The third meaning is equanimity. The fourth meaning is, looking at things with a similar eye, with no judgment; looking at things equally, without any a priori judgment or conclusion -- looking at things with no conclusion at all. Because if you have a conclusion already, you can't look at the thing as it is; your conclusion will interfere. But the most important meaning is rightness.
Right effort will mean neither leaning too much to the left nor leaning too much to the right. Right effort will mean exactly like walking on a tightrope. Have you seen the tightrope walker? He continuously balances himself between the right and the left. If he leans a little too much to the left he will fall; he immediately balances himself by moving to the opposite side. But if he leans a little too much to the right he will fall, too; then again he balances by moving to the left. He is continuously moving between

right and left. Balance is not something static; it is a dynamic process.

Hence you cannot decide your character once and for all. And those who decide their character once for all are dead people. They simply go on following a dead routine; they are not transformed by this dead routine.

Life is a continuous process, a movement -- it is a river. You have to adjust yourself according to the situations; otherwise you remain fixed, and life goes on changing all around. The only result will be that a gap arises between you and your life, and that gap creates misery, sorrow.

You are always missing the train. Either you are too early or you are too late, but you are never on the exact point. You are either running ahead or you are lagging behind. You are either in the past or in the future. Some people live in their memories and other people live in their imagination.

And to live rightly means to be in the present, to be exactly in the middle -- in the middle of past and future, in the middle of imagination and memory, in the middle of that which is no more and that which is not yet. In that exact middleness is the rightness: samyaktva.

And Buddha applies this to every facet of life, to every aspect. You can eat too much and then one day you become tired of eating too much; you suffer, your body suffers. Then you start fasting -- that is moving to another extreme. Again your body suffers, first from too much food, then from no food at all. When are you going to be exactly in the middle?

And remember, again let me repeat it: the middle is not a fixed point. You cannot decide once and forever that this is

the middle, that "I will eat only so much" -- because your needs change. One day you have walked ten miles, you may need a little more food. One day you have rested, you have not worked at all, it was a holiday -- you will need a little less food. One day you have been chopping wood; you will need more food, your body needs more nourishment. And one day it was raining and you were simply playing cards; you can do with little food.

And once in a while your body may not need food at all. If you are ill it will be good to give the body complete rest, because eating means work for the body. The body has to digest it, the body has to continuously work on the food. Once in a while it is good; if you are feeling that the body is not in good shape, it is good not to eat. But there is no religious quality about it; this is a very scientific approach. One thing is certain: that nothing can become a static phenomenon. You have to go on moving.

When you are young you will need eight hours sleep. When you become old you will need four hours sleep, three hours sleep, and that will be enough. When you were a child you needed ten hours of sleep. In the mother's womb the child needs twenty-four hours of sleep; after the birth, twenty-two hours, then twenty hours, then eighteen hours, and slowly slowly... by the end, when a person comes to die, he needs only two hours sleep and that's enough.

In the mother's womb the child is growing; those nine months one grows so much that one will not be growing as much in ninety years' time. Leaps and bounds! The pace is so quick and so fast that the child needs absolute rest. But the old man, he has stopped growing long ago. Now the body does not need so much rest. The body no longer

revives itself; it is getting ready to die, the process of revival has stopped. Now whatsoever cells are dying are dying; they are not being reproduced again. Hence, less and less sleep is needed. You can't fix it forever.

There are fools who fix it, who say, "I have taken a vow to sleep for only five hours a night." They will suffer when they are young, they will suffer when they are old; their suffering will never end. When they are young they will suffer because the body may need ten hours sleep, nine hours sleep, at least eight hours sleep -- and they have decided to sleep only five hours. They will be continuously missing those three hours. They will look a little sad, tired, their faces lusterless, their eyes always sleepy. They will not show intelligence, because body and mind both need deep rest. They will simply move through life like a somnambulist, half asleep.

And their scriptures say that if you feel sleepy in the daytime it means you are a sinner, TAMASIK, that you are suffering from lethargy. And the only thing that you are really suffering from is foolishness! You have decided that you will sleep only five hours when the need is for eight hours. And in old age you will try to sleep five hours and you will not be able to sleep, then you will suffer because you can sleep only three hours. Then the whole night you are tossing and turning and cursing the whole world, and you can't conceive why you can't sleep at least five hours. And trying to sleep five hours when you can sleep only three hours will be a disturbance; it will keep you in despair. You will continuously think that something is being missed.

Never decide like that. Buddha says: Let your life be dynamic. It has to correspond to the reality, to the situation in which you are. Don't follow dead rules; respond to reality, to that which is. In that responsibility you grow, you become mature. To be responsible is to be right.

And he says this rightness has to be applied in all aspects of life. Even about awareness, meditation, he says "right mindfulness" is needed -- because one can become too obsessed with meditation. One can become so fascinated by meditation that one may start escaping from life.

It has happened down the ages. Millions of people have escaped from life for the simple reason that they wanted to meditate and life is a disturbance. They can't meditate in the marketplace, they can't meditate in the family, they can't meditate with the children around. They have to go to the Himalayan caves; only then they can meditate. That is a wrong meditation. If meditation is so poor, so impotent that you can't meditate in your own home, then your meditation is not worth anything. If it needs the Himalayas, then it is not your meditation that is making you silent; it is the silence of the Himalayas.

After thirty years of meditating in the Himalayas, you come back to the world, and then all the effort, that whole arduous journey, all those thirty years of work upon yourself, will simply disappear, evaporate. The world will disturb you more than before, because now you have lived outside the world for thirty years. You have become unaccustomed to it, its noise, its people, their ways. This is not right meditation.

Right meditation has to become a strength in you, not a weakness. It has to make you stronger -- so strong that you can sit in the marketplace and yet be meditative.

And Buddha even uses the word 'right' for samadhi. That has to be understood. He says: "right realization of truth." One wonders, can there be wrong realization of truth? Buddha says yes. Samadhi is the ultimate state when all desires disappear, all thoughts disappear, the whole mind disappears. You are in a state of no-mind. But this can happen in two ways.

You can fall into a deep sleep, so deep that there are no longer even dreams -- the mind has disappeared. In deep sleep there is no desire, there is no mind, no thought. But this is not samadhi -- this is coma!

And many people -- in India particularly -- go into such a coma, and they think they are in samadhi. For hours together they become unconscious. It is a kind of hysterical fit. You can see their faces, their mouths foaming. You can see the quality of their being. They are just lying down like corpses; they are not radiating. You will not see any joy around them, just a negative kind of emptiness. But they are thought to be great saints.

Buddha says this is a wrong kind of meditation and a wrong kind of samadhi. Right samadhi means you have to be without mind, fully awake; in wakefulness, thoughts have to disappear. It is easy to fall asleep, to fall into a deep coma, in a kind of hysterical fit and be without mind; but that is falling below mind not transcending mind. Right samadhi is a transcendence: you go beyond mind, but you are fully alert, aware. Only then is samadhi right -- when it grows in awareness and when awareness grows through it.

When you become enlightened you have to be absolutely awakened; otherwise you missed at the last step.
This way Buddha divides life into eight parts and calls his way "the eightfold way." THE WAY IS EIGHTFOLD. But you have to look at your life, you will have to decide about your life. Don't just follow the words of the Buddha. Follow the SPIRIT of it, because things have changed. In twenty-five centuries it was bound to be so. You are living in a different kind of society, you are living with a different kind of mind. Your life is no longer the same as it was in Buddha's time. So the essential core will remain the same, but many things will have to be changed.
Remember that you have to be always alert, watchful, balanced; always in the middle, never moving to the extreme, never becoming excessive in anything. But then you have to work it out; different people will have to work out different plans for their own life.
If you simply follow the Buddha's words -- as Buddhists are doing all over the world.... They miss the whole point; they still go on doing the same thing. Buddha used to walk, they are still walking, because you have to walk in a right way....
I will tell you: there is no need to walk in order to practice the right way of walking. You can sit in an airplane in the right way. You have to apply the essence of his teaching to YOUR situation. He could not have said -- obviously -- that you should sit in the airplane in a right way. Now, you cannot walk from Chicago to Poona, you will have to come by airplane; but you can sit in the airplane in a right way. And if the pilot informs you that one engine has failed and the other is just on the verge of failing, you have to remain

tranquil, still, balanced. Even if the plane catches fire and you are falling and sooner or later -- it is a question of moments -- you will be dead, you have to keep your awareness, you have to keep your coolness. You are not to become disturbed.
You have to apply the essence to your life; otherwise things remain superficial. One practices them, but deep down one remains unchanged.

An Italian woman and a Jewish woman were sunning themselves next to each other at a fine Miami hotel. The Jewish woman started to brag about her husband. "My husband is so generous -- I asked him for a Cadillac and he gave me a Rolls Royce!"
"It's-a nice!" said the Italian lady.
"He is so wonderful. If I ask for a coat, he buys me a mink."
"It's-a nice!" came the reply.
"If I say I am tired, he immediately sends me to Miami."
"It's-a nice!"
"What about your husband?"
"My husband," said the Italian woman, "is-a so nice, he's-a send me to finishing school-a, where they teach me to say 'It's-a nice,' instead of 'You are full of-a shit-a!'"

You can learn beautiful words. You can go on saying "It's-a nice!" and deep down you are still saying the same thing. Deep down you are not changed at all. Finishing schools won't help. You become cultured, sophisticated, religious. You meditate, you pray, you do all kinds of rituals, but they remain rituals -- not even skin-deep. Just scratch a little bit

and you will find the real man -- and he is as animal as other animals, or sometimes even more. Because no animal can fall as low as man, and no animal can rise as high as man. Man's fall is great, man's rise is great.
Man is a ladder between heaven and hell, between the animal and God. Falling towards being an animal is an unconscious process; rising towards being a God is a conscious effort.
Buddha says:

THE WAY IS EIGHTFOLD.
THERE ARE FOUR TRUTHS.

These are the four truths, he insists again and again. First: life as you know it is sorrow. He wants to make you aware of the phenomenon that your life is nothing but misery. It is a long long tragedy, it is tragic. You don't want to listen to such things; you want to go on believing that you are already in paradise.
You don't want to see your wounds -- and Buddha opens up your wounds again and again. He forces you to see all the pus that you are carrying. Hence people became angry at him. Before Buddha, they were told beautiful things about themselves by other priests and so-called religious teachers. Buddha is the first master who wants you to be absolutely authentic about yourself. He wants you to become aware of the real situation. He is not interested in singing a lullaby, his interest is in waking you up. He is not a sedative, he is an awakener.
The first truth for the real seeker, he says, is to know that life is sorrow. The second truth is that there is a cause to it.

His approach is very scientific. He says: first become aware that your life is sorrow. But don't be worried, don't become sad because of this fact. There is a cause to it. And if there is a cause to it, the third truth is: there is a way to remove it. If there is a cause to it, it can be uncaused. If there is no cause to your misery, then it is not removable; then there is really despair, then there is no hope.

That's exactly where modern existentialists are finding themselves. They have understood the first truth -- that life is sorrow, meaningless, absurd -- but they have not moved beyond that. Sartre, Heidegger, Jaspers, Marcel, they are all hanging around the first truth. Hence, they have created a great despair in the intelligentsia of the whole world. If life is sorrow and there is no way out of it, naturally it creates hopelessness. Naturally, it seems suicide is the right thing to do; to go on living is cowardly. For what? If it is only sorrow, then why go on living? Why not return the ticket? And what is there to be grateful to God for?

Buddha says: "Life is sorrow" is only the first truth. The second is: there is a cause to it, so don't be worried. Sorrow is there, but because there is a cause to it there is hope. And there is a way to remove it. That eightfold path is the way to remove it.

And what is the cause? Desire -- TANHA -- is the cause of it.

And the fourth truth is the ultimate truth: there is a state when sorrow is no more: the state of enlightenment, liberation, nirvana.

In these four simple truths he has reduced the whole spiritual inquiry, the whole spiritual endeavor. And he has reduced it in such a beautiful way and in such a simple way

that anybody who is a little intelligent will not find if difficult to understand.

THERE ARE FOUR TRUTHS....
This life that you are living is sorrow, but this is not the only life. This is the life you have chosen. You can live another kind of life: Buddha lived it, I am living it, you can live it. You can live in a totally different way: you can live desirelessly, you can live meditatively, you can live with choiceless awareness. You can live so centered and rooted in your being that no sorrow can remain. No sadness, no misery, no death remains possible; they all disappear. As you become full of light, your life goes through a transformation. This is not the right kind of life that you are living.

The traveling salesman asked the farmer to put him up for the night. The farmer said, "Sure, but you will have to sleep with my son."
"Good Lord," said the salesman, "I am in the wrong joke!"

Yes, you are in the wrong joke -- you are in the wrong life. But because YOU have chosen it there is great hope: you can stop choosing it. And you have to choose it continuously, constantly, only then can you be in it. Remember, to be in the wrong you have to make great efforts -- and you are making great efforts.
Look at the politicians, how much effort they make to remain in power. Look at the rich people, how much effort they make to remain rich. And their richness brings only misery, and their power trips bring only misery. The more

power they have, the more greedy they are; the more riches they have, the more greedy they are. They become more and more obsessed with the same thing. They go on and on wasting their lives... and in the end they die with empty hands.

You are feeding your wrong life. You go on watering the weeds and you go on hoping that one day roses are going to bloom. You go on hoping that "the spring will come and there will be roses and roses in my garden." But weeds can't produce roses. You have to uproot the weeds and you have to stop feeding and nourishing them. You have to clean the garden of the roots, of the rocks, of the weeds, and then only can you plant roses.

There is a cause to your misery: YOU are the cause. Your sleepiness is the cause, your unconsciousness is the cause. And in your unconsciousness you go on dreaming and desiring stupid things, with such great fervor, with such great enthusiasm. It is strange to see people putting so much effort into creating their own hell; with the same effort they can create a thousand and one paradises. The effort that you put into creating one hell is enough to create one thousand and one paradises.

Buddha says: There is a cause to it -- your constant desire. And there is a way to remove it -- becoming aware of your desire, seeing it through and through. And there is then the ultimate state of freedom, when desire ceases, disappears. You are left without any desire, without any dream, without any sleep -- alert, aware, conscious. Then you know real life.

You can call it God; that is not Buddha's word. He is suspicious of the word 'God'. Because of this word 'God',

priests have exploited man for so long that Buddha never uses it. He is suspicious of the word 'soul' too, because there have been many who have not used the word 'God', but then they have substituted 'God' with 'soul'. And they have used the same exploitation with the word 'soul', they have done the same to humanity.

Buddha avoids God, soul, heaven, everything. He creates a new word, a very strange word. Now it doesn't sound so strange, but when for the first time he used it it was really strange, particularly in this country where for thousands of years people had been talking about religion.

Nobody was ever aware that such a word could be used for the ultimate state. Buddha uses the word 'nirvana'. Nirvana literally means cessation, disappearance, dissolution; you are no more. It doesn't seem to be very appealing! You are no more? This is the goal? You cease to be -- and for that one has to make arduous effort? And one has to meditate and become choiceless and drop all desires? For what? -- just not to be?

Shakespeare says: To be or not to be, that is the question. He will decide for "to be"; Buddha decides for "not to be." He says, "Yes, that's the question. To be is misery, not to be is joy."

But people were very much puzzled: "How can there be joy if I am not there? If I have ceased completely to be, who is going to enjoy?"

And Buddha said, "That is the whole point to understand: if YOU are, misery is -- misery is your shadow; when you are not there, of course there is nobody to enjoy, but there is joy."

A very strange way of expressing it, but I can understand his difficulty. Use any word that can give you some idea of the ego and you cling to it. 'Soul' becomes only magnified ego, purified ego. And remember: a purified poison is more poisonous. The word 'soul' simply means nothing but a very great ego, superior, holy, sacred, divine; but it is the same ego, now tremendously decorated, crowned, garlanded. First it was temporary, now it is immortal. First it was momentary, now it is eternal... but it is the same ego!
Whenever you think of yourself as enlightened what are you doing? What is your idea of enlightenment? You still remain there just as you are; only one thing is added to you: enlightenment. You remain the same PLUS enlightenment. Buddha says that is not possible; either YOU are, or ENLIGHTENMENT is; both cannot be together. You have to disappear. And he is right, he is absolutely right.
The ego has to go, in all its forms, and then the authentic reality explodes. And that explosion is tremendous joy, it is bliss. There is nobody to experience it, there is nobody to observe it. You are not an observer of this bliss, you are the bliss itself; there is no observer separate from it. The observed is the observer, the experienced is the experiencer, the knower is the known. The old duality is no longer relevant.
Buddha's word is significant: nirvana, cessation, stopping to be.

ALL VIRTUE LIES IN DETACHMENT.

Hence, become detached from your ego, become detached from your possessions. Become simply detached from every possible source of attachment.

The forgetful professor left his hotel room and discovered he had left his umbrella behind. He went back to get it and found that the room had been rented already. Through the door he heard sounds.
"Whose little baby are you?"
"Your little baby."
"And whose little hands are these?"
"Your little hands."
"And whose little feet are... and whose little knees... and whose little...?"
"When you get to an umbrella," said the professor, through the door, "it is mine."
'I' exists through 'my', 'mine'; hence so much desire for possessions. You go on accumulating and the more you accumulate, the more you can feel you are. The greater your possessions, the more money you have, the more you can feel you are. Ego is empty; it needs to be filled by things continuously so that it can go on remaining in the deception, in the illusion that it is full. But it never really becomes full; it is a bottomless pit. You go on putting things into it and they go on disappearing; it remains empty. It is never full -- it cannot be full in the very nature of things. It is a false entity, how can it be full?
YOU are full. But when I say "you," I don't mean the ego; I don't mean anything that you understand by yourself. All that has to go, then the real you is discovered. And that real you is not separate from me, and that real you is not

separate from the trees, and that real you is not separate from the clouds. That real you is part of the whole.
That's why Buddha says you become part of the universal law, dhamma, tao. You disappear as a separate entity. You are simply a wave in the ocean. This is liberation: liberation from yourself is liberation, freedom from yourself is freedom.
ALL VIRTUE LIES IN DETACHMENT.

THE MASTER HAS AN OPEN EYE.

Your eyes are closed because you see only outside. Inwardly, you are completely blind. And there is the real treasure and there is the truth of your life -- and about that you are blind. You see meaningless things, you see all kinds of rubbish. You just go on missing your own center, your own source of consciousness. Buddha says: To see it is to be a seer; otherwise you are blind.
THE MASTER HAS AN OPEN EYE -- and you also have those inner eyes, but you are keeping them closed. You have completely forgotten that you have those eyes. The methods of meditation are nothing but methods of opening the inner eyes. They are there; you have to learn how to open them.

THIS IS THE ONLY WAY,
THE ONLY WAY TO THE OPENING OF THE EYE.
FOLLOW IT.
OUTWIT DESIRE.

The only way to open the inner eyes is to drop desiring. What is desire? Desire means: "I feel empty and I would like to be full." Emptiness hurts. "I need money, I need power, I need prestige, so that I can feel full" -- although those who have much money and power and prestige are as empty as you are. Just look at them, just watch! Just look around! Do you see the rich person? -- is he really rich? Surrounded by riches, of course, but is he rich? Is there any inner richness? Is he more sensitive to truth? Is he more aware of beauty? Is he more capable of love? Has he experienced who he is? Does he know the significance of life? Has he any sense of the ultimate?

These are the things that make one rich. Yes, he has a big bank balance, but how can that make him rich? He may be famous, the whole world may know of him, but does he know himself? And if he himself is unacquainted with himself, what does it matter how many people know him? Deep down he is not even aware of his own being. There is great darkness inside -- and there is light all around, but what is the point of having so much light when there is no light inside? Yes, there are suns and stars and moons outside, but inside not even a small candle! And you call it richness?

No, Buddha is rich because the inner light is there. Jesus is rich because the inner light is there. You are rich if your inner being is suffused with light, bathed in light. You are rich if you know that existence is divine. You are rich if you have experienced the exquisite beauty that surrounds, that permeates the whole. You are rich if you have tasted the nectar of your own consciousness. You are rich if you

are capable of sharing your love unconditionally. Otherwise you are a beggar.
Buddha says: THE ONLY WAY TO THE OPENING OF THE EYE is to become desireless.

FOLLOW IT TO THE END OF SORROW.

And go on uprooting one desire after another desire -- because the mind is very cunning. You uproot one desire, it immediately starts growing another desire. It is so cunning, it can even become desirous of God. It is so cunning, it can even become desirous of nirvana. It can desire not to be. That desire is absurd, but mind is so cunning. Beware of the cunningness of the mind!

Passers-by on a New York subway were intrigued by a rather scruffy-looking Irishman standing before a large sign which read: SEE THE WORLD'S ONLY, ONE AND ONLY, TALKING CAT FOR ONLY 10 DOLLARS!
After a large crowd had gathered and the man's pockets were spilling over with money, he pulled a mangy-looking animal from a box and holding it in the air, whispered in the ear of the nearest member of the audience.
Rather embarrassed, the poor spectator looked into the eyes of the bewildered cat and said, "Who was the last president of China?"
Swiftly the Irishman yanked the cat's tail and the beast wailed loudly, "MAO...!"

The mind is very cunning. It can find ways to exploit others and it can find ways to exploit you too. And it goes on

gathering all kinds of cunningness from the world. That's what you call experience.
The older you grow the more cunning you become, although you pretend that you have become more wise. Just by becoming old nobody becomes wise; otherwise every old man would become a buddha. Just by becoming old you certainly become cunning. Of course, your whole life's experiences of being cheated teach you some lessons: you start cheating others, you start learning the ways of the world. A child is innocent; an old man still innocent is very difficult to find. You become great experts on borrowed knowledge.

A man suffering from backache went to a very expensive specialist who recommended hot packs. After using hot packs all night long he felt worse than ever.
His maid, seeing him in agony, asked what the trouble was. When he told the story she said, "Not hot packs. Cold packs!"
He tried it and got prompt relief. Irate, he returned to the specialist and reported the whole story.
"Hmm," mused the doctor, "cold packs. My maid says hot packs!"

The specialist and the nonspecialist are not very much different. The expert and the nonexpert, both are in the same boat.
Beware of knowledgeable people! They know nothing and yet they pretend that they know. Not only that, they teach others. They themselves have wasted their lives and unconsciously they are destroying other people's lives.

In this world, if everybody decides one thing -- that "I will say to others only that which I have known" -- the world can immediately become a far more beautiful and better place than it is. A single decision on everybody's part, that "I will not go on conveying borrowed knowledge. I will say only that which I have experienced"... immediately, ninety-nine percent of the rubbish will simply disappear from the world.
But with it will disappear your scholars, your pundits, your priests, your political leaders -- and they don't want to disappear. They have invested so much in their borrowed knowledge; even to tell them that "your knowledge is borrowed" makes them angry.

Real knowing happens only when desire has disappeared. Then your eyes are clear of all smoke, all clouds. Then you can see. And when you can see, you can see both within and without.

A lovely young thing entered a doctor's office on her lunch hour and addressed a handsome young man in a white coat.
"I have had a pain in my shoulder for a week. Can you help me?" she asked.
"Lie down on this table," he said, "and I will massage it for you."
After a few minutes the beautiful patient exclaimed, "Doctor, that is not my shoulder!"
The young man smiled and replied, "No, and I am not a doctor either!"

Watch who you are listening to. Watch who you are reading. I have known so many books on meditation written by people who know nothing of meditation. They have come to me to ask about meditation, and when they came to ask I was puzzled. I asked, "But I have read your book. You have written such a beautiful book on meditation!"
They said, "Yes, it has sold well and we have earned much, but as far as meditation is concerned, we have not done it at all."
I asked them, "How have you written such beautiful books?"
They said, "Reading other books."

All that you need is good scissors and glue, and you can write a book on anything! Just collect fifty books, go on cutting relevant pieces and glueing them, and a new book is created. That's how all kinds of absurdities go on. New books go on appearing on each subject. There are so many books on meditation that if so many people were meditating this world would be a paradise! So many books on yoga, so many books on God, so many books on Christ, Buddha, Mahavira!
If people knew Buddha, Mahavira, Christ, Mohammed, so well, this world couldn't be in such ugly shape. But they don't know. They are knowledgeable, certainly, but their knowledge is mechanical. They have read -- because they can understand language -- but they have not experienced anything.

And religion is basically experience. It is an experiment with your own subjectivity. It is a journey inwards. It is a penetration into your own interiority. Buddha says:

WHEN I PULLED OUT SORROW'S SHAFT
I SHOWED YOU THE WAY.

He says, "I am not a scholar, I am not an expert, but one thing is certain -- I am no longer miserable. My sorrow has disappeared. And the moment my sorrow disappeared, I showed you the way." That's the right way to show the way to others. Be what you would like others to be. Except that, all that people go on saying is nonsense.

I have known many Buddhist monks who are great scholars on Buddha, who have read all Buddhist scriptures, but who have not meditated at all; who have not tasted even a single drop of Buddha's experience, but they go on believing that they are Buddhists. Not only that, they go on converting others to Buddhism.

Beware of such people! Whether they are Buddhists, Hindus, Mohammedans, Jainas, Jews, it doesn't matter -- beware of such people. Avoid such people. Look into the eyes of a man; feel his presence. If you can see something that is not borrowed, if you can feel something that has happened to the man, then and only then -- if your heart is touched and stirred -- listen to him and follow his insight: otherwise not. It is not a question of books, it is a question of existential experiencing. WHEN I PULLED OUT SORROW'S SHAFT I SHOWED YOU THE WAY.

IT IS YOU WHO MUST MAKE THE EFFORT.

THE MASTERS ONLY POINT THE WAY.

Buddha says, "Still I can only point the way. You will have to make all the effort. I cannot make it for you. I cannot be your salvation."
Look at the beauty of this man! He says, "I cannot be your salvation. If it was possible for me to be your salvation, then I would have done it already. I would not have even asked your permission!"
Christians go on saying that Jesus is the salvation, but that is nonsense because if Jesus is the salvation, then why is the world still in misery? Jesus has happened! He would have solved everybody's problems. He has not solved anybody's problems, not even the Christians' -- he cannot! Nobody can do it, and it is good that nobody can do it, because if others can do it then they can undo it too. And if your freedom can be given by others it won't be much of a freedom; it will be another kind of bondage.
Freedom has to be achieved by your own efforts. Nobody can give it to you; hence nobody can take it away from you. It is absolutely yours.
Buddha says: IT IS YOU WHO MUST MAKE THE EFFORT. THE MASTERS ONLY POINT THE WAY.

BUT IF YOU MEDITATE
AND FOLLOW THE LAW
YOU WILL FREE YOURSELF FROM DESIRE.

Just do two things: meditate, watch your thought processes; become just a spectator of your mind. That is meditation, becoming a witness. And second: follow the law, follow

the natural course. Don't be unnatural, don't try to fight with nature -- stop being a fighter. Learn how to relax with nature, learn to let go. Flow with nature, allow nature to possess you totally. By "nature" he means dhamma, tao, the ultimate nature of things, the universal law.

Do these two things, and you will free yourself from desire and desire will disappear. Meditate and let go. This is the path, the only path... and desire disappears on its own accord.

It is desire that keeps you in bondage, that is the cause of misery. And because of desire you have to do so many stupid things; you have to behave like a fool. Running after money is foolish, running after power is foolish. You are making a fool of yourself, but you never become aware of it because others are also doing the same. Because the majority is doing the same nobody takes note of it; otherwise you would be thought to be mad.

I know rich people who have so much that they don't know what to do with it, but still they go on and on. They have forgotten how to stop, as if their minds don't have any brakes, only accelerators. So they go on accelerating; they don't know how to stop. Now there is no point in earning more money because they have all that money can purchase. They have more money than their next ten generations will need -- but they can't live. From morning to night they are possessed with the mania, with that madness of earning more and more and more.

If you ask them why, they can't answer. And it is not thought to be polite to ask such embarrassing questions! Just watch: your desires make you stupid, they dull your intelligence. They make you behave like buffoons.

Mrs. Nusbaum told her husband that he always looked shabby and that he should buy some new clothes. At lunchtime Mr. Nusbaum noticed that there was a sale at a shoe store so he bought some new shoes. When he came home he said expectantly, "What do you think, Becky?"
"I don't see anything," she said.
So he went to the bathroom and took off everything except his new shoes and then came out again. "So?" he said.
"So," she replied, "it looks the same to me!"
"No, look! It is pointing to my shoes."
"Hmm! Then better you should buy a new hat!"

Desire makes a fool of everybody. But because everybody else is also in the same boat you never become aware of it. And if, once in a while, a Buddha appears in your boat, you throw him out of the boat because he becomes a disturbance, a nuisance. He starts telling you that "This is nonsense! This is stupidity!" He is intolerable.
It is a very strange phenomenon that the real benefactors of humanity look dangerous and the really dangerous people -- who go on poisoning your minds and your beings -- appear to be benefactors. The politicians and the priests and the pundits, these are the poisoners; but they are great leaders, great guides. They guide you -- they guide you into bigger and bigger ditches, they guide you into more and more darkness! You can look at the world and you will be convinced of the fact.
Whenever a buddha appears you are very much annoyed by him, by his presence. because he starts talking about light. He starts talking about opening your inner eyes. He starts

talking about your subjectivity, your consciousness. And these are things you have not heard about. These are things you are not interested in, because nobody else seems to be interested in them. You are interested in money, and a buddha talks about meditation.

Sometimes people come to me and they say, "If we meditate, will we become wealthy?"

And there are frauds who say "Yes." Maharishi Mahesh Yogi says to people, "If you meditate you will become wealthy, you will become rich -- because a meditator attracts money."

No wonder he has such a great appeal in America, because who would not like to sit for just fifteen minutes in the morning and in the evening and attract money? A magic secret to become more rich, more powerful -- you can become the president, the prime minister, just by doing Transcendental Meditation, morning and evening. Twenty or thirty minutes does not seem to be a wastage; it seems to be worth it.

People come to me too, to ask, "Will it help us to become rich, to become more powerful?" Even if you become interested in meditation you become interested for wrong reasons. Your meditation is also a wrong meditation, not a right meditation.

If you become interested in samadhi, you ask, "What will be the gain? What we will get out of it? What kind of paradise will become available to those who have attained to samadhi?"

And there are religions which go on giving you ideas about paradise, that you will have this and you will have that -- rivers of wine, beautiful women, golden trees, paths

studded with diamonds and emeralds. All that you desire, they are ready to provide you. And then you become interested in samadhi. That is a wrong samadhi. That is not a right approach towards religion.

Buddha is right. He says, "YOU will not be there, your mind will not be there. None of your desires will be fulfilled. All your desires will evaporate, disappear. There is no way to say anything to you about that ultimate state because you are bound to misunderstand it. It will be discontinuous with you. You will cease, totally cease, and there will be a totally new kind of life about which nothing can be said in your language, in the language that you can understand."

Those who followed Buddha must have been really courageous people, people with guts. It has always been so and it will always be so.

Those who are with me are courageous people, people who are ready to risk all: their desires, their egos, their very existence. But if you can risk all, all becomes available to you.

Just two small things: meditation and let-go. Remember these two key words: meditation and surrender. Meditation will take you in, and surrender will take you into the whole. And this is the whole of religion. Within these two words Buddha has condensed the whole essence of religion.

Enough for today.

The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 7

Chapter #10

Chapter title: Perfection is death

20 December 1979 am in Buddha Hall

The first question:
Question 1
BELOVED MASTER,
WILL YOU PLEASE TALK ABOUT THE DESIRE TO HELP PEOPLE, ITS DIFFERENCES AND SIMILARITIES TO OTHER FORMS OF DESIRE?

Veet Aikagro, desire is desire; there is no difference at all. Whether you want to help people or you want to harm people, the nature of desire remains the same.
A buddha does not desire to help people. He helps people, but there is no desire in it; it is spontaneous. It is just the fragrance of a flower that has bloomed. The flower is not desiring that the fragrance should be released, should reach to the winds, to people. Whether it reaches or not is not the concern of the flower at all. If it reaches, that is accidental; if it does not reach, that too is accidental. The flower is spontaneously releasing its fragrance.
The sun rises: there is no desire to wake up people, no desire to open the flowers, no desire to help the birds to sing. It all happens on its own accord.
A buddha helps not because he desires to help; compassion is his nature. Every meditator becomes compassionate, but not a servant of the people. The servants of the people are mischievous; the world has suffered too much from these servants -- because it is desire masquerading as compassion. And desire can never be compassionate; desire is always exploitation.
Now they will exploit in the name of compassion; they will exploit with beautiful names. They will talk about service

to humanity and they will talk about brotherhood and they will talk about religion and God and truth. And all their beautiful talk will bring only more and more wars, more and more bloodshed -- more and more people will be crucified, burned alive.
That's what has been happening up to now. And if you don't bring a new understanding to the world, it is going to continue the same way.
So two things to be remembered. One: to desire is the same, whether you desire to help or to harm. It is not a question of the object of desire; the question is of the NATURE of desire. The nature of desire leads you into the future; it brings the tomorrow in. And with the tomorrow come all the tensions, all the anxieties, "whether I am going to make it or not, whether I am going to succeed or not." The fear of failure and the ambition to succeed will be there, whether you desire money or you desire victory in the world or you desire to be compassionate to people or you desire to bring salvation to people. It is all the same game, only names change. This is very fundamental to understand.

A man asked Buddha, "I would like to help people. Instruct me."
Buddha looked at him and became very sad. The man was puzzled, confused. He said, "Why have you become sad? Have I said anything wrong?"
Buddha said, "How can you help people? You have not even helped yourself! You will only harm them in the name of help."

First bring the light within your being. Let the flame be enkindled in your consciousness... and then you will never ask this question. Then, naturally, your very presence and whatsoever you do will be of great help.

Aikagro, desire is desire: there is neither material desire nor spiritual desire. It is an ego trip, helping people, and you become holier than others, and you become wiser than others -- you know and they don't know. You want to help because you have arrived and they are all ignorant people stumbling in darkness, and you want to become a light for them. You want to become a master and you want to reduce them into disciples.

If this desire is there, then this desire is not going to help them -- it is not going to help you either. It will do a double harm; it is a double-edged sword. It will cut others, it will cut you too. It is destructive, it can't be creative.

Then there is another kind of help which is not out of desire, which is not out of any ego projection. That kind of help, that kind of compassion, happens only at the ultimate peak of meditation, never before it. When the spring has come to your consciousness, when you are all flowers inside, fragrance starts reaching to others. You need not desire -- in fact you can't help it. Even if you want to prevent it you can't prevent it. It is inevitable -- it will reach to others. It will become a light in their life, it will become a herald of new beginnings, not because you are desiring it but because you are transformed.

The second question:

Question 2

BELOVED MASTER,

I WANT TO BE A SANNYASIN, BUT I DON'T WANT TO WEAR ORANGE OR A MALA AND I DON'T WANT TO CHANGE MY NAME. CAN I BE A SANNYASIN TOO?

Rupesh, then why bother? Then believe that you are a sannyasin. Who can prevent you from believing? You can believe anything!

It happened in Baghdad:
The caliph of Baghdad was very angry at a man who was brought to his court. The man was declaring that he is a new prophet, the new messiah. God has sent him after Mohammed, because now fourteen centuries have passed and the message of Mohammed has become old. A new dispensation is needed; "hence he has sent me to deliver the message."
Mohammedans can't tolerate such things! The caliph said, "You come to your senses, otherwise you will be in trouble!"
And he ordered that this man should be whipped, put into jail -- no food, no water for seven days, and beaten as much as possible. "Don't allow him any sleep, any rest."
For seven days the man was tortured. Then the caliph came to the jail. The man was chained to a pillar; he was looking very pale, tired, his whole body swollen, bloody. He had not even been given water, no food, no sleep, and continuous beating.
The caliph asked him, "What do you think now?"
He said, "What do I think now? I am more convinced than ever that I am the messiah, because when I was coming,

God said to me, 'Listen! My messengers have always been treated very badly; Jesus was crucified, Mohammed was continuously hunted by murderers, Socrates was poisoned, Mansoor was killed. So, many tortures will happen to you.'
So I am grateful," the man said to the caliph, "that you have proved to my heart's content that I am the prophet!"
At that moment a man who was chained to another pillar started laughing loudly.
The caliph asked, "Why are you laughing?"
The man said, "This man is simply lying -- because I am God myself and I have not sent this man at all!"

You can believe anything! Nobody can disturb your belief; even disturbances can become proofs that you are right. But why bother?
If you can't even change the color of your clothes, will you be able to change your soul? If you can't even change your name, which is just a fiction.... All names are fictions: you come into the world without names and then names are given to you. If you are so identified, Rupesh, with your name, how are you going to change your inner world, your identity with the body, with the mind? If you cannot drop the identity with a fictitious name, the body is too real, the mind is too real; it will be impossible for you to change that.

A poor man came home and asked his wife, "Why don't we ever have blintzes?"
"Well," replied the wife, "blintzes are expensive. They require cheese."
"Could you not leave out the cheese?"

"Maybe," she said, "but they still require eggs."
"So leave out the eggs."
"Yes," she said, "but they require butter and cinnamon and sugar."
"So leave them out," he said.
Sometime later she served him some flat cakes made practically from flour and water.
Taking a taste he said, "I don't see what rich people like about blintzes."

The third question:
Question 3
BELOVED MASTER,
I WANTED TO ASK YOU A QUESTION THE OTHER DAY, BUT WITHOUT MY ASKING YOU ANSWERED IT. HOW DO YOU MANAGE SUCH MIRACLES?

Suriyo, if you are looking for miracles you will find them aplenty -- but miracles don't happen. The universal law always remains the same; there are no exceptions to it. But there is a stupid desire in almost everybody for miracles. We have not yet outgrown the days of magic. Only in the history books do they say that the days of magic are over. Religion was born out of magic, philosophy was born out of religion, science was born out of philosophy. But these are only words. In fact, there are millions of people who still live in the world of magic, who are childish in their approach towards reality. So they will jump on anything. It must have been just a coincidence. Now there are three thousand people here and everybody has questions. Three thousand people must be having at least thirty thousand

questions! And I go on speaking year in and year out. Just leave a little space for coincidences!

An old farmer had three daughters. When the oldest girl married she moved to Twin Cities, Minnesota, and soon gave birth to a beautiful set of twin boys. Her sister married shortly thereafter, and she and her husband took up residence in Three Rivers, Ontario. Pretty soon she gave birth to triplets. The youngest sister got herself engaged, but after almost a year she still refused to set the date for the wedding.
Her father grew concerned and finally demanded that she stop procrastinating and set the date. "If you love that boy, you will marry him this spring or you won't marry him at all!"
"But Pa," she wailed, "I really do love Fred, but he keeps talking about moving to the Thousand Islands!"

Suriyo, it was just a coincidence that you had the question and I talked about it. I was not aware of your question -- I was not even aware that you are here! It is so difficult to remember sannyasins now -- one hundred thousand sannyasins! If I try to remember them all, I will go crazy! I somehow manage.... Mukta goes on prompting me by the side every evening, who is coming... and then still I sometimes make a mess out of it. She says, "He has just come," and I ask him, "When are you leaving?" Or somebody is leaving and I ask him, "When have you come?"
So what miracle?

The fourth question:
Question 4
BELOVED MASTER,
I HAVE BEEN PRAYING FOR YEARS, BUT NONE OF MY PRAYERS HAS BEEN ANSWERED. WHAT IS WRONG WITH ME AND WITH MY PRAYERS?

Govind, prayer simply means gratitude, thankfulness. It is not a demand, it is not a desire. And if you desire anything, then it is not prayer. Then don't call it a prayer. And that's what you must have been doing: desiring something, asking God, "Do this, do that for me." And because he is not doing it, you are becoming frustrated. And rather than thinking that something is fundamentally wrong in the very idea of prayer that you are carrying in you, you may be even suspecting whether God exists or not.
Prayer is not a demand on God, it is not a desire for something. If it is, then it will never reach to him. Desires are heavy things. They gravitate towards the earth, they can't fly into the sky.
When you have a pure gratitude, when you are not asking anything but simply feeling thankful for all that he has already done for you... and he has done more than you are worthy of, he has done more than you deserve. Just look at what he has done for you! He has given you life and love and joy. He has given you a tremendous sensitivity for beauty. He has given you awareness. He has given you the possibility of becoming a buddha. What more do you want? Feel thankful, and then prayers have wings, they can fly; they reach to the ultimate. Then the earth cannot pull them downwards. Then they start rising, soaring upwards, they

levitate. With desire the prayer gravitates downwards; it cannot levitate.
But millions of people go on praying with this wrong attitude: they pray only when they need something.

The Texan was on his knees in church giving thanks for all his blessings.
"Of course," he added, "I am grateful for my six houses, although I could use two or three more. Now, I am grateful for my Rolls and six Cadillacs, but I could use a couple more yachts to add to my collection. And I know I should be grateful for the banks I own, but could you see your way clear to give me five more to make it an even dozen?"
A little man kneeled next to him and talked up to God: "I need bread and a job -- I would be so grateful."
The Texan whipped out a hundred-dollar bill and handed it to the man. "Will you please stop bothering God with that small stuff?"

But whether the stuff is small or big, whether you are asking for bread or for banks, it is the same, exactly the same! Don't ask for anything. Thank him for all that he has already done. Bow down! Words are not needed in thankfulness. Just bow down in deep gratitude, in silence. A real prayer is nonverbal; words are inadequate. They are made for other things, not for prayer. Yes, once in a while you may find tears rolling down from your eyes, and they are far more significant than all the words you could use. Yes, once in a while you would like to dance like a Baul mystic -- for no reason at all, for the sheer joy of being! That dance will be prayer. Yes, once in a while you may

like to play on the flute. And believe me, God loves music! He is tired of your words! Sing, dance, cry, or just be silent. And you will be surprised: great light starts showering on you. You are bathed in bliss, in benediction.

The fifth question:
Question 5
BELOVED MASTER,
HAVING HAD THE ADVENTURE OF LOOKING THROUGH ANCIENT SCRIPTURES OF YOURS, I HAVE NOTICED THAT FOR AT LEAST TEN YEARS YOU HAVE KEPT ON REPEATING THIS LEGEND: "THERE ARE FOUR TIMES MORE FEMALE DISCIPLES THAN MALE DISCIPLES. THE SAME WAS THE CASE WITH BUDDHA, THE SAME WITH ME TOO."
ABOUT BUDDHA I DON'T KNOW -- I WAS NOT THERE -- BUT ABOUT YOU, AFTER DOCUMENTED AND METICULOUS RESEARCH, I AM HAPPY TO INFORM YOU THAT YOU HAVE FIFTY-TWO THOUSAND, THREE HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-SEVEN FEMALE DISCIPLE AND FIFTY-THREE THOUSAND, NINE HUNDRED AND FORTY-SIX MALE DISCIPLES.
AS THE OLD BOB DYLAN USED TO SAY: "THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGING" -- FORTUNATELY! WOULD YOU PLEASE SAY SOMETHING ABOUT THIS? A DISCIPLE DOES NOT LIVE ON LEGEND ONLY.

Sarjano, you will have to do a little more meticulous research. Just look into those fifty-three thousand, nine hundred and forty-six male disciples... how many of them are really male? And then you will understand that my legend is still exactly true; it can't be otherwise. Buddhas don't lie! If facts don't fit with the legend, the facts have to be changed!

To be male or to be female is more a question of psychology than of physiology. One may be a male physiologically and may not be a male psychologically, and vice versa. There are aggressive women -- and unfortunately they are growing in the world -- very aggressive women. The whole Women's Liberation movement is rooted in these aggressive women's minds. When a woman is aggressive she is not womanly.

Joan of Arc is not a woman and Jesus Christ is a woman. Joan of Arc psychologically is a man; basically her approach is that of aggression. Jesus Christ is not aggressive at all. He says: If somebody hits you on one cheek, turn the other. Give him the other cheek, too. That is psychological nonaggressiveness. Jesus says: Resist not evil. Even evil has not to be resisted! Nonresistance is the essence of feminine grace.

Remember that if a man is totally receptive, physically he remains a man but his interiority becomes more a womb. And only such men whose interiority becomes feminine are capable of receiving God. To be receptive, totally receptive, you will need to learn how to be a woman. Each seeker of truth has to learn to be a woman.

Science is male, religion is female. Science is an effort to conquer nature; religion is a let-go, dissolving oneself into

nature. The woman knows how to melt, how to become one. And each seeker of truth has to know how to dissolve into nature, how to become one with nature, how to go with the flow, without resisting, without fighting. And then you will see: the proportion will always be the same.

Here also you will see that change happening. Many women have reported to me, complained that, "What is happening here to men? They are becoming more and more feminine!" That is true -- that is bound to happen. As you become more and more meditative, your energies become nonaggressive. Your violence disappears; love arises. You are no longer interested in dominating; instead, you become more and more intrigued with the art of surrendering. That's what makes a feminine psychology.

To understand feminine psychology is to understand religious psychology. The effort has not yet been made, and whatsoever exists in the name of psychology is male psychology. That's why they go on studying rats, and through rats they go on concluding about man.

If you want to study the feminine psychology, then the best examples will be the mystics -- the purest examples will be the mystics. Then you will have to learn about Basho, Rinzai, Buddha, Jesus, Lao Tzu. You will have to learn about these people, because only through their understanding will you be able to understand the peak, the highest crescendo of feminine expression.

Because the woman has been dominated for centuries, religion has disappeared from the earth. If religion comes back, the woman will again gain respect. And because the woman has been dominated, tortured and reduced to a nonentity, she has become ugly. Whenever your nature is

not allowed to go according to its inner needs it turns sour, it becomes poisoned; it becomes crippled, paralyzed -- it becomes perverted. The woman that you find in the world is not a true woman either, because she has been corrupted for centuries.

And when the woman is corrupted, man cannot remain natural either, because after all, the woman gives birth to the man. If she is not natural, her children will not be natural. If she is not natural -- she is going to mother the child, male or female -- those children naturally will be affected by the mother.

Woman certainly needs a great liberation, but what is happening in the name of liberation is stupid. It is imitation, it is not liberation.

Here there are many women who have been in the Liberation movement, and when for the first time they come here they are very aggressive. And I can understand their aggression: centuries and centuries of domination have made them violent. It is a simple revenge. They have become insane, and nobody is responsible except man. But slowly slowly, they soften, they become graceful; their aggressiveness disappears. They become, for the first time, feminine.

Real liberation will make the woman authentically a woman, not an imitation of man. Right now that's what is happening: women are trying to be just like men. If men smoke cigarettes then the woman has to smoke cigarettes. If they wear pants then the woman has to wear pants. If they do a certain thing then the woman has to do that. She is just becoming a second-rate man.

This is not liberation, this is a far deeper slavery -- far deeper because the first slavery was imposed by men; this second slavery is deeper because it is created by the women themselves. And when somebody else imposes a slavery on you, you can rebel against it, but if you impose a slavery on yourself in the name of liberation, there is no possibility of rebellion ever.

I would like the woman to become really a woman, because much depends on her. She is far more important than man because she carries in her womb both the woman and the man, and she mothers both, the boy and the girl; she nourishes both. If she is poisoned then her milk is poisoned, then her ways of bringing up children are poisoned.

If the woman is not free to be really a woman, man will never be free to be really a man either. The freedom of woman is a must for the freedom of man; it is more fundamental than man's freedom.

And if the woman is a slave -- as she has been for centuries -- she will make a slave of man too, in very subtle ways; her ways are subtle. She will not fight with you directly; her fight will be indirect, it will be feminine. She will cry and weep. She will not hit you, she will hit herself, and through hitting herself, through crying and weeping, through using these Gandhian methods, she will dominate you.

Even the strongest man becomes henpecked. A very thin, weak woman can dominate a very strong man simply by using Gandhian methods. Gandhi is not the inventor of those methods; they have been used for centuries by women. He simply rediscovered them and used them

politically. The woman has been using them for centuries, but only in a family context.
The woman needs total freedom so that she can give freedom to man too.
This is one of the fundamentals to be remembered: if you make somebody a slave you will be reduced to slavery ultimately, finally; you can't remain free. If you want to remain free, give freedom to others; that's the only way to be free.

The sixth question:
Question 6
BELOVED MASTER,
CANNOT ONE EVER FIND A PERFECT PARTNER IN MARRIAGE?

Sagaro, perfect people don't exist. And perfect people, if they existed, would be very boring. It is imperfection that keeps life interesting. Just think of a perfect husband, a perfect wife: they will be utterly bored!
Bertrand Russell is reported to have said: I don't want to go to heaven, for the simple reason that there will be sages and sages, all perfect. Heaven is bound to be very boring.
Just think of all perfect people -- what life can there be?
Bertrand Russell is right: in hell there is much more life than in heaven. Heaven will certainly be dull and dead.
Perfection is death; perfection is not found in the world.
The world lives through imperfection, because in imperfection there is growth, evolution. Perfection means you have come to a dead end; now there is no way to go further ahead. You are stuck.

You ask me, "Cannot one ever find a perfect partner in marriage?" Very difficult, almost impossible!

I have heard about a man who searched his whole life for a perfect woman, and naturally he had to die a bachelor. When he was dying, somebody asked him, "Your whole life you were searching for a perfect wife. Could you not find a single woman who was perfect?"
He said, "Who said that I didn't find her? Many times I came across a perfect woman."
Then the questioner asked, "Then what happened? Why didn't you get married?"
He said, "Because she was also looking for a perfect husband!"

In the first place, to find one person who is perfect is very difficult -- and you are trying to find two persons. Impossible! It has not happened up to now; it can't happen. And what will make a perfect marriage? If the woman is truly a woman and the man is truly a man, there is bound to be some tension, and that tension is beautiful. In fact, that's what brings beauty to marriage. A little conflict is natural; without that conflict there will be no salt. Your food will be without salt -- it will not taste good. There will be no spice in your life. If the woman is really a woman, the man a real man, then they will be polar opposites -- and that is their attraction.
Yes, once in a while they will come close and that closeness will bring great joy, and then they will fall away again. And this will be a constant process of coming together and going away again. Each time they go away

they will fight, because that's how they can go away from each other.
Fighting is nothing but a device. If you understand things, fighting is a device for separation. And each separation is beautiful because it again gives you an opportunity for a mini-honeymoon. Then you can meet again. Fighting and then persuading each other, fighting and then making things okay again, is beautiful. If there is no fight, those two persons will not be real persons.

It was the night before the wedding.
"Honey," the young man said, "I have a confession to make. If you change your mind about marrying me it is alright, but you've got to know -- I am a sadist."
"Ah baby!" cried the girl. "Am I glad you told me! I have been keeping it from you -- I'm a masochist!"
... Now this is a perfect marriage: marriage between a sadist and a masochist. You can't improve upon it.
So the two got married and went away on their honeymoon. That evening at the hotel, the eager bride threw off her clothes, fell on the bed and in a throaty voice said, "Beat me! Beat me!"
The groom stood over her, crossed his arms and replied, "Hope!"

He is a REAL sadist, because if he beats her he is not torturing her, he is simply giving her joy: she wanted to be beaten and he beats her. Instead he says, "Hope!" and just stands there with crossed hands... so even this perfect marriage failed!

I have never heard about any perfect marriage. They say perfect marriages are made in heaven. Nobody comes back from there so maybe it is true, but what kind of marriage will those perfect marriages be? There will be no tension, there will be no individuality in the man or in the woman. They will never collide, they will never fight. They will be too sweet to each other.
And too much sweetness brings diabetes!

The seventh question:
Question 7
BELOVED MASTER,
IS THE REASON FOR TALKING SO MUCH IN FAVOR OF THE WOMEN HERE BECAUSE YOU MAY ALSO BE A LITTLE AFRAID OF THEM TOO?

Anand Toshen, it is true! Even Buddha was afraid, so this is nothing new. For ten years continuously he refused women. He would not accept them as his disciples, he would not initiate them -- for ten years continuously. Thousands of women wanted to be initiated as his sannyasins and he would say no. He was very adamant about it. Finally he had to relax for a certain reason, out of courtesy.
When he was born, his mother died immediately after his birth and he was brought up by a stepmother. And the stepmother had served him so much that when his stepmother came and asked to be initiated as a sannyasin he could not refuse -- just out of courtesy. She was the most valuable woman in his life; without her he would not have been alive at all. He could not say no to her. And because

he said yes to her then the doors were opened. Then other women came and then he could not say no to anybody else. But one thing he said: "My religion was going to last for five thousand years; now it will last for only five hundred years, because these women are going to disturb the whole thing."
I am not that much afraid! In fact, my first disciples, the first people I initiated, were women -- just to put accounts right! Buddha was too adamant, and it does not look good. But, Toshen, there is a truth in it....

Murphy's maxim: You can fool all of the people some of the time and some of the people all of the time, but you can't fool your own woman.

That is impossible, she is bound to find out. Nobody can befool a woman for the simple reason that she does not function through logic; she functions through love, through the heart. Her process is illogical; she simply jumps to the conclusions. She cannot argue, but she immediately arrives at the conclusions. Her process is like a quantum leap: she immediately understands, she can see through and through. The more you try to hide from her, the simpler it is for her to find it out.
Women are powerful people, not in the muscular sense but as far as their resistance is concerned, as far as their life energy is concerned, as far as their tolerance is concerned. And I am bound to be a little afraid because my whole work depends on them.

This is the first time that a commune is being run by women -- the first time in the whole history of man. I have given more power to women knowingly, because my understanding is that their functioning is graceful, insightful, loving, compassionate. It is not rude. And when I have made them the pillars of my temple, certainly I cannot speak against them!

So whatsoever I say about women, listen very cautiously! They are in many ways more powerful than men. Modern research says they are more powerful sexually. And if they are more powerful sexually, then as a corollary, remember -- spiritually they are bound to be more powerful, because it is sex energy that becomes transformed into spiritual energy.

Just the other day I was telling you: man's orgasm is local, woman's orgasm is total. Her whole body is involved in it; each fiber of her being pulsates with joy. And man became so much afraid of her joy that he has repressed, for centuries, the orgasmic qualities of women. And I can understand why he became so afraid -- because when the woman REALLY goes into orgasm she will scream, she will shout, she will go into a kind of LATIHAN. She will start saying sounds, words -- meaningless, gibberish, what Christian mystics call glossolalia.

There is a certain Christian sect which goes into an orgasmic state; it is a kind of meditation, deep meditation. I have used glossolalia on many of my sannyasins. I had to stop it, because three thousand persons going into glossolalia would disturb the whole of Poona! And neighbors started complaining to the police. But in old

camps I used the method very much; it is tremendously powerful.

You simply become relaxed, in a state of let-go. You start swaying, moving. And then you allow whatsoever comes to your mind, you start saying it -- meaningless words or sounds or anything. And soon you are possessed by it. Christian mystics say it is God speaking through you. It's exactly so. Sufis call it gibberish.

Gibberish comes from the name of a Sufi mystic, Jabbar. Jabbar used it for the first time in Sufi tradition. Just as I go on speaking every day, he also used to speak -- but in gibberish! Sometimes I think that when you get tired of words -- because I am never going to be tired! -- when you say, "Beloved Master, enough is enough!" then I will start gibberish. Then I will simply sit here and say anything. You can make any sense out of it; it will be Greek, Latin, Arabic, Chinese, Sanskrit, any language you want to make out of it. The meaning you give to it will depend on you.

Jabbar helped many people, because he would go into such orgasmic joy when he would say these things that his disciples would also start. And then there would be chaos! It is because of his name in the word 'gibberish' that you still remember Jabbar, not knowingly. The English word 'gibberish' has come from Jabbar.

If a woman really goes into orgasmic joy, she will start saying things which will not be meaningful. Sheer joy, utterances of joy, like Alleluia! It does not mean anything; meaning is left far behind. It has a tremendous intensity and passion in it.

Man became afraid, because the whole neighborhood would know that you are making love to your woman. And

police would come and dogs would start barking, and all kinds of things would happen! And people used to live in joint families. In one house there would be a hundred or more people -- and one woman going into orgasmic joy would create such chaos!
And more difficulties were ahead.... When a woman goes into orgasmic joy she has the capacity of multiple orgasms, which man is incapable of fulfilling. Man can have only one orgasm and the woman can have multiple orgasms -- twelve, fifteen, twenty. Then how is the man going to satisfy her? Either he will feel defeated, ashamed, poor, humiliated, or he will have to call his friends! And that too was against his ego.

Sheila and George were spending the first night of their honeymoon in a quaint medieval town in France. Sheila suggested coyly that they make love every time the old watchman rang his hourly bell. George smiled in delight at this prospect, but four rings later he pretended he had to go out for cigarettes and staggered off to the watchman's tower.
"Listen, old man," he wheezed, "do me a favor and for the rest of the night ring that bell at two-hour intervals instead of hourly. Here, I will give you some money."
"I would be happy to oblige," said the watchman, "but I cannot. A beautiful young lady has already bribed me to ring the bell every half hour."

It is because of that fear that man has repressed all of woman's orgasmic capacities. Millions of women have lived and died without knowing that they have the capacity

to experience orgasm. And without knowing that you can have great orgasmic explosions, you will not be able to understand anything of spirituality; it will be almost impossible for you. The woman is more powerful sexually. It is because of her greater power that she has been repressed; it is out of fear that man has repressed her.

You are right, Toshen, I am a little afraid -- knowing perfectly well that I am doing something which has never been done before. I have to move very cautiously. It is a new experiment, but great possibilities will be released out of this experiment. If this experiment succeeds on a small scale it can succeed on a bigger scale too.

My own vision is that the coming age will be the age of the woman. Man has tried for five thousand years and has failed. Now a chance has to be given to the woman. Now she should be given all the reins of power. She should be given an opportunity to allow her feminine energies to function.

Man has utterly failed. In three thousand years, five thousand wars -- this is man's record. Man has simply butchered, killed, murdered; he has lived as if only for war. There are a few days in between two wars which we call days of peace. They are not days of peace; they are only days of preparing for the new war. Yes, a few years are needed to prepare... and again the war, again we go on killing each other. It is enough! Man has been given enough chances. Now feminine energies have to be released.

My commune is going to be rooted in feminine energy, in the energies of the mother. To me God is more a "she" than a "he." "He" is poorer; it can't include "she."

The last question:
Question 8
BELOVED MASTER,
WHY ARE YOU SO MUCH AGAINST CLEVERNESS? DOES IT NOT PAY IN LIFE TO BE CLEVER?

Ageha, cleverness is only a beautiful name for cunningness. Hence I am against it. I am not against being intelligent, but an intelligent person need not be clever. It is only the unintelligent person who has to be clever; because he is missing intelligence he has to replace it with something else.
Cleverness is plastic intelligence, cultivated intelligence. It is a poor substitute. And I know in life -- at least in the short range -- it pays, but never in the long range. And the wise person has to think of the long range. You can be cunning, and for the moment it may pay, but sooner or later you will have to pay for it.
You are sowing seeds which are wrong and you will have to crop the reap... or is it "reap the crop"? You can't avoid the consequences; the consequences are bound to come.

Homer and his pretty wife were about to check out of the hotel when Homer expostulated over the amount of the bill. The hotel manager told him that was the normal rate for a double room with bath and TV.
Homer said they did not use the TV.
"I am sorry, sir," said the manager. "It was there for you to use if you had wanted it."

"Okay," said Homer, "but in that case I am going to charge you for making love to my beautiful wife."
The manager denied it, and Homer said, "That's okay. She was there for you to use if you wanted to."
The manager was so flustered he reduced Homer's bill and Homer decided to try it again the next time they went on a trip.
"Sir, that is our normal rate," said the young clerk.
"But we did not use the TV."
"I am sorry, but it was there for you to use if you wanted to."
"In that case, I will have to charge you for making love to my beautiful wife."
To Homer's chagrin the young man stammered, "Okay, okay, I will pay you. But keep your voice down, will you? I am new at this hotel and you are apt to get me fired."

Cunningness may pay in the short range, but sooner or later you will be caught in your own net. You will fall in the ditch you have dug for others. Beware of it!
I am not against being intelligent -- I am all for being intelligent -- but intelligence is a totally different quality. Intelligence is of the heart and cleverness is of the mind. Cleverness is a heady thing. Even a computer can be clever but not intelligent.
Be intelligent! But to be intelligent needs great changes in your life, in your life patterns. Intelligence is a by-product of meditativeness. If you become silent, if you become innocent, then you will be intelligent. Intelligence means responding to the situation immediately, without any preparation, without the past, without any rehearsal... just

responding as a mirror reflects immediately whatsoever confronts it.
When you start reflecting whatsoever life brings in front of you and you act out of the moment, you are intelligent. But if you are clever and cunning you are using your past, your past experiences, and you are responding according to your past experiences. That is not response -- that is reaction. And that can be done by computer. You are not really human when you are bringing your past into the present and acting out of it.
Be wise, be meditative, be intelligent. Avoid being cunning. That is ugly, that is unspiritual, and that reduces you into a machine.
And you are not a machine, you are a man. Whatever can be done by a machine is not worth doing. Do that which only a man can do. Then your glory is great and then you will release great splendor in your life.
Enough for today.

The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 8

Talks given from 21/12/79 am to 02/01/80 am
English Discourse series
13 Chapters
Year published: 1990
The original tape and book title was "The Book of the Books, Vols 1 - 6". Later reissued as twelve volumes under the present title.

The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 8
Chapter #1
Chapter title: Discontent is divine
21 December 1979 am in Buddha Hall

"EVERYTHING ARISES AND PASSES AWAY."
WHEN YOU SEE THIS, YOU ARE ABOVE SORROW.
THIS IS THE SHINING WAY.

"EXISTENCE IS SORROW."
UNDERSTAND, AND GO BEYOND SORROW.
THIS IS THE WAY OF BRIGHTNESS.

"EXISTENCE IS ILLUSION."
UNDERSTAND, GO BEYOND.
THIS IS THE WAY OF CLARITY.

YOU ARE STRONG, YOU ARE YOUNG.
IT IS TIME TO ARISE.
SO ARISE!
LEST THROUGH IRRESOLUTION AND IDLENESS
YOU LOSE THE WAY.

MASTER YOUR WORDS.
MASTER YOUR THOUGHTS.
NEVER ALLOW YOUR BODY TO DO HARM.
FOLLOW THESE THREE ROADS WITH PURITY
AND YOU WILL FIND YOURSELF UPON THE ONE
WAY,

THE WAY OF WISDOM.

SIT IN THE WORLD, SIT IN THE DARK.
SIT IN MEDITATION, SIT IN LIGHT.
CHOOSE YOUR SEAT.
LET WISDOM GROW.

CUT DOWN THE FOREST,
NOT THE TREE.
FOR OUT OF THE FOREST COMES DANGER.

CUT DOWN THE FOREST.
FELL DESIRE.
AND SET YOURSELF FREE.

The way of Gautama the Buddha is the way of intelligence, understanding, awareness, meditation. It is not the way of belief; it is the way of seeing the truth itself. Belief simply covers up your ignorance; it does not deliver you from ignorance. Belief is a deception you play upon yourself; it is not transformation.

And the people who think themselves religious are only believers, not religious. They have no clarity, no understanding, no insight into the nature of things. They don't know what they are doing, they don't know what they are thinking. They are simply repeating conventions, traditions; dead words spoken long long ago. They cannot be certain whether those words are true or not. Nobody can be certain unless one realizes oneself.

There is only one certainty in existence and that is your own realization, your own seeing. Unless that happens,

don't become contented; remain discontented. Discontentment is divine; contentment through beliefs is stupid. It is through divine discontent that one grows, but it is the path which is arduous. The path of belief is simple, convenient, comfortable. You need not do anything. You have only to say yes to the authorities: the authorities of the church, of the state. You have simply to be a slave to people who are in power.
But to follow the path of Buddha one has to be a rebel. Rebellion is its essential taste; it is only for the rebellious spirit. But only rebellious people have spirits, only they have souls. Others are hollow, empty.

These sutras of today are of immense beauty, truth. Meditate over them. The first sutra:

"EVERYTHING ARISES AND PASSES AWAY."
WHEN YOU SEE THIS, YOU ARE ABOVE SORROW.
THIS IS THE SHINING WAY.

Life is a flux, nothing abides. Still we are such fools, we go on clinging. If change is the nature of life, then clinging is stupidity, because your clinging is not going to change the law of life. Your clinging is only going to make you miserable. Things are bound to change; whether you cling or not does not matter. If you cling you become miserable: you cling and they change, you feel frustrated. If you don't cling they still change, but then there is no frustration because you were perfectly aware that they are bound to change. This is how things are, this is the suchness of life.

Remember Haldane's Law that the universe is not only queerer than we imagine, it is queerer than we CAN imagine. And remember, you are not alone. The world really is like this.

It is a very strange world. Everything is momentary, yet every momentary thing gives you the illusion of being permanent. Everything is just a soap bubble, shining beautifully in the sunrays, maybe surrounded by a rainbow, a beautiful aura of light -- but a soap bubble is a soap bubble! Any moment and it will be gone and gone forever. But for the moment it can deceive you.

And the strangest thing is that thousands of times you have been deceived, yet you don't become aware. Again another soap bubble and you will believe. Your unintelligence seems to be unlimited! How many times do you need to be hammered? How many times do your dreams have to be crushed and shattered? How many times has life to prove that clinging is nonsense? Stop clinging and then you go beyond sorrow. It is clinging that is the root cause of sorrow.

The world is dominated by two types of people: those who understand what they do not manage, and those who manage what they do not understand. Just watch your own life and you will see it happening within your mind too. You understand things which you don't manage; it is easy to understand things which you don't manage.

Somebody asked George Bernard Shaw, "Do you believe that nothing is impossible?"

Bernard Shaw is reported to have said, "Yes, I DO believe that nothing is impossible, provided somebody else is going to do it."

It is easy to understand what you don't manage. What YOU manage you don't understand at all. Do you understand your life? You understand about God and you don't understand about your life energy. You understand about heaven and hell. There are people who know how many heavens there are and how many hells.

One man came to me and he said, "In our religion we believe that there are fourteen heavens. Mahavira has reached only up to the fifth; Buddha up to the sixth; Jesus, Mohammed, etcetera, only up to the fourth; Kabir, Nanak, up to the seventh. And my guru," the man said -- he belonged to the Radhaswami sect -- "MY guru has reached to the fourteenth."
I said to the man, "Yes, I know. I have seen him in the fourteenth, because I have reached to the fifteenth. I am acquainted with the guy."
He said, "Fifteenth? But in our scriptures there are only fourteen heavens, not fifteen."
I said, "How can there be fifteen in your scriptures? -- because your teacher has reached only up to the fourteenth!"

Foolish people! But they go on knowing how many heavens there are and how many hells there are. Jainas believe in seven hells. They have thrown Krishna into the seventh because he was the cause of the great war, Mahabharata. He persuaded Arjuna, his disciple, to fight and kill people. He was the cause of great violence so they have thrown him to the seventh, into the last. But in the days of Mahavira, one of the disciples of Mahavira,

Makkhali Gosal, revolted against the master and declared that there are not seven hells but seven hundred.
People go on talking nonsense -- seven and seven hundred -- and they are not aware about their own inner life, from where this breath comes, to where this breath goes. They are not aware of the closest truth of their being, and they go on talking about ultimate things. These talks about ultimate things are simply to avoid real problems of life. These are strategies of the mind to keep you occupied with utter nonsense. Beware of the mind and its cunning ways!
Buddha says: "EVERYTHING ARISES AND PASSES AWAY." WHEN YOU SEE THIS.... He is not saying, "Believe this." He is not saying, "I have become the enlightened one, so whatsoever I say you have to believe in it." He is not saying, "Because scriptures are in my favor you have to believe me." He is not saying, "Because I can prove it logically you have to believe in me."
See the beauty of the man. He says: WHEN YOU SEE THIS, YOU ARE ABOVE SORROW. In that very moment when you have seen this -- that everything is momentary and everything is a flux and everything is BOUND to change.... Do whatsoever you want to do, but nothing is going to become permanent in this life. When you have seen this with your own eyes, and you have understood it through your own intelligence, suddenly you are beyond sorrow.
What happens? A great revolution happens in that seeing; that very seeing is the revolution. Then you don't cling. The moment you see that this is a soap bubble you don't cling to it. In fact, clinging to it will force it to burst sooner; if you don't cling to it, it may remain there dancing in the wind for

a while. The nonclinger can enjoy life; the clinger cannot enjoy life.

Gussie had lived a good life, having been married four times. Now she stood before the Pearly Gates.
Father Abraham said to her, "I notice that you first married a banker, then an actor, next a rabbi, and lastly an undertaker. What kind of a system is that for a respectable Jewish woman?"
"A very good system," replied Gussie. "One for the money, two for the show, three to make ready and four to go!"

If you see, you can enjoy; then it is just a game. Then everything is totally different; then it is a big drama. Then the whole earth becomes just a stage and everybody is acting his part. But if you don't see, you become obsessed; you start clinging to things, and deep down you know that they are slipping out of your hands.

"I had everything a man could want," moaned a sad-eyed friend of ours. "Money, a handsome home, the love of a beautiful and wealthy woman. Then, bang! One morning my wife walked in!"

You can't remain in the same state for long. Life changes just like dreams. Hence the mystics have been calling life nothing but a dream; a dream seen with open eyes, a dream shared by others too. In the night the dream is private; nobody can share it. In the day the dream is public; everybody can share it. In the night the dream is subjective; in the day the dream is objective. But the quality of both is

the same -- writings on water. You have not even finished writing and they start disappearing. Not even writings on the sand... because on the sand the writing may stay a little longer. It will have to wait for the wind to come or somebody to walk over it. It is writing in water. You go on writing and it goes on disappearing.

Seeing it, YOU ARE ABOVE SORROW -- immediately. Then nothing else has to be done. The moment you have seen it, where is sorrow? The cause has disappeared; you have removed the very cause. You cling and you create the cause. Nonclinging is liberation.

Hence Buddha says: THIS IS THE SHINING WAY -- so simple, so luminous, that unless you are utterly blind, spiritually blind, you can't miss it. He is not talking about great metaphysical truths. He is not philosophizing. He is not using complex words and systems and theories. He is simply stating a fact that he has seen -- and YOU can see it. It has nothing to do with Buddha, it is not his invention, it is not his idea. It is the facticity of life.

Look around. Everything is changing. It is like a river moving and moving -- and you want to catch hold of it? It is mercury! If you try to catch hold of it you will lose sooner than before. Don't try to catch hold of it. Watch joyfully, silently. Witness the game, the dream... and YOU ARE ABOVE SORROW. Buddha is not saying you will GO beyond sorrow. He says, YOU are ABOVE SORROW.

"EXISTENCE IS SORROW."
UNDERSTAND, AND GO BEYOND SORROW.
THIS IS THE WAY OF BRIGHTNESS.

"EXISTENCE IS SORROW." First he says: Sorrow arises out of clinging to momentary things which you cannot make permanent. It is not in the nature of things. It is against the universal law. It is against dhamma, it is against tao. You cannot win. If you fight with the universal law you are fighting a losing battle; you will simply waste your energies. What is going to happen is bound to happen; nothing can be done about it.

All that you can do is about your consciousness. You can change your vision. You can see things in a different light, with a different context, in a new space, but you cannot change things. If you think of the world as very real you will suffer; if you see the world as a strange dream you will not suffer. If you think in terms of static entities you will suffer. If you think in terms of nouns you will suffer. But if you think in terms of verbs you will not suffer.

Nouns don't exist; they exist only in languages. In reality there are no nouns. Everything is a verb because everything is changing and everything is in a process. It is never static, it is always dynamic.

The second thing Buddha says is: "EXISTENCE IS SORROW." To be is sorrow. The ego is sorrow. First he says: See the world as dream, fluctuating, changing, moment to moment new. Enjoy it, enjoy its newness, enjoy all the surprises that it brings. It is beautiful that it is changing, nothing is wrong about it; just don't cling to it. Why do you cling? You cling because you have another fallacy: that YOU are.

The first fallacy is that things are static. And the second fallacy is that YOU are, that you have a static ego. They both go together. If you want to cling you need a clinger; if

you have no need to cling, there is no need for a clinger. Go deep into it. If you don't need to cling, the ego is not needed at all, it will be pointless. In fact, it cannot exist without clinging.

The dancer can exist only if he dances. If the dance disappears, where is the dancer? The singer exists only in singing. The walker exists only in walking. So is the ego: the ego exists only in clinging, in possessing things, in dominating things. When there is no domination, no desire to dominate, no desire to cling, no desire to possess, the ego starts evaporating. On the outside you start clinging and in the inside a new clarity starts arising. The ego with all its smoke disappears, the ego with all its clouds disappears. It can't exist because it cannot be nourished anymore. For it to exist it has to cling. It has to create "my" and "mine," and it goes on creating "my" and "mine" in every possible and impossible way.

The ego says, "This is MY country," as if you have brought it with your birth, as if the earth is really divided into countries. The earth is undivided, it is one. But the ego says, "This is MY country" -- and not only that this is my country, "this is the greatest country in the world. This is the holiest land."

Ask the Indians. "This is the most spiritual country in the world. Everybody else is materialist and we are spiritualists." And everybody else has his own ideas. They are great. Ask the Germans. Nobody is of pure blood, only they are -- Aryan blood, Nordic blood, purest blood. God has created them to rule the whole world. And ask the Japanese. They have descended from the sun god directly; they are not ordinary mortals. The sun is their source, and

the sun is the source of all life. And you ask anybody. Everybody has his own ideas how HIS country is great, how HIS religion is great. Religion also becomes your possession: "MY religion, MY Christianity, MY Hinduism."
Who can claim religion? Who can claim that religion is a possession? You can be religious, but you cannot claim that Christianity is yours, you cannot claim that Hinduism is yours. But the ego is so stupid! It goes on claiming all kinds of things.

Mr. Ginsberg came home one day from the garment district where he owned a company and said that he must get a mistress.
"Why?" gasped Mrs. Ginsberg.
"Well," replied her husband, "all the owners have them and it looks bad for my business that I don't."
"Well, if it is for business, alright," said Mrs. Ginsberg.
Sometime later Mr. and Mrs. Ginsberg were enjoying an evening at the opera when suddenly Mr. Ginsberg said, "Look, Miriam, there is Mr. Pincus and his mistress sitting across from us in a box."
Mrs. Ginsberg studied the pair for a long time with her opera glasses and then said, "Ours is better!"

Anything and everything will be claimed by the ego. And "ours is always better," whatsoever it is. The ego exists only through such claims. The "I" exists only as an island in the ocean of "my" and "mine." If you stop claiming things as "my" and "mine," the ego will disappear on its own accord.

Neither the wife is yours nor the husband nor the children. All belongs to the whole. Your claim is foolish. We come empty-handed into the world and we go empty-handed from the world. But nobody wants to know the truth -- it hurts. Empty-handed we come and empty-handed we go. One starts feeling shaky, one starts feeling scared. One wants to be full, not empty. It is better to be full of anything -- any garbage -- than to be empty. Emptiness looks like death, and we don't want the truth. Our whole effort is to live in convenience, even if that convenience is based on illusions.

"I demand an explanation and I want the truth!" shouted the irate husband upon discovering his wife in bed with his best friend.
"Make up your mind, George," she calmly replied. "You can't have both."

Either you can have the explanation or the truth. And people are more interested in the explanation than in the truth, hence so many philosophies. They are all explanations -- explanations to explain away things, not to give you the truth; explanations to create great smoke so you need not see the truth. And Buddha's insistence is: SEE it! -- because without seeing it you can't go above sorrow.

James, to his wife: "I am in the mood and you are so beautiful!"
Katherine: "What makes you think I am beautiful?"
James: "When I am in the mood, everybody is beautiful!"

The whole question is of your mood. If you are in the mood of an ego trip, then you will not listen to buddhas, or you will listen in such a way that you can manage, distort, interpret those truths according to yourself, to support you. If you are still interested in the ego you cannot understand these sutras.

If you have become fed up with the ego, if you are tired of its games, if you have seen that it brings only suffering and nothing else, then these truths are so simple to understand that in fact no explanation is needed. And I am not explaining them to you. I am simply hammering them on your head, from this side and from that side. You try to dodge, you try to escape, you try to close your eyes, but I go on shouting in your ears, hoping that sooner or later you will be able to understand -- because without this understanding happening to you, your life will be a nightmare. And many lives you have wasted in nightmares. It is time to wake up!

"EXISTENCE IS SORROW." UNDERSTAND, AND GO BEYOND SORROW. THIS IS THE WAY OF BRIGHTNESS. Buddha says: This is the way of intelligence. This is not for dull, unintelligent, mediocre minds.

The way of the Buddha is for those who are intelligent. And who is not intelligent? If you decide to be intelligent, you are intelligent. You are born with great intelligence, but you keep it repressed. You are afraid of your own intelligence because your own intelligence will disturb your settled routine of life. Somehow you have managed to settle, and your own intelligence will keep you moving forward. It will go on telling you, "This is not the truth.

Again you have fallen a victim of a dream. Move on. Unless you reach the truth, there is no way to rest in peace. Move on!" Because intelligence goads you to move on, you repress it.

Everybody is born intelligent. I have never come across a child who is not intelligent, but it is very rare later on to find intelligent people. What happens in the meantime? Every child turns out to be stupid later on. By the time you come from the university you are fully established in your stupidities. The university is a guarantee that now you are intelligence-proof. Nobody can make you intelligent again -- they have sealed you.

Socrates says: Know thyself. Buddha also says: Know thyself. And both have been misunderstood, Socrates more than Buddha. When Socrates says: Know thyself, people think there is someone inside who has to be known. There is nobody inside. When Socrates says: Know thyself, he is simply saying, "Go in and see what is there." He is not saying that there is someone that you will come to know; he is simply saying go in. But he does not make you so scared.

Buddha says clearly that there is no one: Go in and see. There is only seeing, but not a seer. There is understanding but nobody who understands, knowing but not a knower. This has to be understood. This is Buddha's very emphatic message: that there are processes, certainly, but there is no center to those processes. Yes, there is love but no lover, and there is meditation but no meditator, and there is liberation, but nobody is liberated. It looks very strange, but now modern science agrees with it.

As far as objective reality is concerned, modern science agrees with Buddha more than with anybody else. Hence Buddha has a great future, because science will come closer and closer every day to Buddha. Science is going to speak in the same language as Buddha. Science says there is energy but no matter. That's what Buddha is saying for the inner world: There is energy, movement, processes, but no entity, no ego.

"Know thyself" means: know that you are not. Great courage is needed to know this. People want to know that they are immortal souls. Then they are very happy: "We are immortal souls." And Buddha says, "Don't talk nonsense! You are simply not. Immortality is there, but you are not immortal. When YOU disappear completely, whatsoever is left behind... that cleanliness, that purity, that innocence, that nobodiness, that nothingness, that SHUNYA -- that is immortal. It has no beginning and no end, no birth and no death."

But rather than going in and finding the basic illusion of the ego, rather than going in and finding the root cause of all your misery, you go on throwing the responsibility on others.

Murphy's famous maxim: The man who can smile when things go wrong has thought of someone he can blame it on.

Everybody is trying to blame his misery on somebody else. And that's how we remain in misery, because this blaming is not going to help. In the first place it is wrong -- nobody else is the cause of your misery; the cause is within you.

You are living with a fallacy. But even if you are living with a fallacy, the mind enjoys the idea that somebody else is responsible -- "I am not responsible"; you feel a relief.

"Doctor, you've got to do something about my husband."
"What seems to be the problem?"
"He's convinced that he is a refrigerator."
"That's terrible!"
"You're telling me!" snapped the wife. "He sleeps with his mouth open, and the light keeps me awake all night."

A woman called a psychiatrist on the phone and cried, "Doctor, you've got to help me. My husband is driving me crazy. He keeps insisting that he is Moses."
"That sounds serious," replied the psychiatrist. "I think you should bring him to my office tomorrow."
"Ah, I will," she replied, "but in the meantime how do I keep him from parting the water every time I try to take a bath?"

Even if you are mad, the mind would like to believe that somebody else is responsible -- somebody else is mad. People are ready to believe that the whole world is mad, but not themselves. In fact, a madman never accepts that he is mad. You can go to a madhouse and you can ask all the mad people, and you will be surprised: not a single mad person will agree that he is mad. The whole world is mad, he is perfectly sane.
In fact, those who understand mad people, they say that once a madman accepts that he is mad he is no longer mad; sanity has started coming into his being.

That's what all the buddhas have been saying: the moment you understand that "I am ignorant," the first glimpse of knowing has happened. The moment you say that "I am not," for the first time, real existence has penetrated you. The first time you say that "I don't possess anything," the whole world is yours. The first time you say that "I am not separate," that "I am one with the whole," you become the whole. The dewdrop does not really disappear; it becomes the ocean. By knowing one's emptiness, one's egolessness, one loses nothing, one gains all.
And the third sutra:

"EXISTENCE IS ILLUSION."
UNDERSTAND, GO BEYOND.
THIS IS THE WAY OF CLARITY.

Buddha does not give you doctrines, he does not give you dogmas. He is not a bit interested in giving you philosophies of life. His whole concern is one: how to make your mind clear, how to impart clarity to you so that you can see unhindered, so your eyes no more carry any dust, so your eyes are without dust and you can see through and through as things are.
Ordinarily whatsoever you see is your projection. That's what you call existence -- you project. The existence functions only as a screen and the projector is inside you, and you go on projecting your desires, your imaginations, your hopes, your dreams, and you go on seeing things which are not there.
People go on to the very end projecting. Even if you meet them after their death you will find them in the same mess.

Business had been terrible for Blum and he cut down on his help. In a month he had to cut down still further, and everyone said that this terrible strain became a fixation that hastened his death a few weeks afterwards.
As they were carrying his body down the aisle of the chapel, Blum suddenly sat up in the coffin and asked, "How many man are carrying me?"
"There are eight pallbearers, Mr. Blum," said the undertaker.
"Better lay off two," said Blum, lying down again.

Even after death the old obsession continues! And don't take it as a joke -- this is how things are. People go on believing in the same things after death; they go on continuing the same desires. That's how they go on coming back again and again to the earth to fulfill the same unfulfilled desires. And those desires are unfulfillable, so they go on coming again and again, millions of times. Buddha calls it a vicious circle, a wheel which goes on moving. You are just like a spoke in the wheel. Sometimes you come up and sometimes you go down. But the wheel goes on moving up and down, up and down; life and death, life and death; one moment of success, another moment of failure; one moment of hope, another moment of despair. It goes on and on, and it has been going on for eternity. And this whole thing is your own projection -- this is not reality. Reality can only be known when you have nothing to project. That state of nonprojection Buddha calls clarity. Clarity means you have no desire, you don't want things to

be in a certain way, you are ready to see them as they are. You are simply a mirror, not a projector.
When you are a mirror, this is samadhi, this is satori. You simply reflect like the silent, clear, cool water of a lake reflects the full moon and the stars. When you are absolutely clear, no dreams, no desires, no imaginations, no memories, the whole mind put aside -- the mind is a mechanism to project -- then there is clarity and things are reflected as they are. And for the first time you know what is the case; otherwise: "EXISTENCE IS ILLUSION." Understand this: that whatsoever you think as existence is illusion. Understand it, and go beyond. THIS IS THE WAY OF CLARITY.

YOU ARE STRONG, YOU ARE YOUNG.
IT IS TIME TO ARISE.
SO ARISE!
LEST THROUGH IRRESOLUTION AND IDLENESS
YOU LOSE THE WAY.

In ancient India, when Buddha was delivering these sutras to his disciples, this was the accepted tradition, that a man should become a seeker only in the last stage of his life. If you assume life to be a hundred-year span, then the Hindu idea is to divide life in four parts of twenty-five years each. The first twenty-five years are for education, BRAHMACHARYA. You go to the university, you live with a master to learn the skills of the world, the arts, the craft, the science. And after twenty-five years you come back into the world, you get married. And for twenty-five

years now -- the second stage -- you live as a householder, as a husband, as a father, fulfilling the duties of life.
And then comes the third stage, twenty-five years again: you prepare to renounce the world. The third stage is called VANPRASTHA. First is brahmacharya -- celibacy -- so that you can devote your whole mind to your studies, no distractions. Your whole sexual energies have to be concentrated in studies. Then the second stage is called GARHASTHYA -- the stage of the householder. You devote your whole energies to the family life: make a house, create a big business, earn money, raise children. And then the third is called vanprastha. Vanprastha means "facing towards the forest." Now prepare yourself to leave the world -- prepare for twenty-five years! Live still in the house, but turn towards the forest. Slowly slowly, disconnect yourself. Go on giving your responsibilities to your children, who will now be coming back from the university.
And the fourth stage -- after seventy-five years -- the last twenty-five years, you become a sannyasin. This was the routine, accepted, conventional thing in India.
In the first place, people don't live a hundred years, and particularly in those days not at all. All the scientific research that has been gone into proves that people in Buddha's time lived at the most an average of forty years; forty years was the average life. And it does not seem too bad because even now in India, thirty-six years is the average life. With all the new medicine, medical help, hospitals, if India has only thirty-six years as average age, then in those days, with no science, with no medical facilities, if people lived forty years average they were

doing perfectly well! So people were not living for a hundred years. By the time one was seventy-five, one was gone. So for the majority of the people, the time for sannyas will never come.

It seems it was just an effort to postpone it. And even if somebody lived after seventy-five -- a few people lived, Buddha himself lived for eighty years -- if a few people lived after seventy-five, their life will be almost without energy. They will be dead, walking corpses. They won't have energy enough to meditate, to rise to the highest peaks of consciousness. They will not be able to transform their beings into buddhahood; that will be impossible for them. Buddha brought a great revolution and India has never forgiven him for that. He destroyed the whole nonsense idea of stages. It is nonsense, because there are a few intelligent people who can be sannyasins even while they are young, and there are a few superintelligent people who can be sannyasins even while they are small children. Shankaracharya became a sannyasin when he was only nine years of age. Buddha became a sannyasin when he was twenty-nine years old. So it is foolish to postpone it. And why go on postponing truth to the very end when you will be almost a corpse, no energy left? And then you will try to soar high into the sky? When the days have come to go into the grave, you will try to take flight towards the sun? It is impossible.

Buddha was the first in India to introduce the idea of a young sannyasin. His emphasis was that youth is the best time to be a sannyasin because it is great energy that will be needed for the inner transformation, for inner work. It can't be postponed. And who knows about the future? Who

knows about even tomorrow or even about the next moment? He says: YOU ARE YOUNG, YOU ARE STRONG -- then this is the time. IT IS TIME TO ARISE. Don't postpone. There is no need to postpone. Don't say that "I will wake up only after seventy-five years of age." A person who has been dreaming for seventy-five years will find it very difficult to wake up after seventy-five years of dreaming. Dreaming would have become almost a second nature to him.

As you grow old you become more and more stubborn, less and less flexible. As you grow old you become more and more mechanical, less and less alive. Your ways of life become so settled, your ways of thinking become so fixated, that it becomes impossible to change them. That's why it is so difficult for an old man to learn any new thing. They say: You can't teach an old dog new tricks. Children learn very easily; old men find it very difficult to learn because they already think they know. Their whole life's experience is there, and their life's experience starts dominating them; it goes on dominating them to the very end.

Zeb and his wife, Addie, had had a reputation for being the stingiest couple in the hills. Zeb died a few years back, and his kin was downright embarrassed about the way Addie went on about the cost of the funeral. She even insisted on having the coffin closed so she would not have to pay the undertaker for a room to hold the viewing.

A few years later, Addie got sick and it looked like she was going to meet Zeb in the hereafter. Addie called her only

friend to her side and made her promise to see to the funeral.
"Promise you will bury me in my black silk dress," she said weakly. "But you may as well cut the material out of the back of the skirt. It is good material and it surely is a sin to waste it."
"Now, Addie," replied her friend, "I just couldn't. When you and Zeb walk through those Pearly Gates, you surely don't want to go with no back to your dress."
"Don't give it another thought," replied Addie. "They will all be looking at Zeb anyway."
"Why do you say that?"
"Because I buried him without his pants."

The whole life, if you are miserly... even in death you will be the same. As you grow old you become more and more settled.
Youth is the best time for inner transformation because youth is the most flexible time. Children are more flexible than young people, but they are not so understanding. They need a little experience. Youth is exactly the middle; you are no longer a child, no longer ignorant of life and its ways and not yet settled as an old man. You are in a state of transition, and the state of transition is the best time that you can jump out of the wheel of life and death. Youth is the most significant time to take any jump, because the jump needs courage, it needs energy, it needs risk, it needs daring.
Buddha says: YOU ARE STRONG, YOU ARE YOUNG. IT IS TIME TO ARISE.

To be youthful, to be young, to be fresh, is a great benediction. It is the time of rebellion. And if you miss your youth, it will be more and more difficult later on. Not that it is impossible -- it can happen even when you are old -- but it will take more arduous effort and things will not be so easy. It is just like climbing a mountain: when you are young it is easier, when you become old it becomes difficult. Breathing is hard, rising up is tiring, you perspire, you feel exhausted very soon, you will need more rest and the journey will look very long. When you are young you can run up; you can run up to the peak and each step will release more energy in you, because to be young is to be a reservoir of energy.

Many people come to me and ask why I am giving sannyas to young people. ... Because of this: youth is the time for sannyas, because sannyas is the greatest rebellion; no other rebellion is so great. Don't waste your youthfulness on other ordinary revolutions -- political, social, economic. Don't waste your life energy on those stupid games. Put your total energy, focus your total energy, on a single point -- the spiritual revolution -- because that is a radical change, and other changes can follow that change.

If your inner being changes, your whole outer life will be totally different. It will have a different fragrance, a different beauty, a different grace. And when your inner being is changed and becomes a flame of light, you will become a light unto others too. You will become a beckoning light, a great herald of a new dawn. Your very presence will trigger revolutions in other people's lives.

Buddha says: SO ARISE! Don't waste a single moment! -- LEST THROUGH IRRESOLUTION AND IDLENESS YOU LOSE THE WAY.

The only danger is irresolution. A life uncommitted, uninvolved, is not worth calling life. It is only through commitment, involvement, that your life attains sharpness, your intelligence becomes a sword. Through idleness you gather rust; your sharpness disappears. You become old even while you are young. And if you remain sharp and you remain rebellious, even when you are old you will not be old. Only physically you will be old, but your inner being will remain young.

And that is one of the greatest experiences of life: when your body becomes old, but your inner being keeps its youthfulness. That means you have not lost track of life, that you are keeping yourself in step with life. You are not left behind, you are not lagging behind.

The Buddha says:

MASTER YOUR WORDS.

He says, ordinarily a mind is full of words -- relevant, irrelevant, rubbish; all kinds of words go on gathering inside you. Two persons are talking; you simply hear, and those words become part of your mind -- for no other reason, accidentally. You heard two persons talking. You have become burdened. You go and you read the signboards, and those words become part of your being. You read unnecessary advertisements. In magazines, people read advertisements more than anything else. Or you go on gossiping with people, knowing perfectly well

that this is just useless, a sheer wastage of time and energy. But words are gathering inside you like dust, layers upon layers, and your mirror will be covered by them
Buddha says: MASTER YOUR WORDS. Be telegraphic. Listen only to that which is significant, read only that which is meaningful. Avoid the unnecessary, the irrelevant. Speak only that which is to the point. Make your each word your heart. Don't just go on saying things as if you are a gramophone record.

Mary was sitting alone on the couch when her mother came in and turned on the light.
"Why, what is the matter, dear?" asked her mother. "Why are you sitting here in the dark? Did you and John have a fight?"
"Oh, no, nothing like that," replied Mary. "As a matter of fact, John asked me to marry him."
"Well, then why do you look so sad?"
"Oh, mother, it is just that I don't know if I could marry an advertising executive."
"But what is wrong with marrying a man who is in advertising?"
"Well, how would you feel if a man who was proposing to you told you that it was a once-in-a-lifetime, never-to-be-repeated, special offer?"

Just like a gramophone record! He may not be at all aware what he is saying, may be repeating his habit. He is skillful in that, it has become part of his mind. It may be repeating itself; he may not be conscious at all of what he is doing.

When Buddha says: MASTER YOUR WORDS, he means, be conscious. Why are you saying something? To whom? And what is the purpose of it? Be clear, otherwise be silent. It is better not to burden others with your garbage. If you can enlighten, good; if you can unburden, good; otherwise it is better to be quiet.

MASTER YOUR THOUGHTS.

Any thought goes on inside your mind. Watch for a few minutes and you will be surprised: the mind seems to be crazy! It jumps from one thought to another thought for no reason at all. Just a dog starts barking in the neighborhood and your mind takes the clue from it... and you remember the dog that you used to have in your childhood, and the dog died... and you start feeling sad. And because of the death of the dog you start thinking about death, and the death of your mother and the death of your father. And you become angry because you were never at ease with your mother; there was always conflict. The dog is still barking, completely unaware what he has done. And you have traveled so far!

Anything can trigger a process in you. This is a kind of slavery: you are at the mercy of accidents. This is not mastery. And a sannyasin, a seeker, should be a master. He thinks only if he wants to; if he does not want to think he simply puts his mind off. He knows how to put it on and how to put it off.

You don't know how to put it on, you don't know how to put it off; it goes on and on. It starts working in the childhood and goes on working till you die. Seventy years,

eighty years, continuously working -- so much work, and then you cannot expect anything great out of it because it is utterly tired. It has not much energy left; it is leaking from everywhere. If you can put it off... that's what meditation is all about: putting the mind off, the art of putting the mind off. If you can put it off, it will gather energy.
If for a few hours every day you are without the mind, you will gather so much energy that that energy will keep you young, fresh, creative. That energy will allow you to see reality, the beauty of the existence, the joy of life, the celebration. But for that you need energy, and your mind has only very little energy. Just somehow you manage your life. You live a poor life for the sheer reason that you don't know how to accumulate your mind energy, how to make a reservoir of your inner being. It goes on and on leaking and you don't know how to stop those leakages.

NEVER ALLOW YOUR BODY TO DO HARM.

Three things, Buddha says: Be careful about words, be master of your thoughts, NEVER ALLOW YOUR BODY TO DO HARM. Because the body comes from the animals, the body IS animal. It enjoys harming, it is violent. Be conscious of it. Don't allow it to go into violence. Don't allow it to harm anybody, because if you harm others the harm will come back to you sooner or later.
That's the whole theory of karma: whatsoever you do to others will be done to you. So do to others only that which you would like to be done to you.

FOLLOW THESE THREE ROADS WITH PURITY

AND YOU WILL FIND YOURSELF UPON THE ONE WAY,
THE WAY OF WISDOM.

The last advice Buddha gives is: Don't follow these three paths out of calculation. Follow them innocently, in a childlike way, exploring, inquiring. Make it an adventure, but don't be calculative, don't be businesslike. We are all businesslike, and that is one of the basic reasons why we go on missing the joy of life. A businessman can never know what joy is; he is always thinking about profits.
People come to me and they ask, "If we meditate, what will be the profit out of it? What are we going to gain out of it?" If I say to them, "Meditate for meditation's sake," they look puzzled. They say, "Then what is the point?" They can't understand that, in life, a few things should be done without any calculation.
Love for love's sake, art for art's sake, meditation for meditation's sake. All that is beautiful and great can never be reduced to a means to something else. And the businessman knows only that. The businesslike mind always reduces everything to a means to some end. And these are ends. Meditation is an end unto itself, not a means to anything else. Hence, be childlike, innocent, noncalculative. Be pure... AND YOU WILL FIND YOURSELF UPON THE ONE WAY... the only way, the true way, THE WAY OF WISDOM.
SIT IN THE WORLD, SIT IN THE DARK -- these words are tremendously pregnant:

SIT IN THE WORLD, SIT IN THE DARK.

SIT IN MEDITATION, SIT IN LIGHT.
CHOOSE YOUR SEAT.
LET WISDOM GROW.

Sitting in the world means to be in the mind and sitting in meditation means to be in the no-mind. To be in the mind is to be in darkness and to be in no-mind is to be in light. If you have understood the previous sutras you will know how to be a no-mind... and then there is light and only light. You are flooded with light, you become luminous. And that's how wisdom grows.

CUT DOWN THE FOREST,
NOT THE TREE.
FOR OUT OF THE FOREST COMES DANGER.

CUT DOWN THE FOREST means cut out the root, the very source of it all -- NOT THE TREE, because the tree is only a symptom. If you cut one tree, another tree will be growing. Don't fight with the symptoms; look into the root and destroy the root.
The root is the ego. The root is the desire of the ego. The root is the clinging of the ego. Cut the whole forest: the ego, the desire, the clinging, the cunningness, the cleverness, the calculativeness, the politicalness -- cut all these. Don't go on fighting with small things.
Somebody comes and says, "How can I get rid of anger?" Now, without getting rid of ego you cannot get rid of anger, and if you try you will be only repressing it. People come to me and they ask, "How can we get rid of sexuality?" You cannot get rid of sexuality if you don't get rid of the

ego and its continuous hankering for more and more. You can't get rid of sexuality if you cannot see the inner nothingness. In that seeing, sexuality is transformed into spirituality. Go to the root, to the source.
But people go on pruning the trees, thinking that this is how they are going to transform their life. Yes, they can become more sophisticated, more cultured, more civilized, on the surface more polished -- but this will be only the surface. Deep down they will remain the same person, as ugly as before or even more ugly because all that is repressed will make them more and more perverted.

CUT DOWN THE FOREST.
FELL DESIRE.
AND SET YOURSELF FREE.

If you want to cut out the forest, FELL DESIRE. See the point, that desire is futile. Live in the moment and don't try to live in the future. Nobody can live in the future. How can you live in the future which is not yet? And desire gives you the illusion of living in the future. Sitting, you start thinking you have become the president of a country. You start living a dream, a daydream, thinking that you have found great money, a lottery has been opened in your name. And you start thinking and become very much disturbed, really disturbed: "What to do with it?"

I had a friend, a doctor, and he was very much obsessed with crossword puzzles. Every month he would fill the crossword puzzles, and every month he would hope that this time he was going to get five lakh rupees, ten lakh

rupees. I had been watching it for years. And the month would pass and nothing would happen, and he would start preparing for another crossword puzzle.

One day I was sitting in his dispensary, and I told him, "Look, you don't seem to have a great fate!"

He said, "What do you mean?"

I said, "I have been watching you for so many days, for so many years, and nothing happens. Join with me and this month you will get ten lakh rupees."

He was ecstatic. He said, "Why didn't you say it before?"

I said, "But there is a condition. The library of this city needs five lakh rupees. You will have to give five lakh rupees to the library. Then I can join with you. Then my fate will be with your fate -- and you know my fate!"

He said, "That I know!" But he said, "Five lakhs is too much." He started bargaining: nothing had happened yet, but he was so much disturbed! He started bargaining, "Five lakhs is too much, and I am a poor doctor, and you know how difficult it is and what great competition is there -- twenty doctors in this small town and I am the poorest. You are demanding five lakh rupees! Make it one lakh."

I said, "Okay, so it is agreed: one lakh I will get for the library, nine lakhs you get."

He said, "Yes." But he said yes in such a sad way: "One lakh rupees, just going like that!"

Twelve o'clock in the night he knocked on my door. It was summer and I was sleeping on the terrace so I asked from the terrace, "What is the matter? Who is there?"

He said, "I am your friend. I could not sleep, I had to come. One lakh is too much! This time just fifty thousand. Next month we join forces again and then I will give one lakh."

I said, "Okay -- because I don't want to disturb my sleep. You go away. Fifty thousand is okay, but now don't change it!"
Next morning he changed it. He said, "You know my situation. This time, let me keep the whole amount. Next month, whatsoever you say I will give to the library."
I said, "Then I withdraw my hand. Then you do it on your own."
The month passed. Nothing happened. He came to me and he was crying, just tears. And he said, "I am such a fool! I should have agreed with you. You were only asking fifty thousand rupees, but I did not agree. This month I am going to agree."
I said, "But now I am not going to do this business at all, because I know it will happen again the same way -- great bargaining, and your nights will be disturbed and you will disturb my sleep. You do it on your own."

People even start living in imagination.... You watch yourself. Desire keeps you occupied in the nonexistential and goes on destroying that which is present. And the present is the only life. Now and here is the only life. Live it in totality, live it with your whole being. Put your mind aside and jump into the now with a no-mind. And all blessings of God will shower on you.
Enough for today.
The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 8
Chapter #2
Chapter title: The who behind all who's
22 December 1979 am in Buddha Hall

The first question:
Question 1
BELOVED MASTER,
WHAT IS THE GOLDEN RULE IN GAUTAM BUDDHA'S PHILOSOPHY?

Prabhat, once George Bernard Shaw was asked, "Is there a golden rule in life?" He said, "There is only one golden rule: that there are no golden rules."

Life is not mechanical; that's why there is a possibility of religion. If life was mechanical, totally rooted in rules, in cause and effect, in causality, then science would have been enough. And science is not enough.

Science only touches the periphery of life; the innermost core remains untouched. Science only knows the rudimentary; it does not know the highest peak. It knows only the bodily part of existence but not its spiritual center. It is concerned with the circumference and utterly unaware of the center.

Hence there are no golden rules. Life is freedom, it is consciousness, it is bliss, it is love -- but not law.

That's why I am very reluctant to translate Buddha's word 'dhamma' as the "universal law"; it misses something very significant. Dhamma has freedom in it; freedom is the goal of dhamma. And law is absolutely without freedom. Law is like a goods train running on tracks, and dhamma is like a river descending from the peaks of the Himalayas, going zigzag, in absolute freedom, spontaneity, with no fixed routine, unpredictable, towards the ocean.

Life can be lived in rules, but then life becomes superficial. Live life not according to the laws but according to consciousness, awareness. Don't live life according to the mind. Mind has rules and regulations, mind has rituals. Live life from the standpoint of no-mind so that you can bloom into unpredictable flowers.
Buddha has no golden rule in his philosophy.

According to Peter's Principle, the golden rule of life is: Whoever has the gold makes the rules.

And Buddha has no gold -- he can't make the golden rule. And secondly, he has no philosophy either. He has a vision, a DARSHAN, a PHILOSIA, but not philosophy. A philosia simply means the capacity to see. Philosophy is thinking, philosia is seeing. Buddha is not concerned with thinking at all; his whole emphasis is on seeing. See the truth, don't believe in it. Don't think about it. You can go on thinking about it and about it, but you will never arrive at it by thinking about it.
Thinking about God has nothing to do with God. Thinking about light has nothing to do with light. In fact, only a blind man thinks about light. The man who has eyes ENJOYS light, he does not think about it. Have you ever thought about light? You enjoy it, you live it. It is dancing everywhere amongst the trees... you feel it, you experience it. Buddha is not a philosopher, in the Western sense of the word. He is a seer who has seen. And because he has seen he has become free: free of mind. Mind is needed only if you are a thinker.

Plato and Kant and Hegel and Marx and Bertrand Russell, these are philosophers. Lao Tzu, Buddha, Zarathustra, Jesus, Pythagoras, Heraclitus, Eckhart, these are not philosophers; these are seers. These are two totally different currents.
Belong to the seers. Be a seer, because without seeing the truth there is no deliverance.

The second question:
Question 2
BELOVED MASTER,
THE OTHER DAY I UNDERSTOOD THAT YOU DON'T KNOW EACH AND EVERY ONE OF US. BUT ISN'T IT REALLY IMPORTANT THAT YOU KNOW US PERSONALLY? THE MASTER LEADS THE DISCIPLE BY THE HAND TOWARDS THE ABYSS, BUT HOW IS THIS POSSIBLE IF YOU DON'T KNOW US, AND WHO IS WHO?

Prem Jyoti, the personality is false; the master never knows his disciples by their personality. He never knows them personally, he knows them essentially. And there is a great difference between the two. To know you personally is meaningless. What is your personality? -- the accident of your birth, the accident of your upbringing -- as a Hindu, Mohammedan, Christian -- your name, your face, your color, your country. All these things make your personality; and all these things are false, all these things are accidental. I am concerned with the essential core of your being -- and that is not different. It is the same core in everyone. The

original face is the same behind all the faces. It has no color, it has no form, no shape. It has nothing to do with your father and mother, with your country. It has nothing to do with your name. I am concerned with your original face. You come into the world without a name. The name has a certain utility in the world. The master knows you not by your accidents; he knows you by your essence. He does not know you personally; he knows you spiritually.

So I don't know who is who, but I know the "Who" behind all "who's" -- the essential one.

You ask me, "The master leads the disciple by the hand towards the abyss...."

I have got only two hands, and if I go on leading disciples by the hand towards the abyss, then it will take much time to finish all my disciples! That won't do. Jesus may have done it -- he had only twelve disciples -- but how can I manage that?

I have to work out a different way. I cannot take you by your hands. I catch hold of your souls; for that, hands are not needed. And I know YOU perfectly: you as you are before God, in your utter nudity, in your bare essence.

So, Jyoti, don't be worried. If I have to know everybody personally I will have to carry a big book, who is who. And then too it will be very difficult to find out.

The more and more you become meditators, your differences start disappearing, you become more and more alike. Your faces, your eyes, your climate, become more and more similar.

The moment you come close to the abyss to take the ultimate jump, you are no more a separate entity. You are one with the whole. I have to persuade your essence to take

the jump; and that's what I am doing. You need not be worried, you need not become concerned.
Yes, you would like to be known by your personal name, you would like to be recognized. That is nothing but a deep deep ego desire. And that's what I want to shatter completely. So even if I know you, Jyoti, I pretend not to know you!

The third question:
Question 3
BELOVED MASTER,
HOW CAN ONE DROP AN OBSESSION? OR IS IT NOT TO BE DROPPED AT ALL, BUT ENJOYED?

Satya, an obsession simply means a wound in your being, which keeps attracting you again and again, which goes on declaring itself, which wants your attention. You cannot drop it. How can you drop your wound? An obsession is a psychic wound, you cannot drop it. Understand it. Watch it. Pay attention to it. Be meditatively with it. And the more you are meditatively with it, the more it will be healed. Meditation is a healing force. The words 'meditation' and 'medicine' are derived from the same root; they both mean healing forces. Meditation is medicine -- medicine for the soul.
So if you have any obsession, don't call names. The moment you call it an obsession you have already started condemning it. And if you condemn something you cannot watch it -- you are prejudiced against it. How can you watch the enemy? No need to condemn; whatsoever is the case is the case. Just by condemning it you can't change it;

by condemning it you can only repress it. You can avoid seeing it, but the wound will continue; it will become cancerous, it will go on growing inside.
Rather than condemning it, rather than calling it names, giving it labels, watch it -- without any conclusion. See what it is. See as deeply as possible, with great friendliness towards it, with intimacy. It is YOUR obsession, YOUR wound! It says something about you, it is part of your biography. It has arisen in you, just as flowers arise in trees. It is essential because it says something about your past. Go deep into it, with care, with love, and you will be surprised: the more care you show about it, the less it hurts, the less it dominates, the less it forces itself upon you.
Yes, in a certain way, enjoy it! But by enjoying I don't mean become identified with it. If you become identified with it you go insane. If you condemn it, if you repress it, you go insane again. Avoid both the extremes. Keep yourself exactly in the middle, neither condemning nor identifying. Just be a pure witness.
And slowly slowly, it will be healed. Slowly slowly, it will lose all its poison. Slowly slowly, you will see it changing into a positive energy rather than a negative force. It will become helpful. Each obsession is a knot in your being. Once it is opened, great energy is released.
And everybody is carrying obsessions; our whole society is obsessive. A few obsessions are accepted by the people; then you don't call them obsessions. If they are not accepted, then they become obsessions. In one society one thing is thought to be obsessive, in another society it is not obsessive. It may be even respected, may be thought saintly, holy.

For a Jaina monk, to take a bath is an obsession. People who are taking baths every day once or twice are obsessive; they are too much concerned about their body, body-oriented. The Jaina monk condemns them. The Jaina monk does not take a bath. Jaina monks used to come to see me. It was really a difficult time for me -- they stink! But they think they are doing great austerity.

They don't clean their teeth either -- that too is an obsession. Morning, evening and before you go to bed... and a few people will clean their teeth after each meal, so four, five, six times a day. This IS obsession! You are madly concerned about your teeth. And all arguments that you can give are pointless to them because Jaina monks will say, "Look at the animals. Without any cleansing, without any toothpaste, without any toothbrush, their teeth are absolutely clean. Nature takes care, there is no need to worry about it. You are obsessed."

According to them, you are too much concerned about your body odor, about your breath, about your teeth. And this is materialism, and they are spiritual people! But except a Jaina, nobody will think that these are obsessive things.

Remember one thing: that obsessions differ from society to society, from country to country, from religion to religion. What is really obsession? Anything that becomes a dominating force upon you, that dominates you, that becomes master of your being. Anything that reduces you into a slave, that's my definition of an obsession.

Watch it, meditate. Be silently with it, because that is how you will become master again. Silence makes you a master of everything. Don't fight, and don't become identified. If

you become identified you are mad. If you fight you are mad from the other extreme.

The director of a well-known mental hospital decided to resign his post after many years of service. This decision brought the local press out for an interview.
"Tell us, Doctor, what are your plans? Will you resume private practice?"
"Well, I have given it some thought," replied the doctor. "I may go back into private practice, but on the other hand I may become a tea-kettle."

Now, living with mad people for so long, with so many tea-kettles, he has also become impressed with the idea.
If you want to become ANYTHING in your life, that is obsession. It is not a question only of becoming a tea-kettle: if you want to become the president of a country or the prime minister, it is the same -- other names for becoming tea-kettles! There are people who are obsessed with the idea that they will not take any rest unless they become the president. And then they are at a loss when they become the president; they don't know what to do now because all that they know is how to become the president. Their whole life they have devoted to a single purpose: how to become the president. Now they have become the president and they are certainly at a loss; they don't know what to do.
There are people who want to become rich; they become rich. If you persist you can fulfill any kind of stupidity. Man has immense powers. Yes, you can become a tea-kettle if you persist; nobody can prevent you. But then?

Then you are suddenly empty. Then suddenly you find yourself without any goal, lost.
All obsessive people, when their obsessions are fulfilled, will feel lost. If you become identified with an obsession, sooner or later you will feel lost. If it is fulfilled you will be the loser; if it is not fulfilled, certainly you are the loser.
The other way is to repress it, to throw it into the basement of your being, somewhere deep in the unconsciousness, so you don't come across it. But it goes on growing there, and it goes on affecting you and your behavior; it goes on pulling your strings from the back. And the enemy is more powerful when it is hidden. You don't see it, but still you have to follow its dictates -- it becomes a dictator.
Both extremes, Satya, have to be avoided. That's what Buddha also would have suggested: Be exactly in the middle, watchful, choicelessly watchful. Neither choose to be identified nor choose to be repressive. Just see. It is a fact of your psychic life, whatsoever it is. Don't say good, bad, XYZ -- whatsoever it is, watch it. And see the tremendous power of watchfulness: how it transforms wounds into flowers, how it releases entangled energy knots into great forces, positive forces, nourishing forces.

The fourth question:
Question 4
BELOVED MASTER,
WILL YOU PLEASE EXPLAIN THE TIME-LAPSE BETWEEN THE CLOCKS IN THE MAIN OFFICE AND THE FRONT GATE RECEPTION?

Anand Narayano, have you heard about the famous

Segal's law? It says: A man with one watch knows what time it is. A man with two watches is never sure.
Watches have no reason to agree with each other; they are not conformist. Watches are revolutionaries! And what are you talking about? You think you have a problem? You should ask me!
I have five clocks in my room, and the whole day I am working out, figuring out, what time it is -- and of course I am never right!

The fifth question:
Question 5
BELOVED MASTER,
SINCE YOU SPOKE ABOUT THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A DISCIPLE AND A DEVOTEE, I KEEP FEELING THAT I AM A LOUSY DEVOTEE, YET AT THE SAME TIME IT SEEMS THAT I HAVE NEVER BEEN SO DEVOTED AND IN LOVE WITH YOU AS NOW. COULD YOU PLEASE SAY MORE ABOUT BEING A DEVOTEE?

Heeren, even to be a lousy devotee is something tremendously important. It is better than to be a very keen student. It is better than to be a very attentive disciple. Even to be a lousy devotee is better than anything else. And as the devotion will grow the lousiness will disappear, because love cannot allow lousiness for long. Love is fire; it burns all that is nonessential, all that is rubbish.
I know, Heeren, it is happening, and I am immensely pleased with you. The lousiness will go. When the sun has started rising in the east, how long can the darkness of the

night remain? It is already disappearing. In fact, that's why you have become aware of it.
You become aware of a few things only when they start leaving you, because when they are there you will not become aware of them; they have been always there. If you are becoming aware of your lousiness, that simply shows it is disappearing, it is leaving, it is going. Some change is happening; that's why you have become aware of it.
It is said that many people become aware that they were alive only when they are dead. When they are dying, suddenly the idea arises in their mind, "Gosh! So I was alive!" Otherwise it was impossible for them to know that they were alive; some background, some contrast is needed. Death becomes the contrast.
You are becoming aware of some lousiness; it is a good indication. Lousiness is on the go -- say goodbye to it. And once love enters in the heart, lousiness cannot reside there; it is impossible. Love is never lousy. They can't exist together. They are just like light and darkness.

The sixth question:
Question 6
BELOVED MASTER,
IS IT TRUE THAT SOME PEOPLE WAKE UP AND FIND THEMSELVES FAMOUS?

Darshan, yes, it is true. Some people wake up and find themselves famous; others wake up and find themselves late for the morning discourse.

The seventh question:

Question 7
BELOVED MASTER,
MY PREVIOUS LIFE WITH MY MOTHER, FATHER, SISTER AND BROTHER WAS A PERIOD FILLED WITH UNHAPPINESS. WHY DID I CHOOSE TO BE BORN INTO THIS FAMILY?

Prem Joshua, you have not chosen, because you died unconsciously. How can you choose? If YOU had chosen, you certainly would not have chosen such a family. It was unconscious. You moved into the womb robotlike. That's how it happens.

Ordinarily whenever a man dies -- except the buddhas -- he dies in unconsciousness. He lives in unconsciousness, how can he die in consciousness? Death is the culmination of your whole life. If you have lived in unconsciousness, you will die in unconsciousness. It is the condensed moment; your whole life becomes condensed.

If you have lived in unconsciousness, your death is going to be of tremendously condensed unconsciousness. You will die unconscious; then you don't choose. How can you choose?

But millions of stupid people are making love all over the world; millions of wombs are ready to receive you. They are also as unconscious as you are. They don't know why they are making love. They don't know why a certain man is with a certain woman. They don't know what is happening. Something takes a grip, something drives them towards certain acts. They are making love not out of awareness, they are making love out of unawareness. And if a couple has exactly the same kind of unawareness as

you have, then immediately you will enter into that womb. That fits with you.
You say, "My previous life with my mother, father, sister and brother was a period filled with unhappiness."
You must have deserved them! We only get that which we deserve. It is fair too; it is not unjust.
Now you are asking, "Why did I choose to be born into this family?"
You could not have done otherwise. And beware! If you don't become alert you will do the same again. You have done it many times; this is not for the first time. You have not chosen the womb, it is not your choice at all.

A wealthy widower and his daughter were traveling to Europe on the S.S. UNITED STATES. The girl fell overboard. Berman, aged seventy-three, hit the water and saved her. After the two were brought back aboard the ship, the widower threw his arms around Berman.
"You saved my daughter's life!" he exclaimed. "I am a rich man. I will give you anything. Ask me for whatever you want!"
"Just answer me one question," said Berman. "Who pushed me?"

It is not your choice. Your whole life must have pushed you into a certain womb. You can choose only when you are aware, and to die in awareness is the greatest experience of life. There is nothing more ecstatic than that.
In life, three things are the most important: birth, love and death. Birth has already happened; now nothing can be done about it. Something can be done about love: you can

become a conscious lover, and by becoming a conscious lover you will be preparing for a conscious death, because love and death are very similar. In love also you die in a certain way; your ego dies.

The first experience of death is love. And once you have known the beauty of dying in love you will not be afraid of death at all. In fact, you will wait and you will welcome it when it comes. You will sing a song when it comes. You will dance. Death will not be your enemy but a friend, a great friend, because you knew a small death in love and it was so beautiful. Now it is a big death; it is bound to be a thousandfold more beautiful.

Love prepares a man to die -- but only conscious love, because only in conscious love you die; in unconscious love you don't die. Unconscious lovers quarrel continuously, fight. They try to dominate each other. Conscious lovers surrender. In fact, surrender is not to each other; surrender is to the god of love. Both the lovers surrender to some unknown energy in which they dissolve their egos, and they experience small deaths. Each time, each orgasm brings a deeper death. As love deepens, death deepens, and they become prepared for the ultimate death. The day the final death comes is a day of rejoicing. They go dancing into death, singing, their hearts full of the thrill of the adventure.

Then they can choose. Then they can move into a certain womb of their own choice. Now they have eyes -- where to go, from what door to enter.

Love is the beginning of consciousness. Death gives you the great experience -- but still only ninety-nine percent, one percent is still left. That one percent is fulfilled by

conscious birth. A conscious birth is a hundred percent death. The ego simply disappears, totally disappears. Love is one percent death, death is ninety-nine percent death, birth is a hundred percent death. And once you are born consciously, then there is no more love, no more death, no more birth.
This is the goal of all the buddhas: to be free from the wheel of life and death.

The eighth question:
Question 8
BELOVED MASTER,
I HAVE BEEN DOING MEDITATION FOR ALMOST FORTY YEARS, BUT I AM AS FAR AWAY FROM THE GOAL OF GOD-REALIZATION AS EVER. WHAT SHOULD I DO?

Surendranath, to make God a goal is to start in a wrong direction. God is not a goal; if you think in terms of goals God becomes your desire, an object of desire. Then God-realization is nothing but the ultimate glorification of the ego. Hence you have been missing.
I don't know what kind of meditation you have been doing for forty years; it must be some wrong kind. It can't be right mindfulness -- what Buddha talks about -- it must be some wrong mindfulness. You must be doing some kind of concentration and thinking that this is meditation.
This is one of the greatest fallacies, very much prevalent in the so-called religious circles of the world, particularly in India. Concentration is thought to be meditation -- and concentration is not meditation; it is just the opposite of

meditation. Concentration is a mind phenomenon. To concentrate upon something means you are focusing your mind on something. It has its own benefits, but those benefits are scientific, not religious. In science, concentration is needed; concentration is a scientific method.

And your schools, colleges, universities, all prepare you for concentration because their preparation is for scientific goals, not for religious experience. Concentration means excluding everything out of the mind except one thing on which you are focusing.

Meditation simply means not focusing on anything at all, not even on God -- not focusing at all. Hence it does not exclude anything, it includes all. In meditation you relax, in concentration you become tense. In meditation you are in a deep rest, just alert about whatsoever is happening. A bird starts singing in the woods, a dog barks in the neighborhood, a child starts crying; the traffic noise on the road, delicious smells floating in the air from the kitchen... all this, everything that is present, that surrounds you -- all your five senses are alert, receiving.

Concentration can be disturbed because you are trying to focus on one thing; anything can disturb it. You are repeating "Rama, Rama, Rama," and a dog starts barking. Now you will be angry at the dog. The dog will look like the enemy who always disturbs you; whenever you meditate it starts barking. Must be an agent of the Devil! Or the child starts crying or the wife starts shouting at the kids, or something or other... and thousands of things are going on all around. You cannot stop the whole world because you are doing a foolish repetition: "Rama, Rama, Rama."

You cannot stop the whole world for this. The world will continue.
And who knows? The dog may also be doing his concentration in his own way. Barking may be his Transcendental Meditation! They enjoy barking so much and they feel so exhilarated. Have you observed dogs when they bark, why they bark? Either they bark at the policeman or the postman or the sannyasin. They are against uniforms -- a very revolutionary approach! Any uniform... and the dog starts barking. He is never at ease with the uniform; he is always against, suspicious. Or they start barking at the moon. Maybe that is their way of appreciating beauty. And who are you to prevent them? They have as much right to bark as you have.

I have heard:
In an exhibition in Paris all kinds of dogs were exhibited. A couple of Russian dogs had also come and they were talking to the French dogs. The French dog said, "How are things in Russia?"
They said, "Things are beautiful, just beautiful! You can't imagine how beautiful things are. The food is perfect, medical care is perfect; everything that dogs have always imagined is fulfilled. We have attained utopia."
The French dogs felt very jealous, but when the time came for the Russian dogs to leave they asked the French dogs, "Can we renounce our Russian citizenship? Can we stay in France?"
The French dog said, "But why? You are enjoying utopia. Why should you want to stay here? For what?"

They said, "For only one reason: once in a while we want to bark, but barking is not allowed there. No freedom of speech! And once in a while we would like to bark, and we are ready to risk everything for it."

The dog is barking and you are chanting a mantra. He is not disturbing you -- he is doing HIS thing. But you will feel disturbed, not because of his barking but because of your effort to remain focused on one thing. It is because of your effort to focus that you feel distracted.

A meditator is never disturbed, is never distracted. You cannot distract him because he starts watching the distraction too. He is just a watcher; he watches everything, distractions included. How can you distract him? He transforms even distractions, disturbances, into deep silence.

Surendranath, my feeling is you must have been doing some kind of concentration; otherwise... forty years is a long time! You must have followed some stupid pundit, some scholar. You may yourself have become a scholar. Forty years is a long time. You may have read the YOGA SUTRAS of Patanjali and you may have read other books on meditation -- and they all talk about concentration. Buddha is the first person in the history of humanity who has not talked about concentration but about meditation. And he changed the whole phenomenon of meditation; he gave it a totally new color, a new form, a new life.

You must be reading people who have not experienced anything but who go on writing.

Murphy's advice will be helpful to you. Murphy says: When all else fails, read the instructions.

I think for forty years you have been doing meditation without reading the instructions. Try to understand what right mindfulness is.

In India people go on doing all kinds of things. They concentrate, they chant mantras, they fast, they torture their bodies, and they hope that through all these masochistic practices they will realize God. As if God is a sadist! As if God loves you to torture yourself! As if he demands that the more you torture yourself, the more worthy you become. God is not a sadist; you need not be a masochist.

I have come across people who think that without long fasting there is no possibility of meditation. Now, fasting has nothing to do with meditation. Fasting will only make you obsessed with food. And there are people who think celibacy will help them into meditation. Meditation brings a kind of celibacy, but not vice versa. A celibacy without meditation is nothing but sexual repression. And your mind will become more and more sexual, so whenever you sit to meditate your mind will become full of fantasies, sexual fantasies.

These two things have been the greatest problems for the so-called meditators: fasting and celibacy. They think these two things are going to help -- they are the greatest disturbances!

Eat in right proportions. Buddha calls it "the middle way": neither too much nor too little. He is against fasting, and he knows it through hard experience. For six years he fasted and could not attain to anything. So when he says, "Be in

the middle," he means it. About celibacy also: don't enforce it upon yourself. It is a by-product of meditation, hence it cannot be enforced before meditation. Be in the middle there too, neither too much indulgence nor too much renunciation. Just keep a balance. A balanced person will be more healthy, at ease, at home. And when you are at home, meditation is easier.
What then is meditation? Just sitting silently doing nothing, witnessing whatsoever is happening all around; just watching it with no prejudice, no conclusion, no idea what is wrong and what is right.
Surendranath, start from ABC. Forget all those forty years. It is good that you have survived those forty years.

A peddler told a friend that the food for his horse was using up all his profits. The friend suggested that he slowly slowly, reduce the horse's diet by one straw at a time. Sometime later he ran into his friend again.
"So, Abe, how are things?"
"Terrible!" exclaimed Abe. "I got the horse down to where he was only eating one straw a day and then suddenly he died!"

Surendranath, you have survived -- good! God is gracious. Otherwise, forty years of the wrong kind of meditation, austerities, can kill anybody. You are a strong man -- you have survived.
And if you have come here, please put aside your whole knowledge. It has not worked, now don't let it disturb you. Now put it aside completely. Start afresh with me. Still there is hope, there is always hope.

My meditation is simple; it does not require any complex practices. It is very simple. It is singing, it is dancing. It is sitting silently. It is being at ease with existence. It is accepting existence as your home.
Forget about God-realization. By your thinking you will never realize God. You simply enjoy life, celebrate life. And one day, when the celebration reaches to its peak, suddenly the curtain disappears from your eyes and the whole existence is nothing but divine. There is no God, but the whole existence is full of godliness. That is God-realization, that is nirvana.

The ninth question:
Question 9
Beloved Master,
ANY MARKS FOR CHOICELESS UNAWARENESS?

Anand Buddha, even if you are aware of that, that will do. Are you aware of choiceless unawareness? That will destroy that choiceless unawareness. Make it an object of awareness and it will disappear, evaporate.
And no marks can be given for it, because if marks have to be given for it then everybody will succeed in getting marks -- everybody, because everybody is living it.

A huge bully sauntered into the dimly lit saloon. "Is there anybody here called Kilroy?" he snarled. Nobody answered. Again he sneered, "Is there anybody here called Kilroy?"
There was a moment of silence and then a little Irishman stepped forward. "I am Kilroy," he said.

The tough guy picked him up and threw him across the bar. Then he punched him in the jaw, kicked him, slapped him around and walked out.
About fifteen minutes later the little fellow came to. "Boy, didn't I fool him," he said. "I ain't Kilroy!"

A pretty young girl stretched out on the psychiatrist's couch. "I just can't help myself, Doctor. No matter how hard I try to resist, I bring five or six men with me into my bedroom every night. Last night there were ten. I just feel so miserable, I don't know what to do."
In understanding tones the doctor rumbled, "Yes, I know, I know, my dear."
"Ah!" the surprised girl exclaimed. "Were you there last night too?"

People are living in unconsciousness, doing all kinds of things in unconsciousness. Everybody is an unconscious robot. We are just pretending that we are conscious; we are not conscious.
The moment you become conscious, all unconscious actions disappear from your life. Your life starts moving in a new dimension. Your each act comes out of inner clarity; your each response is virtuous, is virtue. To live unconsciously is to live in sin; to live consciously is to be virtuous, is to be religious. And to live in total awareness is to be a buddha, is to be a christ.
It will be good if we start calling Christ "Joshua the Buddha." His real name was Joshua; from Joshua has come Jesus. And 'christ' has become ugly because of the Christian church; the word has lost its beauty. It will be

good if we change, if we start calling him Joshua the Buddha -- because they are all buddhas, they are all awakened people. They live through inner light. You only grope in inner darkness.
Anand Buddha, I have given you the name Buddha. If you feel you are living in choiceless unawareness, make it a point to be aware of it.

A thief asked a great Buddhist mystic, Nagarjuna, "Can I meditate and still remain a thief?"
Nagarjuna said, "Yes. Just do one thing: while you are stealing remain alert, aware, conscious."
The thief was very happy. He said, "You are the right master! I have gone to many people, and they all say, 'First stop stealing, then you can be a meditator.'"
Nagarjuna said, "Those are not masters -- they must be ex-thieves. I am a master. I am concerned with meditation, not with other things. What you do is YOUR business; whether you steal or donate, that is your business. My business is to tell you to be alert, and do whatsoever you want to do."
Of course the thief was very happy -- happy because now he could have both worlds.
But after fifteen days he came back, fell at the feet of Nagarjuna, and he said, "You are a very sly fellow! You destroyed my whole profession -- because if I try to be alert I cannot steal; my hands simply won't move. Last night I entered into the king's palace; this was such an opportunity that it happens only once in a lifetime. It was very difficult to enter -- my whole life I have tried -- but it must be because of your blessings: last light I entered, and all the guards were fast asleep. I opened the treasure and such

precious diamonds I have never seen in my life! I could have become the richest man, and everything was within my grasp, but you were standing between me and the treasure. You were telling me, 'Be aware!' You were shouting at me, 'Be aware!' And if I tried awareness, those precious stones looked just like stones, not worth bothering about. If I forgot about awareness, they were again precious stones, tremendously valuable.
"It changed many times. I became aware and they were ordinary stones; I became unaware and they were great riches. But finally YOU were victorious. I have come back to you. Now initiate me into sannyas."

Nagarjuna must have been a man like me; otherwise, ordinary teachers can't accept a thief.
Sometimes a drunkard comes to me and he says, "I am a drunkard. Can I also be a sannyasin?"
I say, "Don't be bothered about small things. Sannyas will do! You first be a sannyasin, then we will see."
He seems to be puzzled, he can't understand. But once he becomes a sannyasin, things start changing. Sooner or later he comes and reports that "You did the trick. I cannot drink anymore; it has become more and more impossible. It is so repulsive, disgusting."
One drunkard told me -- he has become a sannyasin just a few months ago -- he said, "It has become so difficult. Now I know the strategy and the trick behind these orange clothes, because when I go to the pub people start touching my feet! They say, 'Swamiji, this is a pub! You must have come thinking it is some other place.' And I say, 'Yes -- is this a pub?' And I have to turn back! I can't even go in." He

was really angry at me; he said, "I can't even go to the movie, because standing in the queue people start touching my feet, and they say, 'Swamiji, what are you doing here?' And I have to escape!"
Just a small bit of awareness and it will affect your whole life. Just a small bit of awareness and your total life as you have lived up to now will be shattered, will collapse, and a new life will start arising around that small center of awareness.

The tenth question:
Question 10
BELOVED MASTER,
I JUST HAD A GENERAL ANESTHETIC. THE SPACE WAS SO FAMILIAR -- LIKE BEING IN LECTURE OR DARSHAN. IS THIS WHAT YOU ARE DOING -- ANESTHETIZING US SO THAT YOU CAN OPERATE?

Deva Kanta, anesthesia I don't use, but I have my own ways of making you unconscious so that I can operate.
In the first place, you are already unconscious enough; just a little bit of flickering consciousness sometimes you have. I have to prevent that! No anesthesia is needed for that.

A man who had just undergone a very complicated operation kept complaining about a bump on his head and a terrible headache. Since his operation had been an intestinal one, there was no earthly reason why he should be complaining of a headache. Finally his nurse, fearing that the man might be suffering from some postoperative shock, spoke to the doctor about it.

"Don't worry about a thing, nurse," the doctor assured her. "He really does have a bump on his head. About halfway through the operation we ran out of anesthetic."

And I don't have any anesthesia with me so I go on using the same method -- just a good hammering on the head! Yes, for a few days you will have a little headache and a bump! You are not conscious, so you don't need anesthesia -- just a little hammering and you fall flat! Then any operation can be done on you. And this operation is not physical; this surgery is spiritual. Some weeds from your spirit have to be taken out, uprooted. And that's what is happening in the morning discourse, in the evening darshan.

So I can perfectly understand, Deva Kanta, your experience: that in anesthesia you felt the same space, "like being in lecture or darshan."

Being here with me you lose track of your ego. Being here with me you lose track of your mind. You enter a vast space, a great freedom, a tremendous silence, a deep ecstasy; hence only those who are in deep love with me will be benefited. Those who come as outsiders, spectators, yes, they will gather a few words and they will think they have understood the point. They have not understood the point. Unless you start feeling this space that I am, you have not understood -- you cannot.

My message is not in the words that I use but in the silence from where those words come. My message is not verbal, philosophical. It is a communion, a deep communion of the hearts, a meeting, a merger, an orgasmic experience. It is spiritual orgasm.

The last question:
Question 11
BELOVED MASTER,
I HAVE LIVED MY WHOLE LIFE AS A CELIBATE, BUT I STILL SUFFER FROM BAD SEXUAL THOUGHTS. WHY?

Ravishankar, if you had not suffered, that would have been a miracle! If you have tried to live the life of a celibate, what else can you expect?
And why do you call sexual thoughts bad? They are neutral, neither good nor bad. Sexual thoughts are sexual thoughts. Why bring these moral values in? Because of these moral values you remain in a constant fight, in an inner war, a civil war. You go on fighting with your own energy -- the sexual energy -- and that is the only energy you have. There is no other energy; it is the only energy, which has to be transformed into spirituality. This same sexual energy, which you are calling bad, is going to become a great perfume in you.
But trying to live a celibate life without meditation is dangerous. It keeps you obsessed. It keeps you continuously in sexual fantasies. And then naturally you call it bad, because twenty-four hours living with the same ideas is a constant torture.

"Police?" came the voice on the phone. "I want to report a burglar trapped in an old maid's bedroom!"
After ascertaining the address, the police sergeant asked who was calling.

"This," cried the frantic voice, "is the burglar!"

After rushing into a drugstore, the nervous young man was obviously embarrassed when a prim, middle-aged woman asked if she could serve him.
"No-no," he stammered, "I would rather see the druggist."
"I am the druggist," she responded cheerfully. "What can I do for you?"
"Oh... well, uh, it is nothing important," he said, and turned to leave.
"Young man," said the woman, "my sister and I have been running this drugstore for nearly thirty years. There is nothing you can tell us that will embarrass us."
"Well, alright," he said. "I have this awful sexual hunger that nothing will appease. No matter how many times I make love, I still want to make love again. Is there anything you can give me for it?"
"Just a moment," said the little lady. "I will have to discuss this with my sister."
A few minutes later she returned. "The best we can offer," she said, "is two hundred dollars a week and a half-interest in the business."

Enough for today.
The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 8
Chapter #3
Chapter title: Freedom has to be earned
23 December 1979 am in Buddha Hall

WHILE A MAN DESIRES A WOMAN,
HIS MIND IS BOUND
AS CLOSELY AS A CALF TO ITS MOTHER.

AS YOU WOULD PLUCK AN AUTUMN LILY,
PLUCK THE ARROW OF DESIRE.

FOR HE WHO IS AWAKE
HAS SHOWN YOU THE WAY OF PEACE.
GIVE YOURSELF TO THE JOURNEY.

"HERE SHALL I MAKE MY DWELLING,
IN THE SUMMER AND THE WINTER,
AND IN THE RAINY SEASON."
SO THE FOOL MAKES HIS PLANS,
SPARING NOT A THOUGHT FOR HIS DEATH.

DEATH OVERTAKES THE MAN
WHO, GIDDY AND DISTRACTED BY THE WORLD,
CARES ONLY FOR HIS FLOCKS AND HIS
CHILDREN.
DEATH FETCHES HIM AWAY
AS A FLOOD CARRIES OFF A SLEEPING VILLAGE.

HIS FAMILY CANNOT SAVE HIM,
NOT HIS FATHER NOR HIS SONS.

KNOW THIS.
SEEK WISDOM, AND PURITY.
QUICKLY CLEAR THE WAY.

Niravo asked just the other day, "Is Jesus Christ coming back soon to earth as he had promised?" Such nonsense questions go on in people's minds, and not only in the minds of ordinary, common people; but the so-called religious, theological, philosophical intelligentsia too keeps itself involved in such absurdities.

Christ is not a person, it is an experience. Jesus had it, you can have it. Christ is synonymous with Buddha. What we call in the East the buddha, the awakened, the West has called the christ, the crowned one. Jesus Christ cannot come back, but you can become christ any moment. Christ is already hidden in you as a seed; you are all bodhisattvas, buddhas in essence, in seed. Just a little effort, a little understanding and you can bloom, and your fragrance can be released. Jesus bloomed, Buddha bloomed, so can you. Why wait for Jesus Christ's coming? That is avoiding the fundamental quest. Why not become one? What is the point of waiting for someone else to come and deliver you, and how can anybody else deliver you?

The deliverance that will come from somebody else will not be much of a deliverance. Freedom has to be earned, it cannot be given; if it is given, it can be taken away. If it is given it is not yours, it is not your growth. And anything that is given to you remains only an accumulation on the outside. It never becomes part of your interiority.

Hence Buddha says:

KNOW THIS.
SEEK WISDOM, AND PURITY.
QUICKLY CLEAR THE WAY.

Don't waste time in unnecessary things.
Niravo, are you cuckoo or something? Why wait for Jesus Christ? What wrong has he done to you? Enough is enough. The poor man came once and you crucified him; now are you hankering to crucify him again or what?

The pope came before the gathering of cardinals. Rumors had spread as to the reason for this extraordinary meeting. "Beloved cardinals," the pope began. "I have called this special session to announce incredible news. It is, however, good news AND bad news. As to the good: I have personally received a phone call from the Lord Jesus Christ. He has arrived on earth and has returned to fulfill his word."
The cardinals cheered and applauded.
"The bad news," the pope continued, "is that he called from 17 Koregaon Park, Poona, India."

Why are you waiting for Jesus Christ? He is already here, he has always been here in the awakened ones. And the world has never missed the awakened ones. Yes, few and far between they have been, but it is because of them the earth has still significance. It is because of them the earth is not yet dead. It is because of those few flowers that the earth has still the perfume of the beyond, that the earth has salt. Otherwise the crowds are dead. If you look at the crowds the earth is a big cemetery.
Only these few people -- a Zarathustra, a Jesus, a Lao Tzu, a Buddha, a Kabir, a Nanak... these people who can be counted on the fingers keep the flame burning. But you can become the flame any moment, your heart is ready to burst

into flame. But rather than looking inwards, you go on looking outwards, waiting for Jesus Christ. Rather than searching inwards, you go on searching in the scriptures, in mere words. Rather than transforming the state in which you are, you go on hoping that some miracle will happen and everything will be good.
These hopes are not going to help you, these hopes are deceptive, dangerous, suicidal.
In the first sutra, Buddha says:

WHILE A MAN DESIRES A WOMAN,
HIS MIND IS BOUND
AS CLOSELY AS A CALF TO ITS MOTHER.

One thing very significant has to be understood before we enter into this sutra. In Sanskrit we use the word KAMA both for desire as such, and for sexual desire. The same word is used for both, and there is a reason why the same word is used for both.
To desire a woman or a man, or desire at all, both are expressed by the same word, kama. The reason is very psychological, profound. Sanskrit is one of the most profound languages of the earth, very deliberately evolved. That is exactly the meaning of the word 'sanskrit'; SANSKRIT means consciously refined, consciously evolved.
In India two languages have existed in the past. One was called Prakrit -- PRAKRIT means the natural, unevolved, raw, crude, used by the people -- and the other was called Sanskrit. Sanskrit means refined, cultured, evolved, deliberate. That was used only by the intelligentsia, by the

brahmins. Hence Sanskrit has many significant clues. It is rooted in great insights.
For example, this same word being used for both desire as such, and for sexual desire, has a tremendously important message in it. All desire is basically sexual desire; that is the message in it. Desire as such has the flavor of sexuality in it, and you can observe it. This understanding is based, rooted in great observation. A man who is mad after money -- watch his behavior, his being, look into his eyes, and you will be surprised that he loves money in the same way somebody else loves a woman or a man.

Now psychologists have performed a few experiments. They have made a few cards, one hundred cards, ordinary playing cards. Just two or three cards are there, inside the whole pack, of naked women. They give you the whole pack, shuffled in such a way that the psychologist himself is not aware where the cards are which contain the pictures of naked women. But he goes on watching the eyes of the person who is looking at the cards, who goes on looking at cards. When he comes to a naked woman suddenly his eyes change. His pupils become big; that is automatic. He is not aware what is happening, but immediately his pupils become so big, they want to take the naked woman in as much as possible. They open all the doors.
The same happens with people who are mad after money, money maniacs. Seeing a hundred-rupee note their pupils become immediately big. They may not be interested in a woman -- and women are aware of it, hence so many ornaments, beautiful saris and all kinds of arrangements for these foolish people. They may not look at the face of the

woman but they will be immediately interested in her necklace. They may be immediately interested in her earrings, her hair clip; if it has a diamond, a big diamond, they become interested in the diamond, and via the diamond they become interested in the woman.

Their sexuality has become perverted, it has become focused on money. And so is the case with power-hungry people, those who are after political power, those who want to become presidents and prime ministers and governors. Just seeing the chair of the prime minister is enough and their whole being is in a state of ecstasy, in a state of orgasmic joy. Just seeing is enough. That is their goal.

Buddha is right to use the same word for both. Hence the misunderstanding in translation. The translator has thought that he is talking about women, so he translated kama as: WHILE A MAN DESIRES A WOMAN, HIS MIND IS BOUND AS CLOSELY AS A CALF TO ITS MOTHER.

In fact, Buddha does not mention women. What he is trying to say is: WHILE A MAN desires, HIS MIND IS BOUND AS CLOSELY AS A CALF TO ITS MOTHER. Any desire is a bondage.

Desire AS SUCH is a bondage, because when you desire, you become dependent on the other, on the desired object. Whether it is a woman, money, a man, power, prestige, it does not matter -- it is desire, and desire brings bondage. Why?

It is simple. When you desire something, your joy depends on that something. If it is taken away, you are miserable; if it is given to you, you are happy, but only for the moment. That too has to be understood. Whenever your desire is fulfilled it is only for the moment that you feel joy. It is

fleeting, because once you have got it, again the mind starts desiring for more, for something else. Mind exists in desiring; hence mind can never leave you without desire. If you are without desire mind dies immediately. That's the whole secret of meditation.

Create desirelessness and mind is gone, gone forever, never to return back. If desire is there, mind will come. Desire is the root from where the mind comes in. Desire is its nourishment, its food, its very life, its breath. So mind cannot leave you without desire. If you desire God -- even God -- and you meet God, it will be only for a moment that you will be ecstatic. Then suddenly the mind will say, "Now what? Now this goal is achieved. Project future goals. You are finished with God, now there is no more in it."

Desire fulfilled only for a moment gives you a relief, and that relief has also to be understood. In the moment of a fulfilled desire there is relief. There is relief because in that small moment you are desireless. Desirelessness is joy. When one desire is fulfilled and before the mind projects another desire, between the two there is a small interval when there is no desire. That moment is of meditation. That's how meditation has been discovered. It has not been speculated upon, it is not given by philosophers, by great thinkers. It is a simple observation, a scientific observation, that whenever desire is not there.... You wanted a beautiful house and you have got it. When you open the door of the new house, for a moment you are transported into another world, for a moment there is no desire. A long, long-cherished desire has been fulfilled. It will take a little time for the mind....

Mind needs time, remember. Mind cannot function without time; hence mind creates time. Without time there is no space for the mind to function. Mind will take a little time. In fact, mind is shocked. It was not hoping that the desire was going to be fulfilled. The goal was so far away, the house was so big, and it was almost impossible, but now that it is fulfilled mind is in shock. The mind is collecting itself again while you are opening the door of the new house, and you enter in the new house and a deep joy arises in you. You say, "Aha!" The time that passes while you say "Aha!" is enough, and mind has projected another desire. The mind says, "The house is beautiful, but where is the swimming pool? The house is beautiful, but the garden is not looked after." You will have to create a new garden, a beautiful swimming pool, and again the whole process sets in, again you are in the wheel of the mind. But for a moment when there was no desire, there was joy. Joy is always when there is no desire. Whenever there is desire, joy disappears. Desire keeps you a prisoner.

Hence Buddha says: WHILE A MAN DESIRES HIS MIND IS BOUND -- and there is not much difference between one desire and another desire. So mind is not much worried what you desire. Mind's worry is only one: that you MUST desire. Desire anything! You can start collecting postal stamps, that will do -- but desire. Now, postal stamps are useless, but there are many people who go on collecting them.

I know one man who collects cigarette boxes. He has such a collection... he is ready to purchase at any cost. If a new cigarette packet can be given to him, he is ready.... He

collects BIDI labels, and he goes on showing people with such great joy, as if he has conquered the world.
I know another man who goes on writing in books, "Rama, Rama, Rama." For years he has been doing it -- almost sixty years -- because now he is eighty years old. His whole house is full of books in which is written only one word, "Rama," and he goes on showing people and bragging: "Look how many millions of times I have written 'Rama'."
When I was a guest in his house, he showed me too. I said. "You must be a fool. You wasted all these books. You should have given these books to children, poor children. They would have used them in a far better way. You have simply wasted ink, paper, your time, your life. And moreover, whenever you will come across Rama, he will hit you on your head, because you must be continuously harassing him: 'Rama, Rama, Rama'. Day in, day out you go on harassing him. Avoid him; if you see Rama anywhere, escape." I asked him, "Do you know why he always carries a bow with him? It is for devotees like you. He is always ready with his bow and arrow, so you cannot escape."
He was shocked. He said, "What are you saying? Are you joking? I have been doing a religious act. Everybody has praised it, great saints have come and praised it."
I said, "Those people must have been fools just like you."
Mind can desire anything. Now, he is not collecting money, but more and more names of Rama.... It is the same game.

A man went to see his lawyer about getting a divorce. "How much do you charge for handling a case like mine?" he asked.

"I really don't like to handle divorce cases," replied his attorney. "Why do you want to get a divorce?"
"Because I want to marry my wife's sister."
"Now, a case like that could get pretty messy. It might cost you as much as a thousand dollars. Why don't you go home and think it over."
So the man went home, and the next day he called his lawyer. "I have talked the whole thing over with my best friend," he said. "I have decided not to get a divorce after all."
"That's just fine," said his lawyer. "Tell me, what did your friend say that made you change your mind?"
"Well, he tells me he has been out with my wife and her sister, too, and there ain't a nickel's worth of difference between them."

Every desire is the same. The objects differ, but not the quality of desiring. You desire money, somebody else desires God; you desire power, somebody else desires paradise. It is all the same. Hence there are no religious desires, remember. Nondesiring is religious. Desiring is worldly, desire is the world. Nondesire is transcendence. But when one is under the impact of a desire, the impact is hypnotic. Every desire hypnotizes you. It makes you blind, that's why we say... we use phrases like falling in love. That is significant. The love that you know is certainly a fall -- a fall from consciousness, a fall from understanding. You start crawling on the earth; you are no more in your senses, you lose your intelligence, you become stupid.
The more you are full of desire and lust, the more stupid you are.

Murphy's maxim.... Murphy says: I believe in love at first sight because it saves time.

When you are going to fall, then why wait? Fall at the first sight. At least time is saved if nothing else. When a person is in love with someone -- and by love I don't mean the love of the buddhas; their love is totally different. They are talking about prayer, they are talking about compassion, they are talking about a desireless expression of their being. They are sharing their bliss.
I am talking about YOUR love. It is lust, it is the lowest energy phenomenon possible. You are almost in a hypnotic state. A man in love with a woman, or a woman in love with a man is no longer able to see clearly. The mind becomes clouded, the desire creates so much smoke, it raises so much dust that you can't see clearly. And whatsoever you see is your own projection.

A young army sergeant was posted to the deserts of Arabia by the French Foreign Legion. After a few days he became restless and asked his officer what form of entertainment took place in the camp -- where were all the women and bars and so forth.
The officer replied, "Just be patient and wait until the camels arrive."
So the young sergeant waited patiently for several days more and inquired again and the officer replied, "For heaven's sake, just wait until the camels arrive."
The next night there was an almighty rush, all the soldiers came running out of their tents yelling and screaming.

The young sergeant grabbed the officer and asked, "What is going on?"
"The camels are coming!" replied the officer.
"But why the great rush?"
"Well, you don't want to get an ugly one, do you?"

If you are starving in a desert, even camels will start looking beautiful; otherwise you can't see any difference between one camel and another. But the more your desires are starved, the more blind you become.
So remember, Buddha is not saying to starve your desires. He has been misunderstood by people, by his own followers as much as by his enemies. That is the fate of the buddhas: to be misunderstood by the friends and the enemies both. When he is saying that desire makes you blind, he is not saying to repress desire, because a repressed desire is far more dangerous. He is saying, "Understand desire, meditate over the whole phenomenon of it, and through understanding go beyond it, not through repression. Through meditation, transcend desire. Seeing that desire is misery, seeing that desire is bondage, seeing that desire drags you downwards into hell, one simply is released without any repression."
And to be released from desire is to be a buddha, is to be a christ.
The greatest mystery is that those who have desires live like beggars. They live in bondage, are bound to live like beggars. And those who have transcended desire live like emperors. It seems existence follows a very paradoxical law.

Old Murphy says: In order to get a loan you must first prove you don't need it.

If you want a loan from a bank, prove that you don't need it. If the bank suspects you need it, you won't get it. Exactly that is the case with dhamma, with the eternal law of existence. When you don't need anything, the whole existence is yours, the whole kingdom of God is yours. And when you need anything, nothing is yours -- only the need and the wound and the desire and the bondage. And desires are jumping upon you from every direction, there are desires and desires. It is not a question of one desire; desiring is the same, but there are millions of desires. So you live simultaneously in millions of prisons, and they go on destroying you, they go on forcing things upon you which you would not have accepted if there had been a moment of insight, of clarity. You would not have accepted such humiliation as you accept because of desires. You would not have accepted this crawling state. You are meant to fly into the sky. You have wings -- wings which can take you to the ultimate. But desires are heavy like rocks; they are crushing you.
And how many desires do you have? One day simply write them down and count them, and you will be surprised: they go on sprouting one after the other. And each desire fulfilled brings ten more desires in. Desires don't believe in birth control; each desire gives birth to as many desires as possible. Desires are never barren, they are never childless.

Bobbie Jo, a truly homely gal, came home from the Georgia campus for summer vacation. One evening she

calmly confessed to her mother that she had lost her virginity last semester.
"How did it happen?" gasped the parent.
"Well, it was not easy," admitted Bobbie Jo, "but three of my sorority sisters helped hold him down!"

Just look around at how many desires are holding you down and how you are being exploited, sucked. And if you look miserable, sad, depressed, if you look weak, if you look as if life has no significance, it is not an accident, it is your own doing. You have not understood how you go on creating your own anguish, how you go on creating, feeding your own enemies.
Yes, Buddha is right: WHILE A MAN DESIRES, HIS MIND IS BOUND AS CLOSELY AS A CALF TO ITS MOTHER.

A Martian landed at a busy intersection in New York City and spent the next two hours crossing the street. He kept going back and forth between the two electric signs that change from "Walk" to "Don't Walk" and then back again. Finally the weary little Martian stopped at one of the poles and threw his arms around it. "Baby," he said, "I really do love you, but you've got to stop being such a nag."

All desires are a nag, they go on nagging you, they go on forcing you, they go on goading you. You can't have a moment of rest, you can't be relaxed -- all those desires are there. Rest, relaxation, is known only by those who have understood the art of being desireless. That's what Buddha is pointing out:

AS YOU WOULD PLUCK AN AUTUMN LILY, PLUCK THE ARROW OF DESIRE.

It is an arrow, it is hurting you, it is wounding you, it is great pain, it is nothing but misery. But then why do people go on desiring? Why don't they listen to the buddhas? -- for the simple reason that desires are very cunning. They go on promising you. Desires are politicians; they promise you beautiful things. Of course, those things will happen tomorrow, not today. And it seems logical that time will be needed -- five-year plans. Within five years everything will be perfectly as you would like it to be. Wait! Hope! Let tomorrow come! -- and the tomorrow never comes. Again tomorrow the same desires will be there, promising you. This has been so for so many lives.

You may not remember your past lives, but you can remember your past in this life at least. This has been the case always. The desire goes on telling you, "Tomorrow, tomorrow, wait, be patient." And all promises are just toys to keep you occupied; the goods are never delivered.

The day you become aware of this cunning game that is being played upon you by your own mind, you throw all those toys. You stop listening to the continuous promises. You start laughing at your own stupidity, at your own ridiculousness, how you have been such a fool for so long. And the desire starts disappearing, it can't befool you anymore. It is an arrow, it hurts, but you are ready to suffer the pain in the hope that tomorrow you will be repaid, rewarded. And of course one has to pay for everything. The desire is very logical, it tries to convince you.

FOR HE WHO IS AWAKE
HAS SHOWN YOU THE WAY OF PEACE.
GIVE YOURSELF TO THE JOURNEY.

Buddha says: Enough is enough. You have listened to desire for thousands of lives and you have been moving in circles, suffering. You have not tasted anything of joy, you have not tasted anything of the beyond. Your mouths are full of dirt. You have not tasted real nourishment, because only God can be the real nourishment. Listen to those who are awake.
Even if you listen, you listen to people who are just as fast asleep as you are, or sometimes even more asleep than you are. You can understand them because they speak in the same language.

Once I was traveling in an air-conditioned compartment with three other passengers. It was really a great coincidence. I have been traveling for at least fifteen years continuously, and it had never happened like that. It was simply rare, unique. All the three passengers were such great snorers.
First the one on the lower berth started, and then the second started responding to him, almost answering. It was like a duet. I was surprised. And then the third started and he was something... those two were nothing, just learners, beginners. And they all snored in such a way as if they were answering each other. It was a great discussion. I could not sleep for one or two hours. I waited, and there was no way.

Then I started acting -- snoring so loudly, fully awake, that all the three started asking me, "Please, you are snoring too loudly."
I said, "Yes, I know it, because I am not asleep. Unless you all three stop, I am going to make this night a hell for you!"
But the way they were snoring was something worth witnessing, almost like answering each other. Great messages were being passed, and they followed the general format of a dialogue: when one was snoring the other two were silent. Then the second would start and the other two would listen -- and then the third would start, and the remaining two would be silent. They knew how to converse.
You can understand people who are asleep more easily because they use the same language, the language of sleep.

Florence and Emily, two pretty young housewives, arranged to have cocktails and lunch together. When they met, Emily could see that something serious was bothering her friend.
"Come on, out with it. What is depressing you?"
"I am ashamed to admit it, but I caught my husband making love."
"Why let that bother you? I got mine the same way."

Try to get it! Don't all be Germans, just try to get it. No... you need something else.

Two colleagues were discussing a patient. "I was having great success with Mr. Green," said the first doctor. "When he first came to me, he was suffering from a massive

inferiority complex. He thought that he was too small, which was of course all nonsense."
"How did you treat this patient?" inquired the second doctor.
"I started out with intensive analysis and then group therapy. I convinced him that many of the world's greatest leaders were men of small physical stature. I really hated to lose Mr. Green."
"What do you mean?" inquired his colleague. "How did you lose him?"
"A terrible accident," replied the physician. "A pussycat ate him."

Now, these are your advisers -- more asleep than you are. Now the priests are being replaced by psychoanalysts. Priests were fast asleep; they used to snore, but their snoring has gone out of fashion. Now it is psychoanalysis and different schools of psychoanalysis. Just as there were different schools of theology, there are different schools of psychoanalysis, and you listen to their advice. They are your guides -- the blind leading the blind.

A beautiful girl was talking to her psychiatrist about her problem. "It is liquor, Doctor. Whenever I have a few drinks I have a compulsion to make love to whomever I happen to be with."
"I see," said the doctor. "Well, suppose I just mix up a couple of cocktails, then you and I sit down, nice and relaxed, and discuss this compulsive neurosis of yours."

Listen to the awakened; otherwise there is no way for you. Buddha says: FOR HE WHO IS AWAKE HAS SHOWN YOU THE WAY OF PEACE.
What is the way of peace? Understanding desire and transcending desire through understanding, great peace descends -- because desire is turmoil. Desire is maddening, desire keeps you neurotic.

Murphy's definition of a neurotic: A person who worries about things that didn't happen in the past, instead of worrying about something that won't happen in the future, like normal people.

So there are two types of neurotic people: those who worry about the past and those who worry about the future. The world consists of these two types of neurotics, and your desire is the cause of all this neurosis. It is desire that keeps you still engaged with the past, which is no more. It is utterly foolish to waste time for that which is no more. To look backwards is absolutely meaningless. You can't go back, you can't step backwards in time; then what is the point of wasting your present for that which cannot be recovered?
And then there are people who are too much concerned about the future, which is not yet. Future means that which is not. Remaining concerned with that which is not whether it is past or future is utterly ridiculous. But desire keeps you -- unfulfilled desire in the past keeps you engaged there; hopes of fulfilling desire tomorrow keep you engaged in the future. Only a desireless person lives in the present, and only those who live in the present are alive; others are dead.

FOR HE WHO IS AWAKE HAS SHOWN YOU THE WAY OF PEACE. GIVE YOURSELF TO THE JOURNEY.
Listen to the awakened ones. They are pointing you towards a tremendous journey, a journey into truth, a journey into awareness, a journey into bliss, a journey into peace, a journey into God, a journey into nirvana.

"HERE SHALL I MAKE MY DWELLING,
IN THE SUMMER AND THE WINTER,
AND IN THE RAINY SEASON."
SO THE FOOL MAKES HIS PLANS,
SPARING NOT A THOUGHT FOR HIS DEATH.

It is desire that keeps you clouded and does not allow you to see death, which is approaching every moment closer and closer.
Buddha says: The fool goes on thinking, "HERE I SHALL MAKE MY DWELLING, IN THE SUMMER AND THE WINTER, AND IN THE RAINY SEASON." And he is not aware that maybe the next moment he will be gone like a soap bubble and there may not be any more summer, any more winter, any more rainy season. But he is too concerned about making dwellings, dwellings on the earth, homes on the earth. Stay here, but remember you are in a caravanserai, an overnight stay, and in the morning we go. Don't be foolish.
Even if you can make a house for the winter, another house for the summer, another house for the rainy season....
Buddha must have remembered this, because his father had made three palaces for him in different places, in different

climates: for the summer one palace -- must have been on a higher altitude, somewhere in the Himalayas, so he could live without the torture of summer -- and another house for winter in some warm climate, and another house for the rainy season.
He must have remembered that, but he renounced all that for the search for that which is deathless. Wasting your time in these palaces... and death is coming closer, and death will take you away. Even if you can manage to have all you can desire, mind will not be satisfied.
In the first place you will not be able to manage it, because mind desires impossible things. But even if you can manage, you will not be satisfied.

Old Mrs. Abramson stood at the Wailing Wall hysterically crying and pounding the bricks. A tourist walked over to her and said, "Madam, there is no need for you to cry. The Jews now have a homeland, a place to go to. After two thousand years you finally have the country you have always wanted. Good heavens, why are you crying?"
The old lady said, "I want to go to Miami Beach!"

And when she was on Miami Beach she wanted to go to Israel. That's how the mind functions. It is never satisfied, it knows no contentment. It will always find some fault, it will always find some cause to be tense.

Once a tightrope walker wanted to put together an act nobody had ever seen before. He had a rope stretched across the Grand Canyon, refused a net, had himself blindfolded, and then announced he would walk across the

rope playing the Blue Danube waltz on a violin. Needless to say, a huge crowd gathered to see this performance, but as he approached the far side of the canyon, this is the conversation he overheard.
"Now, admit it, Harry. Have you ever seen anything like that in your whole life? Is he not amazing? Is he not incredible?"
"Okay, I admit it," said Harry. "He is amazing. He is incredible. But I will tell you one thing he is not."
"And what is that?" asked his wife.
"Heifetz, he's not."

This is the way of the mind: it can't be satisfied. It is impossible to satisfy it; it is a great fault-finder, it is a great inventor of misery. So whether you succeed or you fail, you will remain in misery if you remain with the mind. And the way to remain with the mind is desire. Desire is the glue that keeps you with the mind. Unglue yourself from the mind, become desireless.
But when I say, "Become desireless," I am not saying to let this become your goal. I am not saying that now you have to make efforts to become desireless; I am not saying to make this your desire -- becoming a desireless person. No, not at all; otherwise you would have misunderstood the whole point. Try to understand the desire and all its miseries and all its futilities, and in that very understanding is transcendence.

DEATH OVERTAKES THE MAN
WHO, GIDDY AND DISTRACTED BY THE WORLD,
CARES ONLY FOR HIS FLOCK AND HIS CHILDREN.

DEATH FETCHES HIM AWAY
AS A FLOOD CARRIES OFF A SLEEPING VILLAGE.

Remember death. Remember death always. Never forget death for a single moment. Why? Why is Buddha so much interested in death? -- for the simple reason that it is only death that can keep you aware. If you forget death you will become immediately unconscious. It is because of death that only man can become enlightened and no other animal, because no other animal is aware of death. It is only man who is aware of death.

Let this awareness become more and more penetrating. Let it sink in your heart, so it remains there like a thorn, continuously reminding you that life is a shifting sand, that "Don't make your house here. Remember death is coming and whatsoever you do will be undone by death, so what is the point of becoming so much worried, becoming so much concerned, remaining in such anxiety when death is going to take everything away?"

Despite warnings from his guide, an American Jew skiing in Switzerland got separated from his group and fell -- uninjured -- into a deep crevasse. Several hours later, a rescue party found the yawning pit, and to reassure the stranded skier, shouted down to him, "We are from the Red Cross!"

"Sorry," the imperturbable Jew echoed back, "I already gave at the office!"

The Jew is a Jew. He has fallen into a deep pit and the danger of death is all around, but he is more interested in

saving a little money. Just hearing the name 'Red Cross' reminds him only of one thing: they must have come for donations.
T.S. Eliot has written these beautiful lines:

WHERE IS THE LIFE WE HAVE LOST IN LIVING?
WHERE IS THE WISDOM WE HAVE LOST IN KNOWLEDGE?
WHERE IS THE KNOWLEDGE WE HAVE LOST IN INFORMATION?
THE CYCLES OF HEAVEN IN TWENTY CENTURIES BRING US FARTHER FROM GOD AND NEARER TO THE DUST.

What has happened to us? Why have we lost sight of God? Not only have we lost sight of God, we declared with Friedrich Nietzsche that God is dead. Why are so many people against God? And even those who are not against are not for, remember; they are neutrals. And those who are for are only formally for, they are not truly for. They can't commit their lives in the search for God. What has happened to the modern man?
One thing has happened: we have been able to become more and more forgetful of death. The great advancement in medical sciences has given us a hope as if we are going to live forever. Medical science has certainly helped us to live a little longer than before, but that simply means a little longer: the same misery, the same desire, the same lust, the same bondage. Medical science may be able....
It seems very possible now that man may start living more than one hundred years. There are people who think that

man can live at least three hundred years very easily. But what is the point? Whether you live seventy years or seven hundred years, you will be the same stupid man. In fact, in seven hundred years your stupidity will grow very much. And if death is postponed for seven hundred years, who cares? It is not going to happen soon... and man does not have that much insight to look that far.
We live surrounded by small things. We see only so far, just a little bit ahead, enough to walk. Seven hundred years... that will make religion disappear from the earth, because man is not so intelligent that he can be aware of death if death is postponed for seven hundred years. He is not even intelligent enough to see it after seventy years, not even after seven years.
I have seen people who are seventy and yet not interested in meditation. Strange, very strange. I can't believe it. A man of seventy is still not interested in meditation? That simply means he has not yet been able to see death, and death is very close. Any moment it can happen.
Buddha wants you to remember death continuously. Don't think that he is a pessimist. Don't think that he is death-obsessed -- no, not at all. He simply wants you to remember death so that the sword of death hanging on you keeps you aware, alert.

It happened once:
A sannyasin was sent by his master to the court of the great king, Janaka. The sannyasin was a little puzzled; he said, "Why should I go to the court of the king?"
The master said, "You have to learn one thing, and you can learn it more easily there than anywhere else; hence I am

sending you. Go and watch and be very alert. You are going to be enriched tremendously."

The sannyasin was not convinced. Remaining with such a great master, if he cannot learn something, then how can he learn in the court of the king? He used to think the king a fool because he has so many possessions, such a big kingdom, and HE had renounced all, so he had always thought himself holier than the king. Now, going to the king to learn something he felt a little insulted. But when the master was saying it he had to go. So he went, reluctantly, deep down resisting, but he went.

When he reached to the king's court he was shocked. In a way, his doubts were confirmed. The king was sitting, drinking wine; beautiful women almost naked were dancing around, and all the courtiers were there, completely drunk. The sannyasin thought, "What kind of a lesson have I to learn from these fools?" When he thought this, Janaka started laughing. He said, "Why are you laughing?"

Janaka said, "I am laughing because your old man knows something, he understands something, but you don't believe in him. You don't believe in your master. You have come, but reluctantly."

He was surprised: how had Janaka come to know this? He asked, "You seemed to be almost drunk and still you can understand? -- and I have not said anything."

Janaka said, "About this wine we will talk later on. Right now you do one thing; otherwise I am going to kill you."

He ordered his soldiers to take their swords out of their sheaths and surround the court and give the sannyasin a cup full of oil, so full that it could not contain even a single drop more. And he told the sannyasin, "Put this cup on your

head, and go around the court seven times. If even a single drop of the oil falls, your head will be cut off."
Now the sannyasin thought, "I'm amongst lunatics and I cannot even escape." Those naked swords were there all around.
And the king said, "Remember it, I mean business. When I say something I do it. So be careful."
Looking at the cup, so full, he could not believe that he would be able to save his head -- but there was nothing else he could do. He had to put the cup full of oil on his head and go round the court seven times. And the dance continued, and the beautiful women continued, and of course he was an old type of sannyasin, deep down very much interested in women. Many times the desire came just to have a look, but the fear of death and those naked swords.... He managed seven rounds, although it was almost impossible.
Then the king asked, "How did you manage? It was impossible."
The sannyasin said, "I could manage because of these naked swords all around. I have never felt death so close, just a foot from my side. Any moment...."
And the king said, "What about these beautiful women? And I know sannyasins; they may not be interested in anything else, but they are bound to be interested in women. And what about this beautiful, delicious food? And the aroma of the food, and the wine... and these are the things that you have suppressed, so they are deep down in your being, they want to surface."
The sannyasin laughed. He said, "Who cares about these things when death is so close by?"

The king said, "You have learned the lesson. This was the lesson the master has sent you to learn."

Remember death. It is closer than those swords, it is always closer than anything else. You are living surrounded by death, and if this can be remembered, this can become the greatest stimulation for meditation, for awareness.
Hence the emphasis. Buddha says: DEATH OVERTAKES THE MAN WHO, GIDDY AND DISTRACTED BY THE WORLD, CARES ONLY FOR HIS FLOCKS AND HIS CHILDREN. DEATH FETCHES HIM AWAY AS A FLOOD CARRIES OFF A SLEEPING VILLAGE.
Don't be a sleeping village; otherwise death will come like a flood and you will be gone. Be awake, be alert, be mindful.

HIS FAMILY CANNOT SAVE HIM,
NOT HIS FATHER NOR HIS SONS.

Nobody can save you except your own awareness. KNOW THIS... and don't only believe in what the awakened ones say. Know this on your own, let it become an existential experience.

KNOW THIS.
SEEK WISDOM, AND PURITY.

Seek the innocence of a child. Drop all your foolish knowledge. All knowledge is foolish.
Remember T.S. Eliot again:

WHERE IS THE LIFE WE HAVE LOST IN LIVING?
WHERE IS THE WISDOM WE HAVE LOST IN KNOWLEDGE?
WHERE IS THE KNOWLEDGE WE HAVE LOST IN INFORMATION?
THE CYCLES OF HEAVEN IN TWENTY CENTURIES BRING US FARTHER FROM GOD AND NEARER TO THE DUST.

Where is the wisdom that we have lost in knowledge? Knowledge is purely a substitute for wisdom. Knowledge means borrowed from others. Drop all that which you have taken from others. Wisdom is that which grows in your innocence, when you are just like a small child, full of wonder and awe, mystified by existence, knowing nothing, and wisdom arises. Wisdom wells up in your being. Wisdom is not something that comes from the outside, it is your inner growth. KNOW THIS. SEEK WISDOM, AND PURITY.

QUICKLY CLEAR THE WAY.

And whatever hinders the way for the wisdom to arise, quickly clear it.
Remove knowledge, information, remove all your egoistic trips. Remove desires, remove memories, imaginations, remove the whole mind.
Become a no-mind.
That is purity, and in that purity wisdom blooms.

In the lake of that innocence the lotus of wisdom opens up, and that is the only possible way to be free, to have freedom -- ultimate, total.

"What are you reading?" asked the prison librarian. "Nothing much," replied the prisoner. "Just the usual escapist literature."

Enough for today.
The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 8
Chapter #4
Chapter title: A madman's guide
24 December 1979 am in Buddha Hall

The first question:
Question 1
BELOVED MASTER,
I DON'T KNOW WHETHER I AM LOSING MY MIND OR MY MEDITATION, OR BOTH.

Prem Arup, the greatest blessing is when you lose mind and meditation both. To lose the mind is only half the way; the goal is not reached. One who loses the mind starts clinging to meditation; meditation becomes his mind. Meditation becomes his possession, his treasure -- far more beautiful than mind certainly, far more joyous, far more blissful, worth achieving.
To lose the mind is to lose all your miseries. Then great ecstasies bloom, then great joys well up within your being. But even to be ecstatic is to be disturbed. Even to be joyous

is to be not totally at home. One has to go beyond ecstasy, beyond the joy, beyond the exhilaration. One has to become utterly peaceful. Hence, Buddha never talks about bliss; he talks about peace, silence. That is the ultimate goal.

Transcend the mind, using the method of meditation. Then do not cling to meditation -- because clinging is the same; to what you cling is irrelevant. The moment the mind disappears, let the meditation also disappear. Neither be a mind nor a no-mind. This is the ultimate goal, the goal of buddhahood. Then you have arrived. Then there is peace. You are no more, only peace exists. There is nobody to possess it.

Half of you was killed when you dropped the mind, and half of you was killed when you dropped meditation. The worldly part disappeared with the mind and the so-called spirituality disappeared with the meditation. Now you are neither body nor soul. You are not. A tremendous nothingness, a total nobodiness exists. Buddha calls it SHUNYA, nirvana. Everything has ceased: misery and joy, day and night, summer and winter, life and death, all are gone. The whole duality is transcended.

Arup, feel blessed. Feel immensely fortunate if both disappear -- although in the clinging it will look very crazy. First, to drop the mind looks very crazy. But then meditation is there to give you a new settlement, a new order, a new discipline -- higher, better, more sophisticated, more cultured, more inner, more subjective.

When you drop meditation, all order, all discipline, all structure, disappears. You take a plunge into the utterly unknown, the ultimate unknown.

This is the moment of the real birth -- not of you but of God. You are no more, now only God is. And by "God" I don't mean a person; by "God" I only mean an experience.

The second question:
Question 2
BELOVED MASTER,
YOU TELL US THAT AWARENESS IS ENOUGH.
THEN WHY DISCOURSES, GROUPS, SANNYAS?

Rick Ferris, how did you come to know that awareness is enough? I have to tell it again and again -- that awareness is enough, that no discourse is needed. But even that has to be told to you: that nothing is needed. But you are so asleep, you won't come upon the truth by yourself and you won't come upon the truth even if repeated thousands of times.
Now see the trick of your mind: it is not that you have understood that awareness is enough. On the contrary, you have understood that discourses are not needed, groups are not needed, sannyas is not needed. See the tricky mind, the cunning mind... who goes on creating new hells for you. You missed the point and you have misinterpreted the whole thing.
Discourses are to tell you that words won't do, but even to tell that words won't do, words are needed. There is no other way, because you understand only words.

Buddha used to tell a parable:
A man had gone to the market. When he came back his house was on fire. His children were playing inside the house, absolutely oblivious of the fact that the house was

on fire. It was a big house and they must have been in the innermost part of the house.
He shouted from the outside, because he was afraid to enter the house, but the children wouldn't listen. A great crowd gathered. Then he said to the children, "Come out! See what I have brought for you -- many toys. The toys that you had asked me for, I have brought all, and beautiful toys!"
The children came running out of the house -- and he had not brought a single toy! They started asking, "Where are the toys?"
He said, "Look at the fire! I have not brought any toys, but this was the only way to bring you out of the house. The house is on fire! I was shouting that 'The house is on fire!' and you were laughing and giggling. You were thinking I am playing a joke or something. Yes, I have lied to you that I have brought toys for you, but the lie has worked as a strategy -- it has helped you to come out. It has served a great purpose."

Words are not enough, but because you understand only words, Rick Ferris.... Can you understand silence? Then you would not have been here. There is no need to be here. You could have sat by the side of a silent rock or you could have sat underneath a silent tree... and you would have understood all the buddhas. Then you will not read the Bible and the Koran and the Gita. You would have gone to the desert to feel the silence, the eternal silence of the desert. And you would have understood all the Bibles, all the Korans, all the Gitas. But you have come here!
You can understand only words. And I know truth cannot be communicated through words, but words can be used to

bring you out of the house which is on fire. Words can bring you out of the world of words and dreams and desires in which you live. Words can be used in such a skillful way that they can lead you -- or at least point you -- towards silence; hence the discourses.

Groups are a little more rough. If you don't listen to me, if you don't understand words, then real hammers will be needed. I hammer you, but I hammer you with words. I don't whip you, I only show you the shadow of the whip. If you listen, good; if you don't listen, then you will need groups. There they use actual whips! To bring you to your senses they hit you hard. With great compassion they are cruel. They do everything that can be done to wake you up. And sannyas? Sannyas is just to make a fool of you! You are too much in your knowledge, in your head. A little foolishness will do! You are too knowledgeable, too clever, too cunning. Sannyas is a surrender of all your cleverness, cunningness, knowledge.

Sannyas is a madman's path; I am a madman's guide! But before you can really become sane you will have to drop your old kind of sanity -- which is not sanity.

These are all devices -- sannyas, groups, discourses -- strategies. Not that only through these strategies you will know what truth is, but these will help you. If you are intelligent you will use them as a ladder, as a boat to the other shore. When you have reached the other shore, the boat has to be left behind. It is not that you have to sit in the boat forever and forever or that even when you have reached the other shore you have to carry the boat on your head, just out of sheer gratitude.

You are utterly unaware, and great effort is needed to make you aware.

A guy went to the track and won three hundred dollars. Thinking his luck would hold he went back the next day ready to make a killing.
As he was looking over the horses set to run in the last race he noticed a priest making signs over one of the nags. Thinking that he had really lucked in, the guy bet every nickel he had won and every cent he could scrape up on the horse. Naturally, the horse finished last.
Leaving the track he happened to bump into the very priest he had seen blessing the horse. "Father," he said, "I am a ruined man! I saw you blessing that horse and I bet every cent I had on him."
The priest was horrified. "My son," he said, "I was not blessing that horse, I was administering the last rites!"

I see your life as utterly ruined. You have been betting on dead horses! Your whole life is a mess -- and arranging your life from the outside is not going to help. Some radical transformation of your consciousness is needed.
The so-called religious people have been just doing the opposite. And that's why you go to the churches, to the temples, to the synagogues -- not to be awakened but to be helped to sleep better. You go there to listen to beautiful lullabies. You go there to be consoled. You go there to be comforted.
My work here is not to comfort you, is not to console you, is not to sing a lullaby by the side of your bed. My work is to wake you up.

Everything is arranged in such a way -- the discourses, the meditations, the groups, the sannyas... it is an attack on your sleep from all possible directions. In a single word it can be said: my work is to dehypnotize you.

For eight days and nights Schlossberg, the suit-maker, was unable to sleep. No medicine took effect, and in desperation, the Schlossberg family brought in a famous hypnotist.
The hypnotist stared at Schlossberg and chanted, "You are asleep, Mr. Schlossberg. The shadows are closing about you. Soft music is lulling you into a state of lovely relaxation. You are asleep, you are asleep...."
"You are a miracle-worker!" sobbed the grateful son. He gave the hypnotist a big bonus and the man left in triumph. As the outside door closed, Schlossberg opened one eye, "Say," he demanded, "is that schmuck gone yet?"

But these schmucks are your rabbis, your priests, your popes, your shankaracharyas, your imams, your Ayatollah Khomeiniacs.... And because you want more comfortable sleep and sweet dreams, their business prospers.
Sigmund Freud has said that it seems man cannot live without illusions. As far as the ordinary humanity is concerned he is right. Before Sigmund Freud, Friedrich Nietzsche had the same insight. He said that the people who destroy people's illusions are the real enemies of the people, because man cannot live without lies. "Truth is dangerous! Who wants truth?" says Friedrich Nietzsche. We want beautiful lies and illusions, sweet dreams.

This is true about ninety-nine point nine percent of humanity. Only very rarely a person starts searching for truth, but then he has to risk all his sleep and the dreams and the investments that he has made in his dreams.
A Buddha, a Jesus, a Moses: these people are not to give you comforts. They shatter all your lies; howsoever comfortable they are, howsoever cozy they appear, they shatter them. They want you to know the truth. In the beginning it is bitter.
Buddha has said: Lies are sweet in the beginning, bitter in the end. In the beginning they look like nectar, in the end they prove fatal, poisonous. Truth is bitter in the beginning, sweet in the end. In the beginning it looks like poison, as if it is going to kill you; in the end it is elixir, it is nectar. It makes you capable to know the eternal, the deathless.

The third question:
Question 3
BELOVED MASTER,
DO YOU CONSIDER YOURSELF GOD, GOD'S REPRESENTATIVE ON EARTH, A PROPHET, AND/OR JUST A VERY CLEAR INDIVIDUAL? HAVING SEEN YOU A COUPLE OF TIMES IN MORNING DISCOURSE AND LISTENING TO TAPES AND VIDEOTAPES OF YOU, YOU NEVER SEEM TO ANSWER THIS QUESTION. HOW AND WHY DO YOU KNOW OR FEEL SOMETHING I DO NOT?

Harold Peltz, the first thing is that there is no God. Yes, there is godliness, but no God. The idea of God is anthropocentric. The Bible says: God created man in his

own image. The truth is just the opposite: man has created God in HIS own image. God is nothing but a projection of human wishes, desires, longings. God is nothing but the projection of human mind.

That does not mean that I am an atheist, but I am not a theist either. My position is exactly that of Gautama the Buddha. He was not an atheist and he was not a theist. He did not believe in God, he did not DISbelieve in God. What was his position?

His position is very unique, his position is worth sharing. His space is worth communing with. And that is the space of all the meditators: they believe in godliness. The whole existence is overfull with spirituality, but there is no such person as God.

You ask me, "Do you consider yourself God?"

No, sir, certainly not! Even if I was I would have denied it -- because who will take responsibility for this ugly world? I cannot take responsibility for creating you! That will be the real original sin!

I am not God, but I have known godliness -- in me, in you, everywhere. Godliness is a quality; it is a fragrance that permeates the whole of existence. The only difference between you and me is that I am aware of it and you are not aware of it; otherwise there is no difference. I am awake, you are asleep. We are exactly the same, participating in the same existence, breathing the same godliness, living in the same ocean of godliness. We are the fish of the same ocean, but you are not aware of the ocean and I am aware of the ocean, within and without, both.

I don't know more than you know -- you may be knowing more than me. My knowledge is poor; I am not a

knowledgeable person. And whatsoever I quote is not reliable! You may be knowing more, you may be well informed. You have a great accumulation of facts. In that way I am utterly poor, as poor as a child. But that is not the real difference; that is not the difference that makes the difference.

The only thing that is significant is being aware of the reality.

The English language is very poor; it has only one word, 'God'. Sanskrit is immensely rich, it has many words to signify different approaches. The ultimate, the absolute, is called BRAHMAN. That is the purest godliness, uncontaminated. It is an abstraction: all matter has disappeared, only pure energy, only pure consciousness remains.

The second word in Sanskrit is ISHWAR; that comes close to 'God'. Ishwar means "the creator," but it is lower than Brahman. It is as illusory as the whole world. If the creation is illusory, how can the creator be the real? You can see the point: the creation and the creator are two polarities. The whole world is illusory, hence the creator too is illusory.

You will be surprised to know that you have to go beyond God; only then can you know the ultimate, not before it. To know God is a lower state of understanding.

The third word is BHAGWAN -- which cannot be translated as 'God'. Buddha never believed in God, yet we have called him Bhagwan. Mahavira never believed in God, yet we have called him Bhagwan.

H.G. Wells has said: Gautama the Buddha is the man in the whole history of humanity who is the most godless and yet the most godly.

How can this word 'bhagwan' be translated into English? It simply means "the blessed one"; it has nothing to do with God. Literally it means one who has attained; hence he is called the blessed one -- one who has arrived, one who has become awakened, enlightened.

Bhagwan does not mean a representative. There is no God, so how can you be a representative of God? Buddha is not a representative of God, neither am I. That is a very poor idea, being a representative of somebody -- just a salesman! That is very humiliating!

And Buddha is not a prophet -- neither am I. A prophet means one who brings the message from God to the world. He is nothing but a postman -- and I don't want to be a postman! A prophet is not of much value. There is no God; hence there can be no messengers, no messiahs, no prophets.

And you ask me, "... and/or just a very clear individual?"

One thing will have to be understood: if you become clear, individuality disappears; you are simply clarity. If you are unclear, then individuality is there. Individuality and clarity don't go together. Individuality is deep down nothing but an ego -- to feel oneself separate, separate from the whole.

I am just clarity, not an individual. It is very difficult to understand how you can be clear if there is no individual. Our language forces us to some unnecessary conclusions. When the dance is total, the dancer is no more there; only dance is. And you can ask the great dancers -- you can ask Nijinsky, Gopi Krishna -- and they will agree with it: when

the dance comes to the ultimate peak, the dancer disappears. There is only dance, there is nobody dancing. There are not two entities, the dancer and the dance.
When the painter is really merged into his painting, absorbed, then there is not painting AND the painter, there is only painting. There is no painter left; for a few moments the painter disappears. Only when the painter disappears, painting reaches to its ultimate beauty.
The dancer, the painter, the singer, the musician, the poet, they all know those moments, but those are only moments in their lives. In the lives of the buddhas those are not only moments; they have become their reality. The dancer has disappeared forever.
I am no more an individual, but just clarity; not a dancer but only a dance. If you can understand that, only then will you be able to have some communion with this nobodiness, with this nothingness, with this state of nirvana.
You ask me, "Having seen you a couple of times in morning discourse and listening to tapes and videotapes of you, you never seem to answer this question. How and why do you know or feel something I do not?"
I know only one thing: that I know nothing. And that's where the difference may be. You know that you know, I know that I don't know. Only when you come to that state of blissful ignorance, clarity happens. Knowledge is a disturbance; no-knowledge gives you clarity, transparency.

Old man Krestenfeld lay on his deathbed for months and finally passed away.
Two weeks later, the relatives gathered like vultures to hear the reading of the will.

The lawyer tore open an envelope, drew out a piece of paper and read, "Being of sound mind, I spent every dime before I died."

I would like to say only this much: that I am simply soundness -- not even sound mind... pure clarity, a sky without any clouds, utterly empty. You can also be that. In your innermost core you are already that.
And my effort here is, Harold Peltz, to help you to become nobodies just like me, ignorant just like me. And remember: there is a knowledge that knows not and there is an ignorance that knows.

The fourth question:
Question 4
BELOVED MASTER,
YES, THE HOUSE IS ON FIRE. MY FLAMES OF JEALOUSY, GREED AND VIOLENCE ARE BURNING ME. I SEE YOU SHINING AT THE DOORWAY, BECKONING ME TO SIMPLY COME OUT, YET I HOLD BACK, CLINGING TO MY MISERY WHILE MY MIND RACES ON WITH DESIRES. WHY CAN'T I LET GO?

Deva Dwabha, to be without misery needs great courage. To be miserable is very cheap, very simple; it costs nothing. To be miserable you don't need any courage, any intelligence. To be miserable is so easy, but to come out of it is difficult, arduous. To come out of it needs intelligence, because you are the creator of your misery, and you create your misery because you are unconscious. You can stop

creating it only if you become conscious, and to become conscious needs great effort.

Moreover, misery keeps you occupied so that you can avoid your inner hollowness. It keeps you engaged. If you are not miserable you will have to go in, and you are afraid because there is great emptiness. It is a kind of death to go in.

The mystics have called it "the great death" -- greater than the so-called ordinary death, because in the ordinary death only the body dies. If you go in, your mind dies. And one is afraid to die -- your ego dies -- and one is afraid to lose one's identity. And how much effort you have put to attain to a certain identity. One is a famous actor, another is a well-known politician. Somebody is very rich, somebody is very knowledgeable. You have put so much effort... and now I am telling you to come out of it! That means all your effort has been a sheer wastage. It will need guts to come out of it and it will need courage to be without identity.

The Zen people say: Before you meditate, mountains are mountains and rivers are rivers. When you go deep in meditation, mountains are no more mountains and rivers are no more rivers. When you attain to satori, when the meditation is transcended, then again mountains are mountains and rivers are rivers.

This is a Zen way of saying that before meditation you have a certain identity. You have a name, fame, form, family, race, culture, religion, country; all these give you a certain idea who you are -- although that idea is absolutely false, arbitrary, accidental. It is just accidental that you were born as a Christian or a Hindu or a Mohammedan; it has no significance at all. It is just an accident whether you

are born a German or an Indian or a Chinese. You are none of these.
Your consciousness is simply consciousness, neither Chinese nor Korean nor Japanese. Your consciousness is simply consciousness. It belongs to no country, no race, no color, no religion; all those are conditionings. You have been hypnotized and told that you are an Indian; this is a hypnosis. You have been hypnotized and told that you are a Mohammedan, and the hypnosis is prolonged your whole life. It goes so deep that you may even be ready to die for it. People die for religion, for country, for flags; for many nonsenses they are ready to die. It seems as if their life has no meaning at all, as if they are ready to die for any excuse -- any excuse will do.
Your identity is arbitrary. Before meditation you are a little bit certain who you are. As you go into meditation your miseries start disappearing and with those miseries your identity starts evaporating. You fall into a state of chaos, and that chaos creates fear.
Dwabha, I have given you this name.... DWABHA means twilight; it means neither day nor night, just in the middle. And that's where you are: afraid to go deeper, standing in shallow water. It feels safe, although you are miserable -- but the misery is familiar, well known; you have become accustomed to it. In fact, a kind of family relationship has arisen between you and your misery.

There is a Sufi parable:
A man used to call every night to God and he would pray the same prayer. Again and again he would ask, "Do one favor for me, at least one favor -- and I have been asking

my whole life. As far as I can see, I am the most miserable man on the earth. Why have you chosen me to be the most miserable? I am ready to exchange my misery with anybody else, anybody will do -- just let me exchange my misery with somebody else. I don't ask for bliss. Can't you give me only this single opportunity to exchange my misery with somebody else? This is not asking much!"
And one night in a dream he saw God had spoken. A great voice came from the heavens saying, "Gather all of your miseries into bundles and bring them to the temple hall."
So the whole town gathers their miseries into big bundles and they bring them. This man is tremendously happy: "So the moment has come! It seems something is going to happen!"
He rushes with his bundle. On the way he finds others also are rushing. By the time he reaches to the temple he becomes afraid, very afraid, because he sees people are carrying bigger bundles than his. People that he had always seen smiling -- Rotarians, Lions -- in beautiful clothes and always saying nice things to each other, and they are carrying bigger bundles! He starts becoming a little hesitant whether to go or not to go, but he has been praying his whole life, so he says, "Let us see what happens."

They enter into the temple. The voice says, "Put your bundles around the hall." They put their bundles, and the voice says again, "Now you can choose any bundle that you like."
And the miracle of miracles happens: everybody rushes to his own bundle! This man also rushes so fast towards his own bundle, afraid that if somebody else chooses it then he

will be at a loss. Everybody has chosen his own bundle, with great relief and they are all happy, carrying their bundles back to their homes. Even this man is very happy, for the simple reason that "Who knows what is in the other's bundle? At least we are aware of our own bundle and what it contains. And we have become accustomed, we have become adjusted to our misery."

Dwabha, that's why you find it very difficult to get out of your miseries. And there may be investments also; your misery may not be just YOUR misery. You may be creating misery for others through your misery. If you are interested in creating misery in others, how can you drop your misery?
The husband comes home and the wife simply lies down on the bed and says she has a headache -- and I am not saying that she is pretending. In fact, it is almost impossible when you see your husband not to have a headache! She must be having one, I trust.... And then the husband becomes miserable. Now the wife cannot drop her headache, because if she drops her headache, then what about the husband? Her headache creates such misery for the husband that she is ready to suffer -- to make others suffer.

"I would divorce Milton in a minute," Mrs. Cooper told the woman doing her hair.
"Then why don't you?" asked the beautician.
"Because it would kill me to see him so happy."

It is difficult! It is difficult to come out of your misery, because it is not just your misery; it has become entangled

with others' miseries, it has become a cause for others' miseries. And you enjoy torturing others; you feel powerful whenever you can torture. One is ready to sacrifice if one can create misery for others.

People are sadists and masochists both. It is very rare to find a pure sadist or a pure masochist. Those are only types found in psychological books. In reality, everybody is a sadist and everybody is a masochist. People are sadomasochists: they torture themselves in order to torture others; they torture others in order to torture themselves. It is all intertwined, interdependent. You cannot just slip out of it -- it is your whole life's investment. Otherwise, nobody is preventing you, Dwabha, you can come out. Just you have to understand. If you cannot even drop your misery, what else can you drop?

In the old days, a sannyasin was one who used to renounce life. I have changed the definition of a sannyasin. I call a man a sannyasin who is ready to renounce his misery. But in a way your life and your misery are almost synonymous. What is your life? What you are doing with yourself and with others? You feel powerful whenever you can torture others; torture gives you a great release of power. Why are these Adolf Hitlers, Joseph Stalins and Mao Zedongs born again and again? From where do they come? They represent you. They represent the essential madness of humanity. They erupt again and again and they will go on coming, you can't prevent them, unless we change the very foundation of human existence. If we change human consciousness from misery to bliss, from tensions to peace.... Otherwise you will have to suffer. You deserve... in fact, you ask for them. Germany must have prayed long

enough for Adolf Hitler to happen. And now there are again people in Germany who are starting the same fascist movement. You can't live without these insane people! Something in you needs them. Something that you cannot do to yourself they can do to you. They can release great misery in the world.

Have you seen, have you observed in times of war people look happier than ever? Their faces are more lighted up, they smile more. Suddenly their life has zest, enthusiasm, energy. They are no more dragging; their life has meaning. War gives them meaning. The death and the danger surrounding them helps them to come alive.

After each ten years a great world war is needed. If it is not happening now it is not because of humanity and its changed consciousness. It is happening because of hydrogen bombs, because the third world war will be the last -- and that is too much. A little bit of misery once in a while is good, but just to commit a global suicide seems too much. Nobody will be there even to enjoy it!

If a nuclear war happens, then within ten minutes everybody will be gone. Even the newspapers would not have reached you. You would be absolutely unaware what is happening. It will be simply a chaos. And within ten minutes all life would have disappeared from the earth. Birds, animals, trees, men, women, all would be gone. What is the point if you cannot enjoy? The joy is when you see people in gas chambers evaporating.

In Germany, the gas chambers were made in such a way that people could come and see in. The people who were going to die were not able to see the spectators, but the spectators were able to see. Thousands of people were

coming to see; they were paying tickets for it. It was great entertainment! One thousand people in the gas chamber will evaporate. Within a single moment, nothing will be left. And these people -- thousands of people -- have come to see. What joy must they be deriving out of it? There must be something very ugly deep down....

During the French Revolution, when the guillotine was being used almost around the clock, Slutsky lived in a small village outside of Paris. One morning he met Flambeau, who had just returned from the city.
"What's happening there in Paris?" asked Slutsky.
"Conditions are absolutely horrible," replied the Frenchman. "They are cutting off heads by the thousands."
"Oy," moaned Slutsky, "and me in the hat business!"

Man's ugliness! Heads are being cut off in thousands, but Slutsky's problem is not those thousands of people dying. His problem is: "So many heads are being cut off, and me in the hat business!"
Everybody is concerned about his own small, selfish, ugly ego. That's why you cannot come out of your misery. Try to come out of the ego and you will be able to come out of the misery. Try to come out of the self.
Your so-called religious people go on teaching you, "Don't be selfish." Buddha says, "Don't be a self." And I also say to you: Don't be a self. The teaching, "Don't be selfish," has not helped. It can't help because it leaves the root untouched. The self is the root, and your religious people go on teaching -- your so-called saints and mahatmas -- "Don't be selfish." That simply means let the self be there,

let the root remain. Just go on cutting off the branches and pruning the leaves. "Don't be selfish"... but then the root is there, it will sprout again; again leaves will come.
Buddha is the only enlightened master of the world who has gone to the very root of the problem. He says: Don't be a self. This is a great insight, a great contribution, one of the most precious. He says, "If you are a self, you will be selfish. Your selfishness may become otherworldly, spiritual; it will remain selfish. A self can only be selfish; a self can exist only in the climate of selfishness. If you try to be not selfish with the self intact, you will be only a hypocrite."
The word 'hypocrisy' comes from a root which means play-acting. You will be just acting a game, playing a game, pretending. You can't be selfish if the self is not there.
And how can the self be dropped? In fact, it is not there if you look in, so there is no need to drop it. All that is needed is a deep insight into your own inwardness. Look into your interiority -- that's what meditation is all about -- look in, and you will not find any self there. And when you don't find any self -- it disappears like a shadow in the light -- all selfishness disappears on its own accord.
Then a totally new quality comes to your existence. You are no longer concerned with creating misery for others; hence you can come out of YOUR misery. And the moment you see inwards, great intelligence is released, great creativity is released. That intelligence brings bliss and, ultimately, even takes you beyond bliss -- beyond mind and beyond meditation. It brings you to the ultimate core of existence; peace, tranquility, silence, stillness.

You cease totally and only then you arrive. You enter into the world of God, or godliness, only when you are no more. But before you can go in you will have to drop many stupid ideas that you have been carrying all along. You will have to drop all that you have been told and taught. You will have to drop all that you have been educated for.
Your whole society is rooted, based, in the idea of making your life comfortable. Not true, but only comfortable, convenient, so that you can live conveniently and you can die conveniently. Your whole society is based in providing tranquilizers for you. Your religion functions like a tranquilizer. Whenever you are in trouble you go to the rabbi, to the priest, to the imam, and they console you. Your child has died. You go to the rabbi, you go to the priest, and he says, "Don't be worried. God takes away only those whom he loves." He is consoling you! Your child has been chosen by God; your child is one of those chosen few. If you go to the Hindu priest he will say, "Don't be worried. The soul is immortal, nothing dies. The child has only changed the house and he will get a better house, a new house. It is like changing an old car for a new model. So don't be worried." He consoles you. He does not help you with a radical change. His effort is to make your life as comfortable as possible. And you pay for this, naturally. He serves you and you pay for it.

Jacobs and Lipkin, two Israeli commandos, were about to be shot by the Arabs.
Jacobs said, "I think I'm gonna ask for a blindfold."
Lipkin said, "Jake, don't make trouble."

People live just with this idea: Don't make trouble. Even when you are going to be shot -- at least at that time you can make a little trouble; you won't lose anything more. But this is our philosophy, our basic philosophy of life: Don't make trouble. So follow the tradition, follow the conventional. Be a conformist. Be a Hindu, Mohammedan, Christian. Go to the church. Don't make trouble. Don't stir the waters. Just keep yourself somehow alive, and die without making any trouble. Then you cannot come out of your misery.

To come out of the misery you will have to be a revolutionary. The greatest revolution in the world is to come out of the miserable patterns of life. You will have to change your whole psychology and you will have to risk many things. You will not be accepted by the society. Otherwise why was Socrates not accepted? Why was Jesus not accepted? You will not be respected by the crowd. The crowd gives you respect only when you are part of the crowd. If you want respectability, then you have to be part of the crowd. Then you have to be just a sheep and not a man.

Dwabha, you can come out of it. Be a lion!

Buddha used to say to his disciples, "Be a lion! Roar like a lion and come out of all kinds of slavery!" And whatsoever the risk, it is worth it.

The last question:

Question 5

BELOVED MASTER,

THE OTHER DAY IN DISCOURSE YOU WERE SCOFFING AT MIRACLES, YET THREE THOUSAND

PEOPLE SITTING SILENTLY FEELING YOUR PRESENCE, LISTENING TO YOUR SONG AND THE BIRDS AND THE WIND -- IS THIS NOT A MIRACLE IN ITSELF? OR ARE THERE REALLY NO MIRACLES?

Anand Prakash, listening to me, listening to the birds and the wind, being utterly silent here in a deep, loving communion... it is not a miracle in the sense the word is used. It is in fact the most natural thing. Man has become unnatural; hence it looks like a miracle. It is because of man's becoming unnatural that such a simple thing looks like a miracle; otherwise it is natural, it is spontaneous. You are not doing anything, I am not doing anything. We are together here; something is happening. Something is transpiring between me and you. Nobody is a doer, neither I nor you; it is happening on its own accord. In that sense it is simple, natural; but in another sense, you can use the word 'miracle'. It looks like a miracle because man has become so unnatural that to be silent even for a few minutes seems like a miracle.

It is as though a man who has lived in darkness his whole life is brought into light and for the first time sees the color of the flowers and the sunrays passing through the trees and the rainbow in the clouds, and starts shouting, "Miracles, miracles, miracles!"

You will say, "These are simple things, natural things. It is just because you have always lived in darkness. That's why these colors, these butterflies, these flowers, the green and the red and the gold of the trees, look like a miracle." But for him it is a miracle.

To me it is just natural; to you it may be a miracle. It depends from what standpoint you are looking at it.
But when I was scoffing at miracles, I meant miracles like Satya Sai Baba is doing: producing Swiss watches. At least produce watches made in India -- that would be a miracle! What is there of a miracle in a Swiss watch? I was laughing at these tricks, and I was saying there are no miracles in the sense that the universal law, dhamma, accepts no exception. Everything is natural and according to tao, according to dhamma, according to the universal nature of things. Nothing is against it; hence there are no miracles. These are all sleight-of-hand. These are just magic.
If you find a magician on the corner producing Swiss watches you won't call it a miracle. But the same man comes as a holy man, as a mahatma, and then immediately it becomes a miracle. Such miracles don't happen.
But a few miracles really happen. For example, just a few days before, a Polack has become the pope! Now this IS a miracle!
I would like to suggest to Buddha to make a few exceptions in his universal law. A Polack and a pope! -- who has ever heard such a thing?

Once old Murphy was asked, "How do you spot a Polack at a cock fight?"
He said, "He is the one with the duck."
Then he was asked, "How do you know the Italians are there?"
He said, "They bet on the duck."
And then he was asked, "And how do you know the mafia is there?"

He said, "The duck wins."

Enough for today.
The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 8
Chapter #5
Chapter title: Be in the world and be holy
25 December 1979 am in Buddha Hall

THERE IS PLEASURE
AND THERE IS BLISS.
FORGO THE FIRST TO POSSESS THE SECOND.

IF YOU ARE HAPPY
AT THE EXPENSE OF ANOTHER MAN'S HAPPINESS,
YOU ARE FOREVER BOUND.

YOU DO NOT WHAT YOU SHOULD.
YOU DO WHAT YOU SHOULD NOT.
YOU ARE RECKLESS, AND DESIRE GROWS.

BUT THE MASTER IS WAKEFUL.
HE WATCHES HIS BODY.
IN ALL HIS ACTIONS HE DISCRIMINATES,
AND HE BECOMES PURE.

HE IS WITHOUT BLAME
THOUGH ONCE HE MAY HAVE MURDERED
HIS MOTHER AND HIS FATHER,
TWO KINGS, A KINGDOM, AND ALL ITS SUBJECTS.

THOUGH THE KINGS WERE HOLY
AND THEIR SUBJECTS AMONG THE VIRTUOUS,
YET HE IS BLAMELESS.

The first sutra:

THERE IS PLEASURE
AND THERE IS BLISS.
FORGO THE FIRST TO POSSESS THE SECOND.

Meditate over it as deeply as possible, because it contains one of the most fundamental truths. These four words will have to be understood, pondered over. The first is pleasure, the second, happiness; the third is joy, and the fourth is bliss.

Pleasure is physical, physiological. Pleasure is the most superficial thing in life; it is titillation. It can be sexual, it can be of other senses, it can become an obsession with food, but it is rooted in the body. The body is your periphery, your circumference; it is not your center. And to live on the circumference is to live on the mercy of all kinds of things that go on happening around you. The man who seeks pleasure remains at the mercy of accidents.

It is like the waves in the ocean; they are at the mercy of the winds. When strong winds come, they are there; when winds disappear, they disappear. They don't have an independent existence; they are dependent, and anything that is dependent on the other brings bondage.

Pleasure is dependent on the other. If you love a woman, if that is your pleasure, then that woman becomes your master. If you love a man, if that is your pleasure and you

feel unhappy, in despair, sad, without him, then you have created a bondage for yourself. You have created a prison, you are no more in freedom.

If you are a seeker after money and power, then you will be dependent on money and power. The man who goes on accumulating money, if it is his pleasure to have more and more money, will become more and more miserable -- because the more he has, the more he wants, and the more he has, the more he is afraid to lose it. A double-edged sword: the more he wants... the first edge of the sword. Hence he becomes more and more miserable.

The more you demand, desire, the more you feel yourself lacking something, the more hollow, empty, you appear to yourself. On the other hand -- the other edge of the sword -- is that the more you have, the more you are afraid it can be taken away; it can be stolen. The bank can go bankrupt, the political situation in the country can change, the country can go communist. There are a thousand and one things upon which your money depends. Your money does not make you a master, it makes you a slave. Pleasure is peripheral; hence it is bound to depend on the outer circumstances. And it is only titillation.

If food is pleasure, what actually is being enjoyed? -- just the taste! For a moment, when the food passes your taste buds on the tongue, you feel a sensation which you interpret as pleasure. It is your interpretation. Today it may look like pleasure and tomorrow it may not look like pleasure. If you go on eating the same food every day your buds on the tongue will become nonresponsive to it. Soon you will be fed up with it -- that's how people become fed up.

One day you are running after a man or a woman and the next day you are trying to find an excuse to get rid of the other. The same person, nothing has changed! What has happened meanwhile? You are bored with the other, because the whole pleasure was in knowing the new. Now the other is no longer new; you are acquainted with the territory of the other. You are acquainted with the body of the other, the curves of the body, the feel of the body. Now the mind is hankering for something new.

The mind is always hankering for something new. That's how mind keeps you always tethered somewhere in the future. It keeps you hoping, but it never delivers the goods -- it cannot. It can only create new hopes, new desires.

Just as leaves grow on the trees, desires and hopes grow in the mind. You wanted a new house and now you have it -- and where is the pleasure? Just for the moment it was there, when you achieved your goal. Once you have achieved your goal, your mind is no longer interested in it; it has already started spinning new webs of desire. It has already started thinking of other, bigger houses. And this is so about everything.

Pleasure keeps you in a neurotic state, restless, always in turmoil. So many desires, and every desire unquenchable, clamoring for attention. You remain a victim of a crowd of insane desires -- insane because they are unfulfillable -- and they go on dragging you into different directions. You become a contradiction.

One desire takes you to the left, another towards the right, and simultaneously you go on nourishing both the desires. And then you feel a split, then you feel divided, then you feel torn apart, then you feel like you are falling into pieces.

Nobody is responsible. It is the whole stupidity of desiring pleasure that creates this.

And it is a complex phenomenon. You are not the only one who is seeking pleasure; millions of people just like you are seeking the same pleasures. Hence there is great struggle, competition, violence, war. All have become enemies to each other because they are all seeking the same goal, and they all can't have it; hence the struggle has to be total. You have to risk all -- for nothing, because when you gain, you gain nothing, and your whole life is wasted in this struggle. A life which might have been a celebration becomes a long, drawn out, unnecessary struggle.

When you are so much after pleasure you cannot love, because the man who seeks pleasure uses the other as a means. And to use the other as a means is one of the most immoral acts possible, because each being is an end unto himself, you cannot use the other as a means. But in pleasure-seeking you have to use the other as a means. You become cunning because it is such a struggle. If you are not cunning you will be deceived, and before others deceive you, you have to deceive them.

Machiavelli has advised pleasure-seekers that the best way of defense is to attack. Never wait for the other to attack you; that may be too late. Before the other attacks you, you attack him! That is the best way of defense. And this is being followed, whether you know Machiavelli or not.

This is something very strange: people know about Christ, about Buddha, about Mohammed, about Krishna; nobody follows them. People don't know much about Chanakya and Machiavelli, but people follow them -- as if Machiavelli and Chanakya are very close to your heart!

You need not read them, you are already following them. Your whole society is based on Machiavellian principles; that's what the whole political game is all about. Before somebody snatches anything from you, snatch it from the other. Be always on guard. Naturally, if you are always on guard you will be tense, anxious, worried. And the struggle IS such and it is constant. You are one, and the enemies are millions.

For example, if in India you want to become the prime minister, then millions of people, who also want to become the prime minister, are your enemies. And who does not want to become the prime minister? One may say, one may not say. So everyone is against you and you are against everybody else. This small life of seventy, eighty years, will be wasted into some utterly futile effort. Pleasure is not and cannot be the goal of life.

The second word to be understood is happiness. Happiness is psychological, pleasure is physiological. Happiness is a little better, a little more refined, a little higher, but not very much different from pleasure. You can say that pleasure is a lower kind of happiness and happiness is a little higher kind of pleasure -- two sides of the same coin. Pleasure is a little primitive, animal; happiness is a little more cultured, a little more human -- but it is the same game played in the world of the mind. You are not so much concerned with physiological sensations; you are much more concerned with psychological sensations. But basically they are not different; hence Buddha has not talked about four words, he has talked about only two.

The third is joy; joy is spiritual. It is different, totally different from pleasure, happiness. It has nothing to do with

the other; it is inner. It is not dependent on circumstances; it is your own. It is not a titillation produced by things; it is a state of peace, of silence, a meditative state. It is spiritual. But Buddha has not talked about joy either, because there is still one thing that goes beyond joy. He calls it bliss. Bliss is total. It is neither physiological nor psychological nor spiritual. It knows no division, it is indivisible. It is total in one sense and transcendental in another sense. Buddha only talks about two words. The first is pleasure; it includes happiness. The second is bliss; it includes joy.

Bliss means you have reached to the very innermost core of your being. It belongs to the ultimate depth of your being where even the ego is no more, where only silence prevails; you have disappeared. In joy you are a little bit, but in bliss you are not. The ego has dissolved; it is a state of nonbeing. Buddha calls it nirvana. Nirvana means you have ceased to be; you are just an infinite emptiness like the sky. And the moment you are that infinity, you become full of the stars, and a totally new life begins. You are reborn.

Pleasure is momentary, of time, for the time being; bliss is nontemporal, timeless. Pleasure begins and ends; bliss abides forever. Pleasure comes and goes; bliss never comes, never goes -- it is already there in the innermost core of your being. Pleasure has to be snatched away from the other; you become either a beggar or a thief. Bliss makes you a master. Bliss is not something that you invent but something that you discover. Bliss is your innermost nature. It has been there since the very beginning, you just have not looked at it, you have taken it for granted. You don't look inwards.

This is the only misery of man: that he goes on looking outwards, seeking and searching. And you cannot find it in the outside because it is not there.

One evening, Rabiya was searching for something on the street in front of her small hut. The sun was setting; slowly slowly darkness was descending. A few people gathered. They asked the old woman -- she was a famous Sufi mystic -- "What are you doing? What have you lost? What are you searching for?"
She said, "I have lost my needle."
The people said, "Now the sun is setting and it will be very difficult to find the needle, but we will help you. Where exactly has it fallen? -- because the road is big and the needle is so small. If we know the exact place it will be easier to find it."
Rabiya said, "If you don't ask me that question, that will be better -- because in fact it has not fallen on the road at all! It has fallen inside my house."
The people started laughing and they said, "We had always thought that you are a little insane! If the needle has fallen inside the house, then why are you searching on the road?"
Rabiya said, "For a simple, logical reason: inside the house there is no light and on the outside a little light is still there."
The people laughed and started dispersing.
Rabiya called them and said, "Listen! That's exactly what you are doing; I was just following your example. You go on seeking bliss in the outside world without asking the first and primary question: Where have you lost it? And I tell you, you have lost it inside. You are looking for it on

the outside, for the simple, logical reason that your senses open outwards -- there is a little more light. Your eyes look outwards, your ears hear outwards, your hands reach outwards; that's the simple reason why you are searching there. Otherwise, I tell you, you have not lost it outside -- and I tell you on my own authority. I have also searched on the outside for many, many lives, and the day I looked in I was surprised. There was no need to seek and search; it has always been there."

Bliss is your innermost core. Pleasure you have to beg from others; naturally you become dependent. Bliss makes you a master. Bliss is not something that happens; it is already the case.

Buddha says: THERE IS PLEASURE AND THERE IS BLISS. FORGO THE FIRST TO POSSESS THE SECOND. Stop looking on the outside. Look within, turn in. Start seeking and searching in your own interiority, into your own subjectivity. Bliss is not an object to be found anywhere else; it is your consciousness.

In the East we have always defined the ultimate truth as SAT-CHIT-ANAND. SAT means truth, CHIT means consciousness, ANAND means bliss. They are all three faces of the same reality. This is the true trinity -- not God the Father, and the Son, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Ghost; that is not the true trinity. The true trinity is truth, consciousness, bliss. And they are not separate phenomena, but one energy expressing in three ways, one energy having three faces. Hence in the East we say God is TRIMURTI -- God has three faces. These are the real faces, not Brahma, Vishnu, Mahesh. Those are for the children -- spiritually,

metaphysically, for the immature. Brahma, Vishnu, Mahesh: those names are for the beginners.

Truth, consciousness, bliss -- these are the ultimate truths. First comes truth; as you enter in, you become aware of your eternal reality: sat, truth. As you go deeper into your reality, into your sat, into your truth, you become aware of consciousness, a tremendous consciousness. All is light, nothing is dark. All is awareness, nothing is unawareness. You are just a flame of consciousness, not even a shadow of unconsciousness anywhere. And when you enter still deeper, then the ultimate core is bliss -- anand.

Buddha says: Forgo everything that you have thought up to now meaningful, significant. Sacrifice everything for this ultimate because this is the only thing that will make you contented, that will make you fulfilled, that will bring spring to your being... and you will blossom into a thousand and one flowers.

Pleasure will keep you a driftwood. Pleasure will make you more and more cunning; it will not give you wisdom. And it will make you more and more a slave; it will not give you the kingdom of God. It will make you more and more calculating, it will make you more and more exploitative. It will make you more and more political, diplomatic. You will start sucking people; that's what people are doing.

The husband says to the wife, "I love you," but in reality he simply uses her. The wife says she loves the husband, but she is simply using him. The husband may be using her as a sexual object and the wife may be using him as a financial security.

Pleasure makes everybody cunning, deceptive. And to be cunning is to miss the bliss of being innocent, is to miss the bliss of being a child.

At Lockheed, a part was needed for a new airplane and an announcement was sent around the world to get the lowest bid. From Poland came a bid of three thousand dollars. England offered to build the part for six thousand. The asking price from Israel was nine thousand. Richardson, the engineer in charge of constructing the new plane, decided to visit each country to find the reason behind the disparity of the bids.
In Poland, the manufacturer explained, "One thousand for the materials needed, one thousand for the labor, and one thousand for overhead and a tiny profit."
In England, Richardson inspected the part and found that it was almost as good as the Polish-made one. "Why are you asking six thousand?" inquired the engineer.
"Two thousand for material," explained the Englishman, "two thousand for labor, and two thousand for expenses and a small profit."
In Israel, the Lockheed representative wandered through a back alley into a small shop and encountered an elderly man who had submitted the bid of nine thousand dollars.
"Why are you asking that much?" he asked.
"Well," said the old Jew, "three thousand for you, three thousand for me, and three thousand for the schmuck in Poland!"

Money, power, prestige -- they all make you cunning.

Seek pleasure and you will lose your innocence; and to lose your innocence is to lose all. Jesus says: be like a small child, only then can you enter into my kingdom of God. And he is right. But the pleasure-seeker cannot be as innocent as a child. He has to be very clever, very cunning, very political; only then can he succeed in this cut-throat competition that exists all around. Everybody is at everybody else's throat. You are not living amongst friends. The world cannot be friendly unless we drop this idea of competitiveness.

But we bring every child.... From the very beginning we start poisoning every child with this poison of competitiveness. By the time he will be coming out of the university he will be completely poisoned. We have hypnotized him with the idea that he has to fight with others, that life is a survival of the fittest. Then life can never be a celebration. Then life can never have any kind of religiousness in it. Then it cannot be pious, holy. Then it cannot have any quality of sacredness. Then it is all mean, ugly.

Buddha says: FORGO THE FIRST TO POSSESS THE SECOND.

IF YOU ARE HAPPY
AT THE EXPENSE OF ANOTHER MAN'S HAPPINESS,
YOU ARE FOREVER BOUND.

Naturally. If you are happy at the expense of another man's happiness -- and that is how you can be happy, there is no other way. If you find a beautiful woman and somehow manage to possess her, you have snatched her away from

others' hands. We make things look as beautiful as possible, but that is only the appearance. Now the others who have lost in the game, they are angry, they are in a rage. They will wait for their opportunity to take revenge, and sooner or later the opportunity will be there.

Whatsoever you possess in this world you possess at somebody else's expense, at the cost of somebody else's pleasure. There is no other way. If you really want not to be inimical to anybody in the world, you have to drop the whole idea of possessiveness. Use whatsoever happens to be with you in the moment, but don't be possessive. Don't try to claim that it is yours. Nothing is yours, all is God's. We come with empty hands and we will go with empty hands, so what is the point of claiming so much in the meantime?

But this is what we know, what the world is: possess, dominate, have more than the others have. And it may be money or it may be virtue; it does not matter in what kind of coins you deal -- they may be worldly, they may be otherworldly. But be very clever, otherwise you will be exploited. Exploit and don't be exploited -- that is the subtle message given to you with your mother's milk. And every school, college, university, is rooted in the idea: compete. A real education will not teach you to compete; it will teach you to cooperate. It will not teach you to fight and come first. It will teach you to be creative, to be loving, to be blissful, without any comparison with the other. It will not teach you that you can be happy only when you are the first. That is sheer nonsense. You can't be happy just by being first. And in trying to be first you go through such

misery that you become habituated to misery by the time you become the first.

By the time you become the president or the prime minister of a country you have gone through such misery that now misery is your second nature. You don't know now any other way to exist; you remain miserable. Tension has become ingrained, anxiety has become your way of life. You don't know any other way; this is your very style. So even though you have become the first you remain cautious, anxious, afraid. It does not change your inner quality at all.

A real education will not teach you to be the first. It will tell you to enjoy whatsoever you are doing, not for the result but for the act itself. Just like a painter or a dancer or a musician....

You can paint in two ways. You can paint to compete with other painters; you want to be the greatest painter in the world, you want to be a Picasso or a Van Gogh. Then your painting will be second-rate, because your mind is not interested in painting itself; it is interested in being the first, the greatest painter in the world. You are not going deep into the art of painting. You are not enjoying it, you are only using it as a stepping-stone. You are on an ego trip. And the problem is: to really be a painter, you have to drop the ego completely. To really be a painter, the ego has to be put aside. Only then can God flow through you. Only then can he use your hands and your fingers and your brush. Only then something of superb beauty can be born.

It is never BY you but only THROUGH you. Existence flows; you become only a passage. You allow it to happen, that's all; you don't hinder, that's all.

But if you are too interested in the result, the ultimate result -- that you have to become famous, that you have to win the Nobel Prize, that you have to be the first painter in the world, that you have to defeat all other painters hitherto -- then your interest is not in painting; painting is secondary. And of course, with a secondary interest in painting you can't paint something original; it will be ordinary.
Ego cannot bring anything extraordinary into the world; the extraordinary comes only through egolessness. And so is the case with the musician and the poet and the dancer. And so is the case with everybody.

In the Gita, Krishna says: Don't think of the result at all. It is a message of tremendous beauty and significance and truth. Don't think of the result at all. Just do what you are doing with your totality. Get lost into it. Lose the doer in the doing. Don't be -- let your creative energies flow unhindered.
That's why he said to Arjuna, "Don't escape from the war... because I can see this is just an ego trip, this escape. The way you are talking simply shows that you are calculating: that you are thinking that by escaping from the war you will become a great mahatma. Rather than surrendering to God, to the whole, you are taking yourself too seriously: as if, if you are not there, there will be no war."
Krishna says to Arjuna, "Listen to me. Just be in a state of let-go. Say to God, 'Use me in whatsoever way you want to use me. Use me! I am available, unconditionally available.' Then whatsoever happens through you will have a great authenticity about it. It will have intensity, it will have depth. It will have the impact of the eternal on it. It will be

signed by God, not by you. And you will rejoice because God has chosen you to be a vehicle."

Buddha says: IF YOU ARE HAPPY AT THE EXPENSE OF ANOTHER MAN'S HAPPINESS, YOU ARE FOREVER BOUND.
And happiness, pleasure, depend on exploitation. You are always at the expense of somebody else. You come first in the university -- what about those thousands of other students who were also struggling to come first? It is at their expense that you have come first.
Jesus says: Remember, those who are first in this world will be the last in my kingdom of God, and those who are the last will be the first. He has given you the fundamental law -- AES DHAMMO SANANTANO -- he has given you the inexhaustible, eternal law: Stop trying to be the first. But remember one thing which is very much possible, because the mind is so cunning it can distort every truth. You can start trying to be the last -- but then you miss the whole point. Then another competition starts: that I'm to be the last, and if somebody else says, "I am the last," then the struggle, then the conflict.

I have heard a Sufi parable:
A great emperor, Nadirshah, was praying. It was early morning; the sun had not yet risen, it was still dark. Nadirshah was to start on that day a new conquest of a new country. Of course he was praying to God for his blessings to be victorious. He was saying to God, "I am nobody, I am just a servant -- a servant of your servants. Bless me. I am

going on YOUR work, this is your victory. And I am nobody, remember. I am just a servant of your servants."
The priest was also by his side, helping him in prayer, functioning as a mediator between him and God.
And then suddenly they heard in the darkness another voice. A beggar of the town was also praying, and he was saying to God, "I am also nobody, a servant of your servants."
The king said to the priest, "Look at this beggar! He is a beggar and saying to God that 'I am nobody'! Stop this nonsense! Who are you to say you are nobody before me? I am nobody, and nobody else can claim this. And I am the servant of his servants -- and who are you to say that you are the servant of the servants?"

Now you see, the competition is still there, the same competition, the same stupidity. Nothing has changed. The same calculation: "I have to be the last. Nobody else can be allowed to be the last."
Mind can go on playing such games on you if you are not very understanding, if you are not very intelligent.
One thing Buddha wants you to remember is: never try to be happy at the expense of another man's happiness. That is ugly, inhuman. That is violence in the true sense. If you are a saint by condemning others as sinners, your saintliness is nothing but a new ego trip. If you are holy because you are trying to prove others unholy... and that's what your holy people go on doing. They go on bragging about their holiness, saintliness.
Go to your so-called saints and look into their eyes. They have such condemnation for you. They are saying that you

are all bound towards hell. They go on condemning. Listen to their sermons; all their sermons are condemnatory. And of course you listen silently to their condemnations because you know also that you have made many mistakes in your life, errors in your life. And they have condemned everything so it is impossible to feel that you can be good -- impossible. You love food, you are a sinner. You love your children, you are a sinner. You love your wife, you are a sinner. You don't get up early in the morning, you are a sinner. You don't go to bed early in the evening, you are a sinner. They have arranged everything in such a way that it is very difficult not to be a sinner.

Yes, THEY are not sinners -- they go early to bed and they get up early in the morning. In fact, they have nothing else to do! And they never commit any mistakes because they never do anything. They are just sitting there almost dead. They are mummies, corpses, full of rubbish! But because they don't do anything they are holy. And if you do something, of course, how can you be holy? Hence for centuries the holy man has been renouncing the world and escaping from the world, because to be in the world and be holy seems to be impossible.

My whole approach is: unless you ARE in the world your holiness is of no worth at all. Be in the world and be holy! Then we have to define holiness in a totally different way. Don't live at the expense of others' pleasures -- that is holiness. Don't destroy others' happiness -- that is not holiness. Help others to be happy. Create the climate in which everybody can have a little joy.

And what have your saints done? They have done just the opposite. They have created a climate in which everybody

is living in hell -- and they are holy. They have condemned God's world and they have taught you to renounce it.
If God is against the world he should have renounced it himself! But he has not yet renounced. Still the spring comes and the flowers bloom, the bees buzz and the birds sing... and the sun still rises, and the night is full of stars. Still new babies go on coming. God has not stopped creation.
It is all nonsense that in six days he created the world and since then he has retired -- it is all nonsense! He can't have a single holiday, because if God goes for a single holiday we will all be dead. Then who will breathe life into us? Then who will be the color in the flowers and the wings of the birds? And who will be the light in the sun and the greenness of the grass? If for twenty-four hours he goes on a holiday, if he has a Sunday, finished -- everything is finished! He can't have a holiday -- and he need not have. He loves the world; it is his creation. It is not work, it is creativity. It is his joy, it is his play. Do you think on Sunday morning birds don't sing because it is Sunday and they are not going to do any work? Sunday or Monday, it makes no difference. The birds sing and the trees grow and you breathe and existence continues in its celebration without any gap, without any discontinuity.
God has not renounced the world -- and your saints are bigger than God, higher than God, holier than God himself! My own feeling is: God must be afraid of your saints. That's why he never appears before them -- because they will condemn him. They will tell him how many mistakes and how many sins he has committed, and they will ask him how many fasts he has done and how many prayers he

is doing every day. And of course he will be at a loss -- he does not pray and he does not fast and he does not read the holy scriptures! He will look very irreligious.
But these saints had to create this idea: that your life is a sin. You are conceived in sin and you live in sin, and in death you will be dying as a sinner. You are doomed! That gives them great joy. They feel holier-than-thou, they feel they are saved -- the chosen few.
I tell you, there is no difference between a sinner and a saint. All are chosen and all will be saved -- all ARE saved. God is always surrounding you. What more do you need? Everybody is saved.
But if this is the truth, then your saints will start disappearing -- with their big egos. It will be very difficult for them to exist. They are living at your expense. The worse sinner they prove you to be, the more saintly they look; hence they have invented many things. Catholics have confession. It is a great joy to the priest to listen to everybody's sins. The more you talk about your sin, the more he feels holy.
IF YOU ARE HAPPY AT THE EXPENSE OF ANOTHER MAN'S HAPPINESS, YOU ARE FOREVER BOUND.

The dumbest kid in class showed up at the reunion with a gorgeous blond on his arm and a Cadillac at the curb. He showered drinks on everybody. Stunned, one old friend asked, "How did you do it, Abe? You were always slow in math."
"Well," said Abe, "you buy something for a dollar and you sell it for two and that lousy one percent really adds up!"

That's what everybody is doing, whether you know mathematics or you don't. Everybody is exploiting everybody else. Everybody's hand is in somebody else's pocket; and he may not be able to detect it because his own hand is in somebody else's pocket. But then you will depend on the others, YOU ARE FOREVER BOUND. Whomsoever you exploit, on the surface you seem to be the master of the situation, but really you are a slave.

The new neighbor joined the mah-jongg group for the first time, and all the ladies gaped at the huge diamond she wore. "It is the third most famous diamond in the world," she told the women. "First is the Kohinoor diamond, then the Hope diamond, and then this one -- the Horowitz diamond."
"It is beautiful!" said Mrs. Fisch, "You are so lucky!"
"Not so lucky," sighed the newcomer. "Unfortunately, with the famous Horowitz diamond, I am afflicted with the famous Horowitz curse."
"What is that?" asked Mrs. Fisch.
"Mr. Horowitz," said the woman.

That's how it is: if you depend on someone for your happiness you are becoming a slave, you are becoming dependent, you are creating a bondage. And you depend on so many people; they all become subtle masters and they all exploit you in return. It is a mutual arrangement, remember. Exploitation is never a one-way traffic. The husband thinks he is the master, and the wife smiles because she knows better who is the master.

One day Mulla Nasruddin's wife was running after him with a stick. To save himself he slipped underneath the bed. The wife is a fat woman and she could not enter.
Mulla said, "Now you know who is the master of the house!"
And then exactly at that moment, somebody knocked on the door; some neighbors had come. The wife started asking Mulla to come out. "We can finish this quarrel later on. Now the neighbors are there."
Mulla said, "Let them come! Let everybody know once and for all who is the master of this house! I am the master, and wherever I want to sit I will sit!"

What kind of mastery is this -- sitting underneath the bed? But every husband thinks that he is the master and every wife thinks that she is the master. Even small children... parents think they are the masters; they are wrong. The children know how to manipulate you, they know how to create trouble for you -- in the right moment. When the neighbors are in the house they start exploiting you, they start demanding this and that. When you are in the marketplace, in the shopping center, they create a tantrum, and you have to purchase the toy they want. If others were not there you would have given them a good beating -- but when others are there you are very polite, very cultured. Let the neighbors come, then they will see! They have their own times, opportunities, when to manipulate you.
Every child knows -- even a small child knows -- how to exploit the mother, the father, and when. When the father starts reading his newspaper, he starts asking questions. He

won't allow the father to read the newspaper unless his demands are fulfilled.
Everybody in his own way tries to be the master of the other. And in fact, it is a strange situation: everybody has become in a sense the master of others, and also a slave of others. It is a double-bind situation. We are all interdependent; we are both jailors and prisoners.

YOU DO NOT WHAT YOU SHOULD.
YOU DO WHAT YOU SHOULD NOT.
YOU ARE RECKLESS, AND DESIRE GROWS.

Buddha says: You go on doing that which you should not -- and you know it; and you go on doing things which harm you, harm others. Still you persist in doing them because you seem to be almost incapable of remaining conscious. You are so unconscious; that's why you do not what you should and you do what you should not.
He is not giving you commandments: that you should do this and you should not do that. He is simply making it clear to you that you are so unconscious that you go on harming yourself and others. You have to become conscious. With consciousness, your life starts changing.

Women's liberation has become an integral part of Egyptian society despite the traditional disapproval of girls who date many different men.
One night, Sabra was sitting in a car with a boy who began kissing her passionately while removing her dress. She started to sob.
"Why are you crying?" he asked.

"I am afraid you will take me for the wrong kind of girl. I am not that kind."
"Stop crying -- I believe you."
"You are the first man," sobbed Sabra.
"You mean I am the first man to do this with you?"
"No. You are the first man to believe me."

People don't know what they are doing, don't know what they are saying. People know only when they have done it, only when they have said it. People know only when it is too late to change anything, when the harm is already done. YOU ARE RECKLESS, AND DESIRE GROWS. And in this unconscious soil nothing but desire grows. Desire is like weeds. If you don't look after your garden, roses will disappear soon and there will be weeds and weeds.

Mulla Nasruddin has purchased a new house and he planted a beautiful garden, a beautiful lawn. Then a new neighbor moved into the empty house by the side of Mulla's house. He was enchanted with Mulla's garden and his lawn. He said, "I would also like to make a beautiful lawn, but how do you know what is grass and what is just weeds?"
Mulla said, "Very simple. You pull out both and throw them. Whatsoever grows again on its own is weeds."

Weeds grow on their own; you need not take any care of them. That's how it is with the unconscious desires: they grow on their own. They are rooted in your biology, in your past, in your physiology, in your hormones, in your chemistry.

Consciousness has to be deliberate. One has to make arduous effort to be conscious. And when you are conscious you do that which should be done and you do not do that which should not be done.
Buddha is not giving you detailed information about what should be done and what should not be done. That is the difference between Buddha and other masters. He simply gives you the master key which unlocks all the locks; there is no need to go on carrying a thousand keys for every lock. Buddha says: Be conscious and that's enough. Then things will start changing in your life.

... THE MASTER IS WAKEFUL.

That is the fundamental key.

HE WATCHES HIS BODY.
IN ALL HIS ACTIONS HE DISCRIMINATES,
AND HE BECOMES PURE.

Now this word 'discrimination' is not the right translation. Buddha's word is VIVEK. Vivek can be translated in two ways: either as "discrimination" or as "awareness." Whenever Buddha and Mahavira use the word 'vivek' they use it in the sense of awareness, never in the sense of discrimination -- because discrimination means thinking. You are thinking, "This is good and this is not good. This I should do and this I should not do."
Awareness is not thinking; it is clear insight. It is not a question of choosing -- awareness is choiceless. You simply know that this is the only thing that can be done;

there is no alternative. You don't choose, you don't weigh which is better. You simply know -- your whole heart knows -- that this is so, and you can't go against it.
IN ALL HIS ACTIONS HE is aware, AND HE BECOMES PURE. Awareness brings purity, innocence.

HE IS WITHOUT BLAME
THOUGH ONCE HE MAY HAVE MURDERED
HIS MOTHER AND HIS FATHER,
TWO KINGS, A KINGDOM, AND ALL ITS SUBJECTS.

THOUGH THE KINGS WERE HOLY
AND THEIR SUBJECTS AMONG THE VIRTUOUS,
YET HE IS BLAMELESS.

In Buddha's time, these were considered to be the greatest crimes: to kill your own father and mother, and to kill the king.
Buddha says: A man who becomes aware, for him his whole past is like a dream; it disappears without leaving even a trace behind it. It is as if in the dream you kill your father and mother and when in the morning you wake up, do you go to the priest to confess that you have committed a great sin? -- you killed your father and mother in the dream. Or do you go to apologize to your parents, that "Forgive me -- I killed you last night"? You simply forget all about it. It is a dream, it doesn't matter. The father and mother are not killed.
Buddha says: When you become aware, all that you have done in your unawareness, in your unconsciousness, in

your sleep, in your metaphysical sleep, is nothing but a dream.
And remember: bad deeds are dreams, good deeds are dreams. Your being a sinner in a dream is a dream as much as your being a saint. When you wake up you are neither a sinner nor a saint. You are simply awareness.

Once Buddha was asked, "Who are you? Are you a god?"
He said, "No."
"Are you an angel?"
He said, "No."
"Are you a CHAKRAVARTIN -- a great emperor of all the world?"
He said, "No."
The questioner was very much puzzled. He said, "You go on saying no to everything. At least you must be a human being! Now you cannot say no."
Buddha laughed and said, "Yes, I will still say no!"
"Then who are you?" the man asked, annoyed.
Buddha said, "I am just awareness. All these human beings and angels and gods, they were part of my metaphysical sleep. That sleep is no longer there; I have become awakened."

That's exactly the meaning of the word 'buddha': one who has become awakened, one who is enlightened, one who is no longer dreaming. And when you are not dreaming, you have clarity, you can see. And that very seeing becomes the determining factor of your life. Only then you do that which should be done and you don't do that which should not be done.

It is not a question of discriminating between right and wrong. It is a question of coming out of your sleep.
Wake up!
Enough for today.
The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 8
Chapter #6
Chapter title: I call a spade a spade
26 December 1979 am in Buddha Hall

The first question:
Question 1
BELOVED MASTER,
YESTERDAY YOU SAID THAT YOU DON'T NEED TO KNOW US ALL PERSONALLY. I FEEL THAT EVERY ONE OF US IS AT A DIFFERENT PLACE AND HAS A DIFFERENT REASON TO BE HERE IN THIS LIFE, SO AM I WRONG IF I FEEL THAT THE WAY FOR EVERYONE IS DIFFERENT BUT LEADS TO THE SAME GOAL?

Annemarie Muller, there is no goal and there is no way to it. You are already there, you have never been anywhere else. The very idea of the way and the goal is a mind game. First you create a goal, an ambition, a desire far away in the future, a utopia, worldly or otherworldly, Catholic or communist, and then you start thinking about the ways. But basically there is no goal, hence all ways are false. And once you start trying to achieve the goal, you will get more and more in confusion.

All the ways are just dream stuff, because in the first place you have never left the home, you have only fallen asleep. Adam and Eve have never been expelled from the Garden of Eden, they have only fallen asleep. Eating from the tree of knowledge, the fruit of knowledge, they have become rational beings. That is their sleep; they have lost track of their own heart, they have forgotten about it. But it is there, it has not moved anywhere else.

You are still in the Garden of Eden, you are still in God; where else can you be? There is no other place to be. This is my fundamental approach: that there is no goal, no way, you are not to achieve something. The whole idea of achieving is nothing but an ego trip. First you try to achieve money, power, prestige, and when you fail -- which is bound to happen, because the mind goes on asking for more and more -- when you are in deep frustration, you start turning into a religious person. But your whole pattern remains the same. You still desire a goal. Now it is no longer money, it is meditation; now it is no longer power but paradise. It is the same game being played with other words. Mind has deceived you, mind has taken you on another trip.

How long are you going to be deceived by your own mind? The emphasis is not on going anywhere but on waking up. For example, three thousand people are here right now; if you all fall asleep, you will all be here, nobody will have left the place but you will all dream separate dreams. Dreams are very private things; in fact there is nothing more private than a dream. You cannot share your dream even with your beloved, you cannot invite your friends to participate in a dream -- it is impossible, you are absolutely

alone there. A dream is not an objective phenomenon, it is not a reality; it is just an idea which has hypnotized you, so much so that it appears real. The presence of the other will reveal its unreality.

So if you all fall asleep, naturally you will be at different places. Somebody will be in Constantinople, and somebody in Tokyo, and somebody in Beijing, but in reality you will all be here and now. Your places will be different: somebody will be a king, somebody a beggar, and somebody will be a man, and somebody will be a woman, somebody will be very famous, somebody will be just a nonentity. But do you think these things make any difference? You can all be awakened, and all your dreams, separate dreams, different dreams, will evaporate alike.

You say, "I feel that every one of us is at a different place...."

Certainly, but in a dream. One is a sinner, another is a saint; one is a Christian, another is a Hindu; one is white, another is black. All dreams! In your innermost core you are only a pure consciousness, just awareness and nothing else, a pure mirror, not identified with the reflections.

That's the whole effort of a master -- to wake you up, not to goad you towards certain goals. If the master goads you towards certain goals he will have great appeal for your mind; your mind will agree with him, because that's what the mind hankers for: new goals, so the journey continues, and the stupidity of it all remains.

The real master shatters all your goals. It is only by the shattering of your dreams that you can be awakened. What do you mean by "persons"? The word 'person' comes from the Greek root PERSONA. Persona means a mask. A

person is a false phenomenon, it is a mask, it is not your reality. But the ego wants to be recognized personally. The ego wants to relate personally, the ego wants recognition, attention; otherwise you are not a person. Nobody is, nobody has ever been. It is only on the circumference that the mask can exist and can deceive others. But you must know that it is a mask, a camouflage. Deep down behind the mask are you a person? No. Not at all. You are only a presence, not a person.

I relate with your presence, not with your personality. How can I relate with your dreams? I relate with you, but not with your dreams. And it is only in dreams that you are separate. In reality we are all one, it is one organic whole.

You say, "I feel that every one of us is at a different place and has a different reason to be here in this life...."

All nonsense. To be frank with you, just bullshit! But the ego goes on playing with this beautiful idea, that "I have a special reason to be here." Every grass blade also thinks the same way, and every pebble on the shore believes in the same way. Ask any dog or buffalo or donkey, and they all believe that they are here for a special reason and they have come to fulfill a certain mission, they have brought a message to the world. And those who want to exploit you go on telling you such nonsense.

Existence has no reason at all; it simply is. That's its beauty. It has no cause to it, it has no direction either, it is not going anywhere, it has nothing to fulfill. That's its beauty, tremendous beauty. It exists for no reason at all; that's its mystery, unfathomable, immeasurable.

If you can know the reason for existence you have demystified it, you have destroyed all its beauty. Then it

carries no more meaning, remember. Then there will be no significance. Why is there love? Is there any reason to it? Yes, if you ask the chemist, the physiologist, he will say, "Yes, it is the hormones in the chemistry of your body; lust maybe, but not love." You are more than the sum total of your parts, and in that more exists God. In that irrational element that permeates the whole exists God.

Tertullian is right when he says: CREDO QUA ABSURDUM -- I believe in God because God is absurd. Tertullian is one of those great buddhas of the world who have really seen through and through. "I believe in God because God is absurd," is one of the greatest statements ever made, one of the most pregnant statements. To believe in God because there are reasons to believe is not much; then anybody will believe. It is not a quantum leap, it is not jumping out of your mind. All arguments convince the mind, and if the mind believes, it is not religious.

When your heart is stirred by something you cannot express; which cannot be adequately even put into words; out of which no system can be made, no scripture, no religion; which simply leaves you dumb, in deep awe and wonder, in a kind of tremendous shock, all old notions shattered, in silence -- you lose all your reasoning, all your argumentation -- only then are you in communion with the whole. It is not a question of argument, and you are not here to fulfill something. It is just a celebration: life for life's sake.

But our minds want something to be nourished by, so your so-called religious preachers, priests, philosophers, theologians, they go on giving you nourishment. They say, "You are sent here for special purposes. You have a special

place. Some great work is being done by you." And your ego feels puffed up.

I cannot do it. I am not your enemy. The moment I find any chance I am going to destroy these puffed up egos, spiritual egos, pious egos, religious egos. But the ego is an ego; on what it stands does not matter, on what it is nourished is irrelevant.

No, I don't see that you have a different place; yes, a different dream. And I don't see that you have "... a different reason to be here in this life." There is no reason at all. It is simple celebration. It is the overflowing energy of existence, or God. What is the reason for the waves of the ocean? What is the reason for the rays of the sun? What is the reason for the birds singing? a distant call of the cuckoo? And what is the reason for a dewdrop shining in the early morning sun? What is the reason for a roseflower? Can't you ever look at life without this business-type mind, always calculating? Can't you put it aside even for a few moments to look at reality as it is? And then you will be surprised: there is no reason at all. Then you can laugh and dance and pray, then only you will have a different quality to your being. The whole will start expressing itself through the part.

But remember again, I am not saying that it will express some special message, that you will become a messiah. I am simply saying the whole will start playing its tremendously absurd game through you without hindrance. It is exquisite, it is beautiful, but it is not arithmetic. It is poetry, it is music, it is dance -- art for art's sake. So is life, so is existence. And that approach I call religious.

The second question:
Question 2
BELOVED MASTER,
WHY DO PEOPLE THINK THAT TO LIVE WITHOUT POLITICS IS IMPOSSIBLE?

Mukesh Bharti, mind IS politics, because mind is ambitious and ambition is the root of politics. If you are ambitious you are political. Your ambition may take the form of religion, but the politics is there. Then you are competing with other saints.
The night Jesus departed from his disciples, the so-called apostles were not much worried about what was going to happen to Jesus. Their worry was: after Jesus, when the Day of Judgment will come and they all will go to paradise, who will stand next to Jesus? Of course, Jesus will be at the right hand of God; that much they can concede. But who will be next to Jesus? They were quarreling and arguing about this. The last night of the master, tomorrow he may be crucified... but that is not their concern. Those apostles are political, and those apostles have created Christianity, and Christianity is politics and nothing else. So is Hinduism and so is Mohammedanism -- all political desires hidden behind religious words.
Man cannot live without politics, because of the mind. You are brought up, you are trained to be political. Every child is poisoned from the very beginning, poisoned by ambition. We teach children to be ambitious: be somebody in the world, be somebody special, somebody superior, defeat others! We give the idea to every child that life is a struggle

and only the fittest survive. Whether you survive by right or wrong means, that is not important.

Twenty-five years of education -- almost one third of your life you are being trained to be ambitious. How can you avoid politics? The only way to avoid politics is to get out of your mind; that means that unless mind is dropped totally, politics will go on clinging to you. You can even be antipolitical but then that will become politics.

You ask me, Mukesh, "Why do people think that to live without politics is impossible?" -- because they cannot conceive how to live without the mind and desire, or how to live without ambition. They know only one way to live: compete, fight! If you are not going to dominate the other, the other is going to dominate you; so before the other dominates you, dominate the other. It is certainly better to dominate than to be dominated; it is better to be the master than to be the slave; it is better to be rich than to be poor. And there is great struggle, and millions of people are fighting for the same thing -- and things are not so many. How many people can be presidents, and how many people can be prime ministers, and how many people can be Fords, Rockefellers and Morgans and Birlas and Tatas? How many people? Very few people. And life is short, and these are the goals to be fulfilled. If you cannot be a Rockefeller, if you cannot be the president of a country, your life is a sheer wastage, you are a failure. Unless you understand that even by becoming a Rockefeller, a Morgan, you are not going to achieve anything... you will be farther away from yourself. You will be deeper in the dreams.

By becoming a president or a prime minister you are not going to achieve any peace or bliss. No music is going to

explode in your innermost being. In fact, you will become more and more ugly. By the time a person becomes a prime minister he becomes the ugliest possible, because the whole struggle makes him ugly. He has to be cunning, more cunning than others, otherwise he will not succeed. He has to be cruel, he has to be violent, he has to be very diplomatic. He has to say one thing, think another, do still another. By the time he reaches to the highest post of his desire, he is completely destroyed. He is no more a human being. He is hollow inside; he has no substance, no soul. But these people are thought to be successful people, these people are thought to be the makers of history. These people are thought to leave their mark on human evolution. These are the most mischievous people in the world, these are the greatest criminals: Genghis Khan, Tamerlane, Adolf Hitler, Joseph Stalin, Mao Zedong, these are the real criminals in the world. Small criminals suffer in the prisons, big criminals become presidents and prime ministers.

But the people who have not been able to achieve these foolish desires also suffer very much. They suffer from an inferiority complex, from failure. Your education creates only two kinds of people. First, those who succeed, and by succeeding they come to know that they have wasted their lives. But it is pointless to tell it to others, because then others will laugh and will think you ridiculous. It is better to go on smiling although you know deep down that you have failed, your life has not been of any significance, you have not enjoyed being here. You have not danced, no song has been sung by your heart. Your whole life has been an experiment in futility. You know it but it is too late. You

cannot go back, and you cannot say the truth -- that will simply reveal your stupidity. It is better to go on playing the role of being successful.

And then the other kind is those who see these successful people and suffer with great jealousy, envy, are greatly wounded that "We could not make it in this life." This is politics.

My effort here is to teach you a different way of life which is not political at all. Let the mind be dropped. Don't be a slave of your mind. Become more conscious, more alert of all the nuisance that your mind is doing to you, the mess the mind is creating in you, the chaos the mind has reduced you to. Just watch, be alert. And slowly slowly, as your watchfulness grows -- Buddha calls it "right mindfulness" -- you will be able to slip out of the mind. Out of the mind and you are out of politics; otherwise, whatsoever you do is politics. If you don't do anything, that too is politics. You participate, either positively or negatively. If you vote you participate, if you don't vote still you participate, in a negative way. There seems to be no choice. In every way you will be part of it.

During the days of Hitler's dominance, five Germans sat at a table in a coffee shop, each thinking his own thoughts. One of them sighed, another groaned aloud. The third shook his head desperately, and the fourth man choked down the tears.

The fifth man, in a frightened voice, whispered, "My friends, be careful! You know it is not safe to talk politics in public."

Whatsoever you do is going to be politics, except one thing: if you really become a dropout from the world of the mind.

People hate this situation, but they don't know what to do about it. They are caught in such a complex situation, they don't know how to get out of it. And the whole crowd is going in a certain direction. If you move in some other direction the crowd becomes angry at you. The crowd does not allow nonconformists. It wants total submission, it wants slaves, it respects slaves. It gives all kinds of honors -- from the lowest honor to the Nobel Prize -- to the slaves, to the conformists, to those who are somehow supporting the status quo.

You can see it happening everywhere. Just look at the so-called respectable people, they are the greatest slaves. That's why they get respect. It is a mutual understanding. You follow the crowd, the crowd respects you, calls you a saint, a mahatma.

Adolf Hitler did not trust the reports he had been getting that the people were still loyal to him. One evening he disguised himself and went to a movie house. Soon the newsreel went on. The announcer said, "And now the latest picture of our great, our benevolent dictator." The commentary went on. The picture flashed on the screen. With one motion, the audience rose in salute, shouting "Heil, Hitler!"

Hitler was so pleased with the response that he forgot to get up. The man behind him tapped him on the shoulder and whispered, "I know how you feel about that bastard, but you had better stand up or the police will arrest you."

That's how everybody feels, but who wants to get into unnecessary trouble?
To be a nonconformist is to ask for trouble, because the mob feels offended. Why does the mob feel offended by a nonconformist? -- because the nonconformist shows signs of intelligence, he shows signs of individuality, authenticity, responsibility, and then people feel stupid compared to him. They can't forgive him -- and the politicians cannot allow such people to exist at all.

The sultan decided to have the Sufi matched against some wild lions in an arena, to entertain and warn the multitude. Many thousands turned up. The Sufi went into the arena, caught the lions by the ears and threw them out of the ring. The crowd went wild. Then the sultan ordered him to be bound hand and foot and elephants to be stampeded over him. By split-second timing he managed to roll away from the elephants' feet. The crowd roared.
Now the sultan had a pit dug, the Sufi buried in it up to the neck, and ordered three powerful and skilled swordsmen to cut off his head. As they struck, he moved his head this way and that to avoid the swipes, so that they started to tire. But by that time the crowd was on its feet, yelling, "Stand still and fight like a man, you tricky mystic!"

Now the poor man is buried, just the head is out of the earth! But intelligence can manage. Down the ages the real Sufis, the real Zen people, the real Buddhas, the real Hassids, the real mystics of all the countries, of all the races, have been utterly disgusted with this whole nonsense

that goes on in the name of politics. They have been teaching their disciples, "Get out of it, it is futile," and they have suffered much because of it.
Mukesh Bharti, if you feel that politics is a dirty game, don't be worried: "Why do people think that to live without politics is impossible?"
Don't waste your time in that. The crowd is going to remain like that forever, but you can come out of it. Even if you can manage that, that's enough. And maybe if you can manage, then a few others will see the light too, because they will see a new joy arising in your being, a new aroma surrounding you, a new aura, a new atmosphere, a new milieu will start touching other people's hearts.
I am not saying, "Become a missionary." That is a dirty word. But if you are out of these ugly games, your life becomes such a beautiful phenomenon that those who have eyes will see and those who have ears will be able to hear and those who have hearts will be able to feel it. And that's all that you can do. That is real service.

The third question:
Question 3
BELOVED MASTER,
WHY ARE YOU SO MUCH AGAINST THINKING, THEOLOGY, PHILOSOPHY?

Gangadhar, because thinking is nothing but dreaming in words. Dreams are nothing but thinking in pictures.
What can you think? You can't think the unknown; you can only go on repeating the known. Thinking is repetitive, it is mechanical. Thinking never brings you to a new insight,

neither in religion nor in science. Nowhere does thinking bring you to new windows to existence. Even in scientific work, real insights have happened not through thinking; they have been all intuitive, they have not been of the intellect. All the great scientists are convinced of the fact that it was not their effort that made them discover new ways of life, new secrets of nature, something of the beyond, something very mysterious. It was not their work, at the most they were only vehicles. Hence I am not in favor of making you great thinkers. In fact, you are already great thinkers. Everybody is a great thinker. So much traffic goes on in the mind; you are continuously thinking, day in, day out, your whole life you are thinking -- to what purpose, to what conclusion?

And I am more against theology than any other kind of thinking because that is the ultimate in stupidity. THEO means god, LOGY means logic: logic about God. That is a contradiction in terms. There is no logic about God. Love yes, logic no, a thousand times no. Yes, there can be love for God, but not logic. And if you come through logic to love, your love is also false, pseudo, plastic, synthetic. Love happens, it is not an argument; then how does it happen? It does not happen through thinking. It happens by glimpses into no-thought, by entering into the intervals between two thoughts. Those are the windows, windows of the divine. I am against theology.

And philosophy has wasted so many beautiful minds that it is a crime now to go on teaching philosophy to people. At least for five thousand years people have been philosophizing. And what has been their conclusion? Philosophy has not come to any conclusion at all. It

confuses people. Bertrand Russell has written in his memoirs that when he was young and went to the university, he had the thought that by studying philosophy at least he would be able to solve a few problems. By the end of his life -- and he lived a long, very long life, and a very philosophical life of constant thinking -- by the end of his life he said, "All that philosophy has done is to create more problems. It has not solved a single one. My old problems are exactly where they were. New problems have certainly arisen out of my philosophical thinking."

And that is the experience of all thinkers, all philosophers. Philosophy is thinking about the unknown, about God, about life after death. You don't know what life is before death, and you think about the life after death.

My emphasis is, please know what life is before death, because if you can have an experience of life before death, death will disappear in that very experience. Death evaporates. Then there is no death; life is eternal.

But rather than experiencing, the philosopher goes on thinking, and you have to make the clear-cut distinction between thinking and experiencing. One can think about food, but that is not going to nourish one. Eating is totally a different matter. And you may think about very delicious food with all the vitamins thrown in. Still it is not going to help. And just bread and butter, if really eaten, will do the trick; they will nourish you.

The philosopher thinks about love. He does not love, he does not know anything about love. He has not experienced it, but he thinks about it. What can you think about something you have not experienced? And what is the need to think if you have experienced? Hence I am against

philosophy. In both ways it is futile. If you have not experienced it, it is futile; if you have experienced it, it is more futile than ever.

Just recently an ape escaped from the local zoo. Must have been a philosopher! Several hours later the beast was finally found in the reading room of the library. He was poring over the first chapters of Genesis and he also had a copy of Darwin's THE ORIGIN OF SPECIES.
When a policeman asked the ape what he was doing, the ape replied, "I am trying to figure out once and for all if I am my brother's keeper or if I am my keeper's brother."

That's how philosophy goes on -- words and words. And words can be placed in such a systematic way that they can deceive you, just like playing cards can be put in such a way that they can give you the illusion of a palace. Paper boats can be made to look exactly like boats; you can paint them, but they are of no use.You can't go to the other shore by paper boats.
Philosophy is a palace made of playing cards, a boat made of paper. Painted beautifully, it looks exactly like a boat but is not a boat.
Except existential experience nothing is going to save you.

Two men were sent to define the border between Poland and Russia.
One day, in the middle of a big wood, they came to a very old house set right on the borderline. Unable to decide to which country it should belong, they approached the inhabitants. After they rang the bell for a long time a very

old but well-known philosopher opened the door. They explained their difficulties and asked him what country he would prefer to belong to.
"Oh," he said, "I have been living here for so long now, I don't care at all," and he started to shut the door.
Suddenly he opened it again and said quickly, "No, wait, put me in Poland."
The rather hurt Russian went back after an hour to ask the old philosopher what the reason for his sudden decision was.
"Oh, no special reason," he replied. "I just read in the newspapers twenty years ago that the winters in Russia are very cold."

Philosophy is bookish, verbal, has no relationship with existence. My effort here is to help you enter into existence, and philosophy is a sheer wastage of life and energy -- a life which is so invaluable, an energy which can lead you to God, an energy which is divine. Avoid philosophy, avoid philosophers.
Sit with the wise ones, and they are totally different people. In the ancient days the philosopher was a wise man. Socrates was a totally different kind of philosopher from Bertrand Russell, Immanuel Kant, Hegel, Heidegger. Socrates was a wise man, as wise as Buddha. Pythagoras was also called a philosopher, but in those days the word philosophy had its original meaning: love of wisdom. SOPHY means wisdom, PHILO means love. But slowly slowly, that meaning has changed. Now what is being taught in the universities has nothing to do with wisdom. It is all rubbish knowledge.

Analysis of language is now called philosophy. G.E. Moore and Ludwig Wittgenstein are now thought to be great philosophers. They are linguists, analysts -- great linguists and great analysts, but not philosophers at all, not in the sense of Socrates, Buddha, Lao Tzu.

George Bernard Shaw had been wearied by the tedious conversation of a philosopher who was trying to impress him with his knowledge.
Finally Shaw cut in, "You know, between the two of us, we know all there is to be known."
"How is that?" the philosopher asked delightedly.
"You seem to know everything," Shaw said, "except that you are a bore, and I know that!"

The fourth question:
Question 4
BELOVED MASTER,
WHY DO I FEEL SADNESS ABOUT CHRISTMAS WHEN THE WHOLE MESSAGE IS REJOICE AND BE MERRY?

Vachana, Christ's message IS rejoice and be merry. But that is not the message of Christianity. Christianity's message is: be sad, long faces, look miserable; the more miserable you look, the more saintly you are. Sometimes I really feel for poor Jesus. He has fallen in such wrong company, and I wonder how he is managing in paradise with all these Christian saints, so sad, so dull.
He was not a dull man, he was not a sad man -- he could not be. The word 'christ' is exactly synonymous with

buddha. He was an enlightened person. He rejoiced in life, in the small things of life. He rejoiced in eating, drinking, friendship. He loved companionship, he loved the whole life.

But Christians down the ages have painted him as very sad. They have painted him always on the cross, as if for thirty-three years he was always on the cross. And my own understanding is that a man like Jesus will not die sad, even on the cross. He must have laughed before he died. That's what al-Hillaj Mansoor did before he was killed by the fanatic Mohammedans, because he had declared: ANA'L HAQ -- I am God. Mohammedans could not tolerate it, just as Jews could not tolerate Jesus. They killed him -- but before they killed him, he looked at the sky and laughed loudly.

One hundred thousand people had gathered to see this ugly phenomenon, the murder of one of the greatest human beings who has ever walked on the earth. Somebody asked from the crowd, "al-Hillaj, why are you laughing? You are being killed!" And he was killed in the most cruel way, piece by piece. Jesus' crucifixion is nothing compared to Mansoor's: first his legs were cu off, then his hands were cut off, then his eyes were taken out, then his nose was cut off, then his tongue was cut off, then his head was cut off. They tortured him as much as was possible, but he laughed. Somebody asked, "Why are you laughing?"

Mansoor said, "I am laughing because the man you are killing is somebody else, I am not he. I am laughing at God too. What is happening? -- have these people gone mad? They are killing somebody else! Me you cannot kill; it is ridiculous, your whole effort is ridiculous. So let it be

remembered, let it be on record that I laughed at your foolishness!"

And that's exactly what Jesus must have done, laughed. But Christians have tried their best to depict Jesus as sad. They have made a saint out of a real authentic human being; they have cut everything. The gospels are not true stories; much has been changed, much has been reduced, much has been added. They have become mere fictions.

Down the ages, Christians have been trying to paint Christ as more and more sad. Why? -- because all over the world religion has been dominated by a neurotic kind of people. It has been dominated by the people who are masochists, sadists. In the East too, Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism -- they have all been dominated by the masochistic people, the people who enjoy torturing themselves, the people who are incapable of living life in its totality. The people who are too cowardly to live, escapists, have dominated religion up to now. These escapists have depicted Buddha as not laughing, Mahavira as not laughing.

And Christians actually say that Jesus never laughed in his life. Can you believe that? Jesus never laughed in life? -- and he enjoyed drinking and eating, he enjoyed gamblers and prostitutes, and he enjoyed all kinds of people, and he never laughed? Can you imagine that a man like Jesus, who was always feasting for hours with his friends, never laughed? It is inconceivable! How can you go on wining and dining without laughing? He must have joked, he must have told funny stories. They have been edited out. He was a very true man, and very courageous. He accepted Mary Magdalene, the famous prostitute of those days as his

disciple. It needs courage, it needs guts. I cannot believe that he never laughed.

I can rather believe a very fictitious story about Zarathustra -- that the first thing he did when he was born was to laugh loudly. That I can believe, but I can't believe this story about Jesus, that he never laughed. It looks impossible. A child... just the first thing he did was a belly laughter. But I can believe it. It has a certain beauty about it, a certain significance. It simply says that Zarathustra was born wise, he was born enlightened, that's all. Whether he laughed or not, that is not the question.

And it doesn't seem too difficult: if children can cry, why can't they laugh? Doctors say that children cry just to clear their throat, so that they can breathe easily. But that can be done in a far better way by a belly laughter. And now there are doctors who say that if we take enough care children don't cry; on the contrary, they smile. That's a good beginning. Soon Zarathustras will be coming.

But up to now doctors have been very Christian. The first thing they do is they hang the child upside down and hit him on the buttocks. Do you expect a child to laugh? This is a great welcome to the world, putting the child upside down, giving him a hit -- a good beginning, because his whole life he is going to get hit in the pants, again and again. And hanging upside down, how can he laugh? No wonder he cries!

Now there are a few doctors working in a different direction. They bring the child in a more natural way out of the mother's womb; they don't cut the umbilical cord immediately because that creates crying, that is violence. They leave the child on the mother's belly with the

umbilical cord intact. They give a good bath to the child, a hot bath, they put the child into a hot tub of exactly the same temperature as it was in the mother's womb.

In the mother's womb the child is floating in water. The water has the same contents as sea water, salty. In the same salty chemical solution, of the same temperature, the child is put in the tub. He starts smiling. It is a real beautiful reception. And not with glaring tube lights... that hurts the eyes of the child. In fact, so many people are wearing glasses only because of the foolishness of the doctors. The child has lived for nine months in the mother's womb in darkness, utter darkness. Then suddenly so much light... it hurts his delicate eyes. You have destroyed something delicate in his eyes. The child should be received in a very dim light, and the light should be increased slowly slowly, so his eyes become accustomed to the light. Naturally the child smiles at the beautiful welcome.

I can believe Zarathustra loudly laughing, but I can't believe Jesus not laughing at all. He lived thirty-three years and did not laugh? -- that can only be possible if he was absolutely perverted, absolutely pathological, ill. Something must have been wrong if he didn't laugh. But nothing is wrong with him; something is wrong with the followers. They depict their saints, their messiahs, their prophets, as very serious, somber, sad, just to show that they are above the world, that they are beyond, that they are not worldly people. Laughter seems shallow, seems unspiritual.

That's why, Vachana -- because you have been brought up as a Christian. Although the message of Christmas is rejoice and be merry, still there is a sadness, because the

whole of Christianity teaches you to be sad. It is not a life-affirming religion, it is life-negative. It is much more life-negative than Hinduism, much more life-negative than Judaism. It has no sense of humor at all. And a religion without a sense of humor is ill, pathological. It needs psychological treatment.

Peter, standing in the crowd, looked up at Jesus on the cross. As he watched, he distinctly saw Jesus motioning him forward.
"Pssst, hey Peter, come here," said the Lord.
As Peter moved forward, two Roman guards blocked his way and beat him till he fell to the ground.
A few moments later, Peter, bruised and bleeding, looked up and saw Jesus again motioning him forward.
"Pssst, hey Peter, come here!"
Looking around, Peter noticed that the crowd was gone and so were the Roman soldiers. He moved closer to Jesus,
"Yes, Lord, what is it? What is it you want?"
"Hey Peter," said Jesus. "Guess what? I can see your house from here!"

The fifth question:
Question 5
BELOVED MASTER,
WHY IS THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA AGAINST YOU?

Vijayanand, any government will be, because I call a spade a spade, and that hurts. It has nothing to do particularly with the Indian government; any government will do. In

fact, I have chosen to remain in India because the Indian government is the most lousy in the world. In Germany they will not tolerate me even for a single day. The Indian government seems to be such a chaos that even when they want to do something against me it takes months. By that time I will escape. The Indian government is a phenomenon....
There are at least thirty cases against me in the courts. In one court we lose the case, and the government officer doesn't come to know for months that we have lost it. They think the case is going on. By that time we move to another court. It is really a beautiful government, but they are bound once in a while to get angry with me.

The occasion was the visit of the Soviet leader, Nikita Khrushchev, to India. Prime Minister Nehru was anxious to impress his guest with the great strides India had made under his leadership following the principles of socialism and democracy.
They drove through the great park that surrounds the Indian parliament in Delhi, and Khrushchev caught sight of a figure squatting under a tree having a shit.
"Look over there!" said Khrushchev pointing to the figure. "You talk about the great strides your country has made, but I see your government has not even provided proper toilet facilities for the masses! What kind of socialist progress do you call this?"

It is said that Nehru was deeply embarrassed by this remark.

The following year it was his turn to be the guest of Mr. Khrushchev in Moscow. He longed to even the score and find some criticism with which to taunt his host.
As the two leaders walked through the park close by the Kremlin, Mr. Nehru caught sight of a man.
"Look over there!" Nehru shouted. Khrushchev looked... and when he saw the man his face turned crimson with rage.
"Arrest that man!" he yelled to his secret service men.
A dozen cops rushed to the tree and seized the man. They dragged him to the nearest police center for questioning.
The man -- it turned out -- was the Indian Ambassador!

The last question:
Question 6
BELOVED MASTER,
I AM SEVENTY NOW, BUT STILL THE SEXUAL URGE IS THERE. WHAT SHOULD I DO?

Narayandas, you should not do anything. Enough is enough. Just the other day I have received from the great Madhuri a beautiful Christmas card. I must have received thousands of Christmas cards, but this is the most beautiful. And particularly for you, Narayandas, it will be helpful. So I will read this card from Madhuri.

From twenty to thirty, if you are feeling right
It is once in the morning and once at night.
From thirty to forty, if you are still living right,
You skip the morning but continue at night!
From forty to fifty, it is now and then....

And from fifty to sixty, it is God knows when!
From sixty on, if you are still inclined,
Believe me, fella --
It is all in your mind!
Happy Christmas!

Enough for today.
The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 8
Chapter #7
Chapter title: You have slept long enough
27 December 1979 am in Buddha Hall

THE FOLLOWERS OF THE AWAKENED
AWAKE
AND DAY AND NIGHT THEY WATCH
AND MEDITATE UPON THEIR MASTER.

FOREVER WAKEFUL,
THEY MIND THE LAW.

THEY KNOW THEIR BROTHERS ON THE WAY.
THEY UNDERSTAND THE MYSTERY OF THE BODY.
THEY FIND JOY IN ALL BEINGS.
THEY DELIGHT IN MEDITATION.

IT IS HARD TO LIVE IN THE WORLD
AND HARD TO LIVE OUT OF IT.
IT IS HARD TO BE ONE AMONG MANY.

AND FOR THE WANDERER, HOW LONG IS THE ROAD
WANDERING THROUGH MANY LIVES!

LET HIM REST.
LET HIM NOT SUFFER.
LET HIM NOT FALL INTO SUFFERING.

IF HE IS A GOOD MAN,
A MAN OF FAITH, HONORED AND PROSPEROUS,
WHEREVER HE GOES HE IS WELCOME.

LIKE THE HIMALAYAS
GOOD MEN SHINE FROM AFAR,
BUT BAD MEN MOVE UNSEEN
LIKE ARROWS IN THE NIGHT.

SIT.
REST.
WORK.

ALONE WITH YOURSELF,
NEVER WEARY.

ON THE EDGE OF THE FOREST
LIVE JOYFULLY,
WITHOUT DESIRE.

Three reformed and very progressive rabbis were boasting about the advanced views of their respective congregations.

"We are so modern," said the first, "we have installed ashtrays in every pew so members can smoke while they pray."
"Ah!" snorted the second. "We now have a snack bar in the basement that serves ham sandwiches after services."
"You boys," said the third, "are not even in the same class as my congregation. We are so reformed, we close for the Jewish holidays."

That's what has happened to all the so-called followers -- Christians, Jews, Hindus, Buddhists. They are not real followers; their being a follower is only a formality. It is just by accident of birth that one is a Hindu and another is a Christian. It is not out of your own choice, it is not YOUR commitment. You have not chosen to be a Christian or a Hindu or a Buddhist; hence it is absolutely meaningless, it carries no weight. It is at the most a social phenomenon. It has nothing to do with religion, it has no sacredness about it -- a social conformity, useful in its own ways.
But your church is nothing but a club. Just as there are Rotarians, so there are Christians. You belong to a certain club and the club has a few privileges; belonging to it, you also have the right to have those privileges. It is not the search for truth because the search for truth does not make you a part of a tradition. It certainly makes you a disciple, but not a part of a dead tradition, religion, organization. It certainly brings you close to a Christ or a Buddha, but it has nothing to do with the scriptures.
A living master is bound to happen to the person who is in search of truth, who wants to know the meaning of life, who wants to go to the innermost core of his being, who

wants to know the depth and the height of existence. He will have to hold hands with a master.

The master is one who has already known. The master is one who has been to the other shore and has come to this shore to show you the path. But only a master can show the path -- a living master, remember. A tradition is just a fossil, a corpse. Yes, once there may have been a light, but the light has gone to the infinite long long ago.

Twenty-five centuries have passed since Buddha's flame became one with the universal flame. Now you can go on worshipping Buddha, but you will not be, in the real sense, a disciple -- you can't be. The buddha you worship is your own invention, your projection. You will have to find a real buddha, a man who is alive, just as alive as you are, who is in the body, whose flame can help your unlit candle to become lit, whose fire can consume you.

But churches and temples and creeds and dogmas cannot consume you, they cannot make you aflame. They have no fire left. Two thousand years have passed since Christ. You can go on worshipping in the church, but now what you are doing is a kind of social duty. You are not involved in it, your heart is not there. Superficially, on the periphery, you have a label -- Christian, Hindu, Mohammedan -- but behind the labels you are all alike; there is no difference at all.

The first sutra of Buddha says:

THE FOLLOWERS OF THE AWAKENED
AWAKE....

Those who are really followers of the awakened ARE awake. That's the only way to be a follower of the awakened -- to be awake. It is not a question of worship, not a question of respect. It is a question of inner transformation. It is going through inner alchemy.

How can you go through inner alchemy if the master is not present? The gap of thousands of years cannot be bridged. But there is no need to bridge it either because whenever there is one who is awakened he is the same, the fire is the same. It does not make any difference in what lamp the flame is alive. The lamp may be of this shape or that shape, the lamp may be made of this metal or that metal, it is irrelevant. The flame has nothing to do with the metal and the shape of the lamp; the flame is always the same. But you will have to seek a lamp which can still show you the path.

The moment you see an enlightened person, if you allow yourself to SEE the enlightened person, three things happen in your life. The first is, you become a student. A student means one who becomes intellectually involved, who becomes intellectually intrigued, who starts feeling that his questions are being answered for the first time, his curiosities are dissolving for the first time. For the first time there is someone who can answer him and his answers are not borrowed; his answers are on his own authority. His answers are not coming from his memory; his answers are welling up from his very center.

And you can feel the difference, the difference is great. It is the difference between a plastic rose and a real rose. You can see that his answers are fresh, young, breathing. They have a heartbeat to them, they are not dead information. He

has not collected knowledge; he has known, he has seen, he has become. And you will feel his being. The first step is to become a student; that's how the journey starts.

The second step is to be a disciple. When not only your head is in communication with the master but your heart too, when not only does he look logical but a great love arises in your being for him, then you become a disciple. A disciple knows how to commune, the student knows how to communicate. The student lives on the verbal, intellectual level; the disciple on the nonverbal, feeling level. His heart starts opening. Just as the sun rises in the morning and the flowers start opening, the disciple feels some opening is happening in him. He is no more the same person. The master has touched his being; something has penetrated in. The disciple has become pregnant.

And the third step is to be a devotee. The student relates through the head, the disciple through the heart, and the devotee through his totality. It is no more a question of head or heart, body or mind or soul; his whole being becomes suffused. He becomes one with the master. It is no more a dialogue of the head or of the heart. There are no more two; the flames have become one.

This is the moment of real initiation, of real sannyas. Buddha is talking about it. He says: THE FOLLOWERS OF THE AWAKENED AWAKE....

They become just like the master. They have the same quality, the same fragrance, the same aura. To understand a buddha, the only way is to become a buddha yourself; there is no other way.

The disciple will know ABOUT the buddha; the devotee will KNOW the buddha. The disciple will feel the buddha.

The disciple is just in between the student and the devotee. He will remain a little vague, clouded; he will not have clarity. In that sense, the student is clear -- intellectually clear. The devotee is totally clear. The disciple is in the middle: something is clear and something is very unclear; something is light and something is dark. The disciple is in a state of twilight, neither day nor night.

Buddha is talking about the devotee when he uses the word 'follower'. He does not mean a Christian, a Hindu, a Buddhist. He means someone who has the courage to take the plunge into the very being of the master; he is a real follower. And in that plunge he starts having the same quality -- the quality of being awake.

Ordinarily you are living in a kind of sleep; a metaphysical slumber surrounds you. And even if sometimes there are possibilities, opportunities for you to be awakened, you avoid, because you have invested so much in your sleep. You are afraid of being awake. Deep down you know that if you become awake your dreams will be disturbed -- and you may be having beautiful dreams, nice dreams, sweet dreams. And who wants to get disturbed when there are so many beautiful dreams surrounding you? And when you are dreaming, you don't think that you are dreaming; your dreams look real.

That is one of the strange things about dreams: they have such a deep impact on you. They hypnotize you so deeply that many times you have known that they are dreams when you wake up in the morning, but again every night you fall back into the same hypnosis.

This is the case with you in so many lives. You have lived the same kind of life again and again -- the same desire, the

same greed, the same ambition -- and each time you were frustrated, but again you are ready to become a victim. It is exactly like dreams.
This morning also when you woke up you remembered so many dreams from the night and you laughed; it looked so ridiculous. But let the night come again and you will dream again, and when you will be dreaming you will believe them. They are real deceivers! And when one believes that this is real, why should one want to be awake and disturb it? You resist awakening.
Even if you come across a buddha you will not look at him. You will look sideways; you will not look into his eyes. The fear... his energy may start pulsating in you. Hence, many times you have come across a Buddha, a Krishna, a Mahavira, a Christ, a Mohammed, but you have missed again and again on your own accord. You were afraid to encounter them -- the encounter may prove too dangerous.

"Hello. This is long distance. I have a call for you from Palm Springs."
"Hello, Herman, this is Rube. Listen, I am stranded here and I need five hundred dollars."
"I can't hear you. Something is wrong with the phone."
"I want five hundred dollars!"
"I still can't hear you."
"I can hear it okay," interrupted the operator.
"Then YOU give him the five hundred dollars!"

You listen only to that which fits with you; you avoid listening to that which can be a disturbance. You become deaf, you become dumb, you become blind. You have

chosen a particular sleepy life and you have lived with that style for so long that it looks almost natural. The unnatural has become the natural and the natural has been completely forgotten.
To awake means to be natural again. To awake means to be awake in your consciousness, in your deepest core of the heart, to become aware.
We go on reading the Bibles, the Korans, the Gitas. That is not a problem. The problem comes when you come across a Mohammed. It is easy to read Ayatollah Khomeiniac; it is difficult to come across Mohammed, because Mohammed is bound to be like an electric shock. He will go like a deep tremor into your being. And these ayatollahs, these imams, they are not to be afraid of. They talk such nonsense.
Just the other day I was reading.... These people write great treatises on the Koran, and you will be surprised to know what they write in those treatises. Such stupid things! -- for example: "You should not urinate towards Kaaba." Great metaphysics! Great spirituality! You should remember continuously, otherwise be prepared for hell. But this can be managed; Mohammedans manage it, they remember the direction of Kaaba. As if God is only in Kaaba and nowhere else! As if Kaaba is the only direction which is divine and all else is undivine!

I was reminded of a beautiful story in Nanak's life:
He went to Kaaba and he slept with his feet towards the sacred Kaaba stone. The imam of Kaaba came and he was very angry. He said, "You pretend to be a holy man and you don't even know the ordinary rules! Whether you are a Mohammedan or not, at least you can be polite! This much

courtesy you can show: you should not put your feet towards Kaaba. Change the direction of your feet!"
Nanak laughed and he said, "You have come in the right time -- that's what was puzzling me! Please, you do it. You turn my feet towards any direction... because I have tried and I have to go to sleep. I have tried; half the night I have wasted already. You try!"
In deep anger, rage, the imam turned Nanak's feet to the opposite direction. He was shocked to see that Kaaba moved towards Nanak's feet! He turned in every direction and Kaaba moved.

Whether it happened or not, that is not the point; but the story is beautiful. It simply says that God is everywhere. Wherever you put your feet it is God's direction, because nothing else exists. But these foolish scholars, they go on talking nonsense and they write big treatises. But they are not dangerous to you.
For example, on a day when you are fasting, in the days of Ramadan when a Mohammedan fasts, in desert countries a great problem has arisen: when you are moving in the desert sometimes you may swallow dust. Now the problem is -- what a great problem! -- in the desert on a fast day, if you swallow dust, is your fast broken or not? Now these ayatollahs say your fast is broken if you swallow the dust voluntarily. But who will swallow the dust voluntarily? For what? Dust is not food, dust is not nourishment! But if it happens INvoluntarily, then the fast is not broken.
Then for centuries people go on discussing such stupid nonsense -- sheer nonsense! They will miss a Mohammed, they will miss a Moses, they will miss a Lao Tzu; and then

for centuries they will discuss useless things. Useless things are not dangerous.
The real danger comes from people who are awake, because to be in their presence it is possible that you may become infected. Awareness is contagious! But read the Koran and the Bible -- it is just a game of words. And if you read every day your Bible and Gita, then even words don't mean anything. You simply repeat like a parrot.

Every year dignitaries of the church come from Rome to Israel and a time-honored ceremony is re-enacted. One of the chief rabbis hands a jewel-covered scroll to a visiting priest who holds the scroll for a minute, shakes his head, and then returns it to the rabbi until the next year.
This year, however, the rabbi and the priest involved in the ceremony grew curious about the scroll and decided to open it. They removed the jeweled covering, then unrolled yards and yards of yellowed parchment with long columns of numbers on it and blurred words
The rabbi put on his glasses and finally managed to read the ancient Hebrew letters. It was the bill for the Last Supper!

For two thousand years they had been giving it to the other: "Please, you pay it!" And nobody has bothered what is written in it, what exactly it is.
Scriptures are cheap and scriptures are manipulatable. You can manage very easily any meaning out of them. You can invent, you can interpret, you can do a thousand things to the scripture. You can bring it to your own level.

But you cannot bring a buddha to your own level. If you want to commune with a buddha you have to go to HIS level, to HIS plane of being. And his plane of being is awareness.
THE FOLLOWERS OF THE AWAKENED AWAKE.... You are somnambulists! The only possibility in your life of being awake is coming in contact with someone who is awake. Only fire can ignite fire in you. And you are living in such a deep sleep that unless somebody hits you hard enough your sleep may not be broken.

The advance proofs of a cookbook for hipsters recently came my way. The wildest recipe is for a salad. "You cut up lettuce, tomatoes, cucumbers and green peppers, then you add a dash of marijuana and the salad tosses itself."

And that's the state you are in. For centuries the salad is tossing itself -- too much marijuana! Everybody is spiritually in a state of deep slumber, dreaming great dreams, but not an inch of evolution... because there are only two states: either you are asleep or you are awake. This whole idea of human consciousness evolving, the idea of progress, is nothing but a strategy of the mind to keep you sleeping. It is a great trick of the mind. The mind goes on telling you, "Humanity is progressing. Don't be worried -- everything has its own time. When the spring comes, you will also become an evolved buddha. Wait! Nothing can be done before its time. Wait for the right time and you will also be ripe." And you have been waiting for centuries and you can go on waiting for centuries, the right time will

never come. This is not the way that it comes. You have to catch hold of it.
You are just in a deep lethargy. Buddhas happen and disappear, light descends from the beyond, but you don't take any note of it. Yes, you do one thing: when a buddha is gone you worship him. You make him a god, you create temples for him, you make statues of him and you worship them. Statues are toys, they can't awaken you. And the real man? The real man you avoid. And because you avoid the real man, a great guilt arises in you. To put that guilt right you worship.
Worship is not religious; worship is just out of guilt. Because you never listened to the buddha when he was alive, when he dies you start feeling guilty. Now what to do? How to put your guilt and the burden of it aside? You worship. You compensate with worship, but you remain the same.

AND DAY AND NIGHT THEY WATCH
AND MEDITATE UPON THEIR MASTER.

The devotee -- the real follower -- is constantly watching what he is doing, how he is doing, why he is doing. Even in small matters he de-automatizes himself. Walking, he does not just walk; he walks with meditative awareness. He knows that he is walking. Eating, he knows he is eating. You eat and you do a thousand and one other things. You go on swallowing food, you go on throwing food in, you go on stuffing yourself... and the mind goes on planning, goes on remembering, desiring, projecting. You are not there in the act; you are either in the past or in the future. And the

present is the only time, only the present is real. Past is unreal, future is unreal; both are unreal -- and you are always living in the unreal.
This is sleep: you go on doing things.... You yourself sometimes say, "I did it in spite of myself." What do you mean when you say "in spite of myself"? It simply means that you were not conscious and you did it -- as if you are just an automaton, a robot!

A very fat lady boarded a crowded bus and managed to wedge herself in. She had a long way to go and feeling very uncomfortable reached down and unzipped the zipper in the back of her skirt.
A few minutes later, feeling the draft, she reached back and zipped it up again. Feeling more and more uncomfortable, she reached back and unzipped the zipper, but in a few minutes she reached back and zipped herself up again. This went on for nearly twenty minutes until finally the man standing behind her leaned over and said, "Listen, lady. I don't know what's on your mind, but in the last half hour you have unzipped my fly at least ten times!"

People are not conscious of what they are doing! They just go on doing things, half asleep, half awake, in a kind of alcoholic state.

The pretty young thing came slamming into her apartment after a blind date and announced to her roommate, "Boy, what a character! I had to slap his face three times this evening!"
The roommate inquired eagerly, "What did he do?"

"Nothing!" muttered the girl. "I slapped him to see if he was awake!"

People only appear to be awake; they are not. People only appear to be alive; they are not. People only appear to be; they are not -- because if they are really there, then there is no difference between them and the buddha. Then they will know all the secrets of life, then they will know the significance of life. Then their life will be a celebration, a constant celebration, a joy, a song, a dance. But people are living in hell, in misery.
Misery is symbolic of unawareness; bliss is symbolic of awareness.

FOREVER WAKEFUL,
THEY MIND THE LAW.

The devotees of a master, of an awakened one, are continuously wakeful and they are continuously making every possible human effort to be in tune with the universe, not to fall out of step with the universe -- because that is what misery is.
To be in tune, to be harmonious with the universe, is bliss, is joy, is music, is poetry. You start blooming the moment you are in tune with the whole. Whenever you are not in tune with the whole, something goes berserk in you. Then the whole no more nourishes you; then you are no more rooted in the whole. Then you become an uprooted tree, then you are undernourished. Then your green foliage starts disappearing. Then flowers can't happen to you, because

flowers are possible only when you are overflooded with joy, overflowing with joy.

THEY KNOW THEIR BROTHERS ON THE WAY.

The real devotees are so awake that they immediately, intuitively recognize anybody who has the same quality -- the BROTHERS ON THE WAY. A sannyasin, if really meditative, will immediately know another sannyasin. This is not an intellectual understanding -- not that he infers that this must be a sannyasin -- but a simple intuitive feeling. Something strikes him deep down in his being. Something so similar is there present in the other person that he knows without any mental effort and exercise. He knows through the heart that the other is also on the way.

How do you recognize a man when he is awake? And how do you recognize a man when he is asleep? Sleepers cannot recognize other sleepers and sleepers cannot recognize that somebody is awake, that is true. But if you are awake you know who is asleep and who is awake. Exactly in the same way, on a higher plane, it happens again: the people who have a little bit of awareness immediately become aware of the brothers on the way.

That's how the commune arises, through this recognition. A commune is not a church. A commune is not an organization. A commune is not based on a dogma, on a creed. The commune grows out of this intuitive recognition that the other is also in tune with the whole. You can hear the music! You can hear something which cannot be heard by the outer ears. Something immediately rings a bell in your heart. It is a mysterious phenomenon.

Buddha says: THEY KNOW THEIR BROTHERS ON THE WAY. Wherever you will find anybody who is meditative, out of your meditation you will be able to recognize him.
Every commune has arisen in this way. Of course, every commune has fallen and become a religion finally. That's the way of the world. Once the master is gone, the commune slowly slowly, starts losing its quality of awareness, it becomes more and more formal. When the first disciples have also disappeared it is no more a heart phenomenon, it becomes a head phenomenon. When the second line of disciples has also disappeared, it is only because of your birth that you are a Christian or a Hindu or a Mohammedan. Then you are following a dead path which leads nowhere.

THEY UNDERSTAND THE MYSTERY OF THE BODY.

Buddha calls the commune THE BODY. The real devotees start feeling such attunement, such at-onement with other brothers, that they become one body. Buddha used to call it the SANGHA -- the commune, the one body, the family. If something happens it immediately affects all the people, a wave surrounds all instantly.
When Buddha died he had thousands of disciples. They were spread all over the country. The moment he died, all the disciples who were real disciples immediately were affected wherever they were. Thousands of miles away from Buddha, immediately they felt, "The master is no more."

This is a mysterious phenomenon, but now even science is going deep into this phenomenon -- from a different route, of course. They have been experimenting on animals, particularly the relationship between the mother and the child. And they are surprised, utterly surprised, by a mysterious phenomenon. You take the child of any animal deep into the sea, a mile deep or two miles deep into the sea, and you kill the child there. The mother is on the shore; there are two miles of water in between, but the mother immediately knows the child has been killed. She becomes sad, depressed; tears start flowing.

In Soviet Russia particularly, they have worked hard on this phenomenon. They have tried the distance of a thousand miles; and if the child is killed, the mother is immediately affected. There seems to be a spiritual umbilical cord between the child and the mother. It has become very confused in human beings, that's why they have to experiment with animals. Animals are still simple, innocent; they have not yet become educated, cultured, civilized. These misfortunes have not yet happened to them; hence they are working with animals, but it happens in human beings also.

If there is a deep love relationship between the child and the mother, the death of the child anywhere in the world will affect the mood of the mother immediately. Some mysterious connection exists between the mother and the child.

But this is nothing compared to the mystery that happens between the master and the disciple, because the mother/child relationship is only physical and the master/disciple relationship is spiritual. It is far more profound, far deeper.

Buddha says: THEY UNDERSTAND THE MYSTERY OF THE BODY.

THEY FIND JOY IN ALL BEINGS.

You find only that in others which you have found in yourself first. If you are sad you will find sadness all over the place. To a sad person even the full moon looks sad, gloomy, depressed. To a joyous heart even the dark night is luminous. It all depends on you; it all depends how you are, where you are. The whole world moves with your heart, it becomes that which you are.

You have heard it said again and again that the person who is holy, who is meditative, who is prayerful, goes to heaven. That is wrong; just the opposite is the case. To the prayerful person, to the meditative person, heaven comes. Not that he goes to heaven -- heaven comes to him, to his heart. Wherever he is, he is in paradise. And the evil person, wherever he is, he is in hell. There is no need to send him to hell, there is no need to have a special place called hell. Nowhere is there any hell and nowhere any heaven.

If you are joyous you live in heaven, and your neighbor may be living in hell. And sometimes it happens, one moment you are in heaven and the next moment you are in hell. It all depends on your inner states. If you are soaring high, heaven opens up. If you are drowning in darkness, in sadness, hell is ready to welcome you. THEY FIND JOY IN ALL BEINGS.

THEY DELIGHT IN MEDITATION.

This is a very significant sutra; remember it. Buddha says: THEY DELIGHT IN MEDITATION. It is easy to meditate if you don't want to be blissful -- it is very easy to meditate. If you want just to be blissful and you don't want to be in meditation, that too is easy. The rarest combination is meditation plus bliss. Meditation minus bliss is easy; bliss minus meditation is easy. But meditation minus bliss is not true meditation and bliss minus meditation is not true bliss either. They are true only when they are together.

Many people have tried to meditate without bliss because it is simple, less complex. You have to take only one work upon yourself: that you have to still your mind. And you can force your mind to be stilled, but you will become sad, you will have a long face.

That's why your saints -- so-called saints -- look sad. Sadness has become a necessary quality for being a saint. They can't laugh, they can't dance, they can't sing, they can't love, they can't rejoice. They talk about bliss but they only talk about it. You don't see any bliss in their eyes, you don't see any bliss in their milieu, you don't see any bliss radiating from their inner center. They look sad, dull, dead, unintelligent, for the simple reason that they have chosen a shortcut and there is no shortcut. They have avoided the complexity of spiritual transformation. They have chosen meditation, they have forced their mind to be still. It is a negative state; their minds are only empty, not silent -- forcibly made still. But it is not a natural growth of silence, it is not the flowering of silence. Their silence is like the cemetery, it is not the silence of a garden.

The silence of the garden is full of music: the bees humming and the birds singing and a distant call of the cuckoo. They are all in it, essential parts of it. The garden has a very living silence, full of song and joy. The cemetery is also silent, but it is only the silence of death; because there is nobody, hence there is silence.

You can meditate, force yourself to be silent, but you will miss God, you will miss nirvana. And you can also try to be blissful; that means you can pretend, you can practice, you can rehearse bliss. You can always try to be blissful, smiling, at least looking happy.

Slowly slowly, it becomes so practiced... like Jimmy Carter. Now his smile is disappearing, but just remember two years before -- you could have counted his teeth! You can practice it. I have heard that in the beginning days of his presidency his wife had to close his mouth in the night! I don't know how far it is true, but it appears to be true -- because if you practice the whole day, then in the night too your muscles become fixed. Even in sleep you will go on smiling.

You can practice blissfulness too, but a practiced blissfulness is false. Anything practiced is false, remember it -- never forget it. Things have to be spontaneous and natural, not practiced, not cultivated. Cultivated blissfulness is only a mask. You are smiling, but the smile is not in the heart. You are showing joy, but you are not joyous. Your heart is a desert; only on the face you have put plastic flowers. They may deceive others, but they can't deceive you and they can't deceive a master. Your smile, your joy, is formal -- just good manners.

This too has happened. There have been many saints, very blissful, always singing and dancing, but deep down just deserts. They both have chosen only the half, and the half-truth is far more untrue than any untruth.
Truth has to be total, truth has to be whole. And the whole truth is: bliss PLUS meditation. It is difficult of course, arduous, to manage both. Why? -- because they seem to be polar opposites. Meditation means silence and bliss means dance. Meditation means stillness and bliss means a song. Meditation means escaping from the world and bliss means sharing with the world. Meditation you can do in a Himalayan cave, but to be blissful you will have to come back to the world.
Bliss needs to be shared; it exists only in sharing. It can't exist when you are alone, it disappears. It is a communion. Meditation can exist in aloneness and bliss can exist in togetherness. But when both exist then you have to learn a totally new way of life.
Buddha will give you the sutra soon. He says:

IT IS HARD TO LIVE IN THE WORLD
AND HARD TO LIVE OUT OF IT.
IT IS HARD TO BE ONE AMONG MANY.

He says: IT IS HARD TO LIVE IN THE WORLD....
Certainly, hence millions have preferred to escape. He himself had escaped in the beginning -- but remember that he did not become enlightened because of his escape. He became enlightened IN SPITE OF his escape. He did not become enlightened because he renounced the world; he became enlightened even though he renounced the world. It

was in spite of it. It was not the cause of his enlightenment, it did not cause it.
Enlightenment is not caused by anything.
So when he comes back after his enlightenment to the world, goes to the palace to see his parents -- his old father, his old stepmother -- his wife, his son, the wife asks one question; a very pertinent question she asks Gautam Buddha. She asks, "Tell me one thing -- I have waited long just to ask you one thing. Whatsoever you have attained, was it not possible to attain it here in this house? Was it necessary to escape from the palace and from the world and from me and from your child? Was that absolutely necessary to attain it?"
And that is the only time when Buddha looks downwards without saying anything. His silence is eloquent. He accepts that yes, it was not necessary.
He escaped out of the world because it was hard to live in the world. It is hard.

"Son, I just know that you will do the right thing by this little girl," said the preacher. "You just marry her and you will be at the end of your troubles."
So he did the right thing and he married the girl. And about six months later, when he saw the preacher again, he tried to murder him.
"You miserable liar!" shouted the young man. "You told me if I married her I would be at the end of my troubles. Well, I married her and she has made my life miserable!"
"That may be true, son, but you can't blame me," replied the minister. "I said you would be at the end of your troubles, but I never said which end."

To be in the world is hard, to live in the world IS difficult, because it is living with so many lunatics. You yourself are a lunatic and everybody else is a lunatic! The world is in such a mess. It simply seems impossible how the good God could manage within six days to make such a mess of the world! There was not time enough... and no woman even to advise him! Still he managed.
Those who know, they say he created Eve only in the end simply so that she would not give advice to him; otherwise in six days it would have been impossible to make the world. She would have interfered in everything: "Do it this way. This is not right." And since he created Eve he has not created anything else. That was too much! He called it a day and he said, "Enough is enough!" Since then nothing has been heard about him.

Shed a tear for the beatnik who committed suicide, leaving a note saying, "Goodbye, cool world."

It is really icy-cold -- no warmth anywhere, no love anywhere, no compassion anywhere. IT IS HARD TO LIVE IN THE WORLD AND HARD TO LIVE OUT OF IT. And it is not easy to live out of it either; it is even harder to live out of it.
Man is in such a dilemma! It is difficult to live in the world, it is difficult not to live in the world. Have you ever tried living in a Himalayan cave? Try for one month, and the world will look so beautiful and so heavenly! A few experiences you have had. It is difficult to live with the wife, but when she goes for a few days to her mother's

house, it is very difficult to live without her. When she is with you, you want to be without her; when she is gone, you want her immediately back.
It is going to be so, because the ultimate question is neither to live in the world nor out of it. The ultimate question is to live in a state of wakefulness. If you are living in sleep IN the world you will be in misery; if you live outside the world you will be in far more misery.
I know both types of people, the worldly and the otherworldly. I know the people who live in the marketplace, and I know the people who have renounced the marketplace, and have moved to the monasteries. Both are in misery, deep misery, for the simple reason that just changing the place, just changing your address from the marketplace to the monastery, does not make any difference at all. You are the same person, your consciousness has not changed. And change is needed there. Then you can become the center of the cyclone. Then you can live in the cyclone and yet undisturbed.
But Buddha says that is very rare.
IT IS HARD TO BE ONE AMONG MANY. That happens only once in a while. Among millions, only a single person manages to live joyfully wherever he is -- in the world or outside the world. Who is that person who can manage to live joyfully? -- the one who lives in awareness. That is Buddha's insistent message.

AND FOR THE WANDERER, HOW LONG IS THE ROAD
WANDERING THROUGH MANY LIVES!

And how long have you been wandering! When are you going to decide to be awake? You have slept long enough. It is time to wake up and to start a totally new kind of life which is lived from inside. Light a flame inside of awareness, and then wherever you are it is all joy.
LET HIM REST.... You need rest, you have wandered enough. You are tired, utterly tired, weary, bored.

LET HIM REST.
LET HIM NOT SUFFER.
LET HIM NOT FALL INTO SUFFERING.

The time is right now. Don't suffer anymore. Don't fall again and again into suffering. To fall into forgetfulness is suffering; to remember is to come out of suffering. And rest is the most necessary step for remembering, for awareness. Relaxation is the whole art of meditation and bliss both. How can you rest with so many desires? They go on pulling you apart. You can rest only if you learn the secret of desirelessness; if you learn to live moment to moment without any future; if you learn to live without any hope for the future; if you live concentratedly in the present, totally involved in the moment, neither worried by the past nor worried by the future, relaxed, at rest. Then meditation and bliss both are easy, spontaneous growths out of a restful heart, out of a relaxed being.

IF HE IS A GOOD MAN,
A MAN OF FAITH, HONORED AND PROSPEROUS,
WHEREVER HE GOES HE IS WELCOME.

And don't be worried what will happen to you if you don't take care of your future, if you don't plan, if you don't arrange beforehand what is going to happen to you. Don't be worried.
Buddha says: IF HE IS A GOOD MAN, A MAN OF FAITH... a man who trusts existence, then don't be worried: WHEREVER HE GOES HE IS WELCOME -- at least welcome by those who know, at least welcome by those who understand... and only their welcome is of any worth.

LIKE THE HIMALAYAS
GOOD MEN SHINE FROM AFAR,
BUT BAD MEN MOVE UNSEEN
LIKE ARROWS IN THE NIGHT.

Don't be worried what will happen to you. You will become so luminous -- LIKE THE HIMALAYAS -- shining from thousands of miles away. You will become so radiant that people will start moving towards you as if you are a great magnet. From far and wide, from all corners of the earth, people will start moving towards you, pulled by an unknown force, by a mysterious energy.
Don't be worried about the future, everything will be taken care of. Trust nature. AES DHAMMO SANANTANO: this is the inexhaustible, eternal law. Trust, and nature will shower upon you millions of blessings.
SIT.... Don't rush, don't run. Don't continually be on the move for this and that. SIT. That's exactly the meaning of ZAZEN. The word 'zazen' has come from this sutra.

SIT.

REST.
WORK.

Zazen means just sitting doing nothing. The first thing to do is learn sitting, a deep restfulness. Become a pool of rest, not even ripples of desire, going nowhere, no ambition -- not even for God, not even for nirvana.
SIT... not only physically -- psychologically, spiritually too. Learn to sit; that is zazen. And REST -- and fall into a deep rest, so the breathing becomes natural, the body becomes cool, all the fever of constant desire and turmoil disappears, evaporates.
And then, WORK. That work will have a totally different quality. It won't be out of desire; it will be creativity. It will be because you have so much energy available that you would like to share your energy with the world, that you would like to create something, that you would like to make the world a little more beautiful, a little more blissful, a little more human.

ALONE WITH YOURSELF,
NEVER WEARY.

And remember the difference between loneliness and aloneness. Never feel lonely. You are never lonely. At the deepest core of your being, God resides; he is always with you. And whenever you are alone, only then will you be able to hear his footsteps. Whenever you are alone, only then will you be able to hear his music, his whisperings. He never shouts, he only whispers. He comes very silently and

goes very silently. Be in a deep rest and you become the host; and he is the guest, God is the guest.

ON THE EDGE OF THE FOREST
LIVE JOYFULLY....

The forest represents the unknown, the unknowable. ON THE EDGE OF THE FOREST LIVE JOYFULLY.... Be always close to the unknown and the unknowable and don't be afraid. LIVE JOYFULLY... because the unknown, the unknowable, is also yours. You belong to it, it belongs to you. LIVE JOYFULLY....

WITHOUT DESIRE.

Don't ask for anything. Jesus says: Ask, and it shall be given. Buddha says: Ask not, and it shall be given. Jesus says: Seek, and ye shall find. Buddha says: Seek not, and ye shall find. Jesus says: Knock, and the doors shall be opened unto you. Buddha says: There is no need to knock; the doors are already open.
Why this difference between two enlightened persons? Both are awakened. The difference is because of the audience. Jesus is speaking to very ordinary people; Buddha is speaking to his commune -- that is the difference. He can speak the highest truth without any compromise. Jesus cannot. Jesus has to compromise with the listeners.
Jesus lived without a commune. Yes, a few disciples he had, twelve disciples -- and those twelve disciples are also not of much worth. Buddha had thousands of disciples and

of tremendous value -- because many of them became enlightened while Buddha was alive. In his commune there were at least one thousand enlightened people, of the same status as he himself was. He could talk in any possible way and it would be understood; there was no worry on his part about being misunderstood. Jesus had to be constantly on guard, and even then he was misunderstood and crucified.
SIT. REST. WORK. Let these three words sink deep in your heart. Learn to sit silently, restfully, not fighting with yourself, relaxed. Not in a yoga posture, remember, because the yoga posture is a constant effort. No yoga posture is needed. Sit in any way that you find relaxed -- even a chair will do.
Buddha used to sit on the floor; that was easy in those days. You can sit in any posture you like. You can use a pillow, a zen pillow, to sit upon; you can use a chair. The question is not the posture; the question is inner rest.
Be at rest... and when energy accumulates in you, start being creative. Paint, sing, dance, or do whatsoever you feel like doing to make this world a little more beautiful, a little more warm.
We have to create a paradise on the earth.
Enough for today.
The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 8
Chapter #8
Chapter title: Out of chaos stars are born
28 December 1979 am in Buddha Hall

The first question:

Question 1
BELOVED MASTER,
WHENEVER ONE COMES TO THE ABSURD, SOMETHING INSIDE SIMPLY EXPLODES AND THE WHOLE WORLD LOOKS ANEW. IS IT WHEN THE ABSURD BECOMES OVERWHELMING THAT ONE GETS AN INSIGHT INTO THE GESTALT OF EVERYTHING?

Prem Prabhati, the absurd is nothing but another name of God -- and a far more beautiful name than God itself. For centuries the theologians, the philosophers have destroyed the beauty of the word 'God'. They have painted it, polished it, with such rational garbage that it has no more any life left in it. The god of the philosophers is not the true God because it is nothing but a rational concept.
The God of the lovers is a totally different phenomenon; it has nothing to do with reason, with mind. It is the heart pulsating in tune with the whole. It is a song, a symphony. It is a dance, a celebration. It is more poetry than prose. It is more intuitive than intellectual. It is something felt not thought.
Hence I say 'the absurd' is a far better name for God.
The mind has created a subtle structure around itself of rationality to protect the ego, to protect the separation from existence. All rationality is man-made -- and God is not man-made. All rationality is just a projection of our own ideas on the screen of existence. And God is not a projection; it is a discovery.
To see God one needs eyes absolutely without any idea. The idea is the greatest cloud.

One of the greatest mystics of the West -- whose name is not known because he has not signed his book -- has written one of the most important mystic treatises ever: THE CLOUD OF UNKNOWING. He says that it is not through knowledge that you come to know; on the contrary, you come to know by UNknowing. This is pure absurdity! It is talking in paradoxes: knowing through unknowing. What does he mean? He means that when all knowledge has been dropped, when all experience has been put aside, when mind as such is no more functioning, then you relate with existence in a totally new way. Each fiber of your being pulsates with the whole; it is a rhythmic dance. It IS absurd -- you cannot make a theory out of it.

God is not a hypothesis. If God is a hypothesis, then that hypothesis is no more needed. Far better hypotheses have been proposed by science. But God has never been a hypothesis. It is a passionate love affair with existence. It is feeling the existence. It is being in a heart-to-heart contact with existence.

Tertullian is always worth remembering -- a great Christian mystic. He says: I believe in God because God is absurd -- CREDO QUA ABSURDUM EST. The reason that he gives for his belief is that there is no reason to believe.

Unless you have something in your life which cannot be supported by reason at all, your life will not have any significance. Unless you have something for which you can live and for which you can die without any rational grounds, you will go on missing the very meaning of life and existence. You will remain superficial.

Hence the absurd can release something tremendous in you; it can become an explosion. It can make you see the whole

world anew, because it is a rebirth. You slip out of the mind. You are no longer covered by the dust of the mind. Everything is fresh and new then. It is mind which makes things old. Because of memory, past, the mind goes on interpreting everything new in terms of the old. Mind cannot do otherwise. Mind means memory -- memory and nothing else. It is your accumulated past experience, and you go on interpreting the new according to the past. Naturally, the past gives its color to the new, it gives its meaning to the new -- and the new is missed.

That's why the whole world looks so bored, utterly bored. Existentialists have brought out this situation of boredom as one of the most significant points to be pondered over. They say that man is utterly bored, and they are right. Only stupid people are not bored, or buddhas are not bored. Stupid people are not bored because they don't have that much sensibility, that much sensitiveness to feel boredom. And buddhas are not bored because they don't carry the past. Everything is so fresh, so new; everything is such a surprise. Every moment you are in for a surprise.

For a buddha, life is a continuous revelation, unending revelation. There is no beginning to it and no end to it. It is a mystery; unfathomable, immeasurable, unknown and not only unknown but unknowable too. You can only taste it, feel it, see it, touch it, but you cannot KNOW it. You cannot reduce it to a theorem, to a hypothesis; that is not possible.

Prabhati, you are right: if you can have a contact with the absurdity of it all, with the irrationality of existence, you are moving into a totally different dimension -- moving from mind to no-mind, moving from mind to meditation.

That's what meditation is all about: taking you out of the prison of the mind, the prison of the past. And there is no other prison; that past is the only prison.
The man of awareness -- the meditator -- goes on dying every moment to the past so that he remains new, fresh, childlike. Yes, if the absurd becomes overwhelming, you will have your first insight into the gestalt of everything. But remember again, the insight will not be rational. You will not be able to explain it away. You will not be able to say anything about it. You will be able to see, but suddenly you will become dumb. Suddenly you will find language absolutely inadequate, words impotent; communication is not possible. Then only communion remains.
When you know WITHOUT knowledge, the only way to convey the message is through silence, through love, through compassion, through being. You can hold the hand of your friend and something may transpire. You can embrace your friend and something may transpire. You can just look into the eyes of your friend and something may transpire. The absurd can only be expressed through absurd ways. You can dance or you can sing.

There is a beautiful story of a Baul mystic:
A very rich man, a goldsmith, came to see the mystic and he asked about God: "Do you believe in God? Is there really a God? Does God exist?"
The Baul mystic listened to all his queries smiling, and then he started dancing, playing on his EKTARA -- a one-stringed instrument -- he started dancing.

The goldsmith said, "Are you mad or something? I am asking great metaphysical questions! Rather than answering me, you start dancing! Are you drunk?"
And the mystic said, "That's true, I am drunk -- drunk with the divine! But please don't misunderstand me, don't feel offended. This is the only way I can answer your questions."
And he sang a song -- a song of tremendous beauty and meaning and insight. He said, "I know that you are a goldsmith. I know that you can judge whether something is made of real gold or not. You have a touchstone on which it can be judged. But it will be absolutely useless if you come into the garden and start judging roses on your touchstone. For the gold it is okay, but for the roses it is not at all relevant. Roses cannot be judged on the touchstone on which gold can be judged. You can't know through the touchstone whether the roses are true or not true. For that you will need a totally different kind of approach.
"I know that you have studied much; you are very much interested in philosophical reasoning, argumentation. I have heard about you. But all that reasoning is as absurd here as the touchstone of the goldsmith will be in the garden. I am singing, I am dancing, I am playing music. Feel it! If you can dance with me, come on, dance with me! That may give you some insight into the world where I live. That may give you a touch of the unknown. There is no other way. I cannot logically answer your questions, hence my illogical act."

When Bodhidharma, the great mystic, reached China, the emperor of China had come to welcome him on the border;

with thousands of people he had come to receive the great mystic. But he felt very embarrassed seeing Bodhidharma. He had never thought, he could have never imagined, that Bodhidharma would enter China in such an insane way. Bodhidharma was carrying one of his shoes on his head. One shoe was on one foot; the other foot was bare -- and the other shoe was on his head!

The king asked, "I don't understand. Why are you carrying one shoe on your head? Shoes are not meant to be carried on the head!"

Bodhidharma said, "This is the beginning. If you cannot understand this, then it is better I should go back. You have to understand one thing absolutely: that my approach is absurd. This is just to give an indication of my approach -- that I am not a philosopher. You can call me a madman, but I am not a philosopher -- and I am going to put things upside down! All that you have thought up to now, I am going to disturb it. I will bring a chaos into your being, because only out of chaos stars are born."

It is very difficult to drop reason, because one feels frightened. Reason gives you a sense of order. Reason gone, there is only chaos. But remember, reason is barren; chaos is a womb. Out of that chaos something of tremendous importance is born: YOU are reborn.

Yes, if the absurd can overwhelm you, you will have an insight into the gestalt of everything; an insight which is untransferable, an insight which is inexpressible. But there are ways beyond words through which it can be communicated.

That's the whole secret of the relationship of a master to a disciple. It is an absurd phenomenon. That's why the West has not known it yet. The West knows the relationship between a teacher and a student; it knows nothing of the relationship between a master and a disciple. The West is absolutely unaware of that dimension. That's why Jesus could not be understood, Socrates could not be understood. In the East, crucifying a Buddha has not been our practice; giving poison to Lao Tzu has not been our way. Why were Jesus, Socrates and Mansoor killed? For the simple reason that they were trying to bring something absolutely Eastern to the West. They were trying to bring a new insight into God, and the time was not ripe. Maybe NOW the time is ripe. Jesus came a little early.
Now the time is ripe. Now the West has the possibility to open up a new door -- the absurd -- and enter through that door. That is the only door to the temple of God.

The second question:
Question 2
BELOVED MASTER,
OLD HABITS DIE HARD!

Prem Harideva, it is true... but why? Why do old habits die hard? -- because you are nothing but your old habits. If they die, YOU will die. You don't have anything more, you don't have anything plus. You are just your old habits, old patterns. You are a mechanism, not yet a man; that's why old habits die hard. It is very rare that a man exists, very few and far between.

A Buddha is a real man, authentic. A Zarathustra is a real man -- a man worth calling a man. The ordinary humanity is just robotlike: it lives unconsciously, it lives mechanically. And habits are all that you have. If you drop all your habits you will simply start evaporating; you will not find yourself at all. What are you? Just watch, and you will find a bundle of old habits. You don't yet have anything more.

That's the whole effort of meditation: to bring something more to your life which is not a habit, something which is spontaneous, something which is nonmechanical, something which transforms you from a robot into a conscious being.

George Gurdjieff used to say that every man is not born with a soul. On the surface it appears not believable because for centuries you have been told by the priests that everybody is born with a soul and you believe in it. It is comfortable to believe that you have a soul. It feels very good, cozy, warm, that deep inside you, you have a soul, eternal, immortal. And Gurdjieff says you don't have a soul at all! You are jut hollow within; there is nothing inside you -- just habits and habits, a cluster of habits and at the very center there is nobody. The house is empty. The master has not yet come or is fast asleep.

Gurdjieff is right: you are only potentially a human being. A possibility is there, but the possibility can be easily missed. And millions of people miss it because to become conscious, to become a soul, arduous effort is needed. It is an uphill task. To remain in your habits is cheap, easy, downhill. Gravitation is enough; it goes on pulling you.

It is like when you are coming downhill in a car, you put the engine off. You don't need any gas for coming downhill; the pull of gravitation is enough. But that cannot be done when you are moving uphill; then gas will be needed. You will need some integrity, some power. And only consciousness releases power.
Consciousness is the key, the ignition key, that releases power in you, and you become capable of soaring high. Otherwise, Harideva, this old saying is right: Old habits die hard... because there is nobody who can kill those old habits.

At breakfast, Feinberg's wife said to him, "We are having Sonia's boyfriend to dinner for the first time. We are gonna have a big meal with our best dishes. So please behave. Don't eat with your knife, or you will kill her chance of marriage."
That night at supper all went well. Feinberg hardly touched a thing for fear of using the wrong tool. Then coffee arrived. Feinberg took the cup and started to pour his java into the saucer. The family was looking daggers at him. Feinberg kept right on pouring. Finally the saucer was full. Feinberg raised it to his mouth, looked around the table, and said, "One word out of any of you and I will make bubbles!"

It is difficult, it is very hard. You have to be conscious, alert, on guard. You have to go on remembering. And remembrance is the most difficult thing in existence. Habits can be dropped not by fighting against them. That's what people ordinarily do. If they want to change a habit

they create another habit against it to fight with it. They move from one habit into another habit. If you want to drop smoking you start chewing gum; now it is as foolish as the other. You change one habit for another, but you remain the same unconscious person.

To drop the habit and not to compensate for it and to remain utterly aware and alert so that you don't start moving into another substitute is one of the hardest things in life. But it is not impossible; otherwise there will be no possibility of a Buddha, of a Christ, of a Krishna. Because buddhas happen, it is possible -- although difficult, very difficult; a great challenge has to be accepted. And all those who have any respect for themselves always accept the challenge of the greatest, the hardest thing.

To reach to the moon is not so hard, it is not so difficult. To go to Everest is child's play compared with remembering constantly what you are doing, being aware. But the day awareness starts happening, you know the ecstasy of being, the bliss of being. You know something which cannot be imagined. It is so vast, it is so inexhaustible!

AES DHAMMO SANANTANO. Buddha says: It is the ultimate law of bliss, of joy, of ecstasy. And it is inexhaustible; once you enter into it, it is forever yours. Jesus calls it the kingdom of God; that is his expression for it. But one has to become alert enough, aware enough, so that one can disidentify oneself with the habits, with the patterns, structures, that have become ingrained in your being.

This very rich but very miserly old man is dying, so he calls to his deathbed three men of the cloth -- a rabbi, a priest, and a minister.

When they arrive he says, "Gentlemen, you know the old saying: You can't take it with you. Well, taking it with me is precisely what I propose to do. And because of your religious backgrounds, I feel I can trust you. Here, in these three boxes, is the greater part of all my wealth. My dying wish is that each of you places one box in my grave."

All three agree to his request, upon which the dying man distributes the boxes and dies. Sure enough, on the day of the funeral, they all show up and each places a box in the grave. Later on they decide to go to a nearby pub for a drink, where, after a long silence, the priest at last speaks.

"Friends," says the priest, "I am afraid I have a confession to make. I did not put all the money in the grave. What with contributions falling off lately and the church in need of repair, it seemed such a sin not to put some of the money where it will do some good."

Then the minister says, "Father, I am glad you spoke up. As you know, I am the head of several charities. And, likewise, it seemed to me such a sin to just bury all that money. So I too kept some of it, of course a small portion, to help these very worthwhile and needy charities of mine."

After another long silence, the priest and the minister ask the rabbi, who has been looking out the window all this time, what he thinks about their actions.

"Well," says the rabbi, "I must say that I am deeply surprised, not to say shocked. As a rabbi, respecting the wishes of a dying man, I could only put in the full amount. In fact, I gave him my own personal cheque!"

A Jew is a Jew! Whether he is a rabbi or not does not make much difference: old habits die hard. But they can die. And you have to make all the efforts so that they die, because in their death is the beginning of your real life.

The third question:
Question 3
BELOVED MASTER,
IS THE INDIAN GOVERNMENT REALLY SO LOUSY AS YOU WERE SAYING THE OTHER DAY?

Pradipama, it is not really a question of the Indian government; basically it is the Indian mind. Indian mind is lousy; Indian government is only an expression of the Indian mind. And because the Indian mind is lousy, whatsoever it does becomes lousy. For centuries the Indian mind has lived in this state. There is a reason why it has happened.
The West is not so lousy; there is a reason for that too. Three religions were born outside of India: Judaism, Christianity, Islam. They are all really offshoots of Judaism; Judaism is the source of them all. Three great religions were born in India: Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism. They also are all offshoots of Hinduism. So, in fact in the world there are only two basic religions: Judaism and Hinduism. And the one basic difference between them is that Judaism believes in one life and Hinduism believes in many lives, in reincarnation. That has made the whole difference.

If there is only one life you have to be in a hurry. You have to do everything quick and you have to do everything skillfully so you need not do it again, because time is short. In the West, time is money. Because time is so short -- seventy, eighty years... half of it will be simply wasted in sleep; most of it will be wasted in earning bread and butter, the remainder in looking at the TV. What is left for you? Hence there is a great hurry in the West and a great longing for speed -- without ever thinking where you are going. Everybody is going; the only question is that one should go fast. Who cares where? -- because who has time to bother about where? The only question is: with what speed are you going?

I have heard:
An airplane was lost in the clouds. Its many sophisticated machines were not working and the pilot informed the passengers on the telecom, "Don't be worried. There is bad news and there is good news too. The bad news first: that we don't know where we are going. The good news: that we are going with such beautiful speed that you need not worry. The speed is perfect."

In the East, Hinduism introduced the idea of reincarnation: many many lives, millions of lives. There is more time than you need; it is not money at all. Then there is no question of hurry, no question of speed, no question of being skillful. You can do the same thing again and again. You can sleep and let the time pass. If this life goes down the drain there is nothing to worry about: there will be another life and another, and so on, so forth.

These two ideas have created two different kinds of people on the earth: the Western mind and the Eastern mind. Both these ideas were created for a different reason, but when things reach to the unconscious man he changes them according to his unconsciousness. Both are beautiful ideas, can be of tremendous importance.

The idea that there is only one life means that you should not waste it in unnecessary things. Don't waste it in accumulating money, gadgets; don't waste it in superficial things. Think of the essential, not of the accidental. That was the message behind it. But what happened? People turned it completely upside down. They became much more interested in the nonessential, because there is not much time, so "Eat, drink and be merry! You are not going to be born again, so have as much as you can have of this world."

That's what happened in the West. The idea was to make you a seeker for the essential, but it was transformed into its very opposite. It became: "Eat, drink and be merry, because soon you will not be here -- and you will not be coming again. Who knows about the other world, and who knows about God, and who knows about heaven? Don't be bothered with such nonsense, such esoteric nonsense! You be simple, and enjoy this life as much as you can. Live it! Squeeze every moment to your heart's content." That's what became of the great idea that was given by Abraham and Moses to the West.

And in the East, the idea that there are millions of lives had also a tremendously significant message. It was to remind you that you have lived many many times in the same rotten way. You have been moving in a wheel, you have

been going in circles. Are you not bored yet? Are you not fed up yet? Are you so stupid that you can't see the utter futility of it all? Living for so many lives, desiring the same things, succeeding and failing, and dying every time; have you not become aware that something ELSE is needed? This world won't do, you have to transcend it. This was the idea behind Patanjali, Mahavira, Krishna, Buddha, and their message.

Reincarnation simply means: be BORED with the whole idea of desiring this and that. Be finished with it. Jump out of this wheel of life and death. But what really happened was totally different, just the opposite. What happened was that India became very lousy, slow. The unconscious mind interpreted the whole message that there is no need to be in a hurry. "There are many many lives, so why worry? We will think of God in the old age or in the next life. There is no shortage of time, so go slow." East has not moved at all; it is stuck. It has become undynamic, dormant, stagnant. This is one of the great calamities that happens always. Whenever a conscious man gives you a certain strategy, a certain idea to help you, you change it according to your mind, and rather than using it as a help it becomes a harmful thing for you. You are given nectar by the buddhas; by the time it reaches you it becomes poison.

So it is not really a question of the Indian government; the Indian government is only an expression of the Indian mind. The Indian mind needs a change, just as the Western mind needs a change. Both have gone wrong. I have no preference for either. Both have created misery for humanity up to now.

We need a new mind which will not be either Western or Eastern -- a new, global mind. For the first time, a universal mind is needed. And for the first time we need a man who thinks not in terms of nations, hemispheres, races, blood, color, religions, but who thinks only in terms of consciousness. We need to raise the consciousness of this whole humanity.
India suffers from great lousiness.

A guy dies and goes straight up to paradise. Saint Peter stops him at the gate and says, "Sorry, sir, but you can't come in. You are not registered in the paradise list. You have to go to hell. But as you were not so bad you can choose between the Indian hell or the German hell."
"Well," says the guy, "before choosing I would like to know what the difference is."
"Okay, I will explain," says Peter. "The Indian hell is a swimming pool full of shit and you stand in it with shit right above your head and each time you try to put your head out of the shit there is a guard who hits you on the head with his stick till you go back under."
"And what about the German hell?" asks the guy.
"The German hell is a swimming pool full of shit and you stand in it with shit above your head and each time you try to get out there is a guard who hits you on the head with his stick."
"So," says the guy, "I don't see much difference...."
"You know what," says Peter. "As I am feeling pretty far out today I will tell you something: in the Indian hell there is sometimes not enough shit, or the guard is not there, or he forgets his stick...."

The fourth question:
Question 4
BELOVED MASTER,
DO YOU THINK IT IS POSSIBLE TO MEASURE LIFE AND LOVE IN PERCENTAGES, AS YOU DID IN THE LECTURE THE OTHER DAY?

Meeshael, what other day? I have completely forgotten! My memory is not very good.

Harvey was traveling east by train to a business convention in New Orleans. On the train he happened to read an article in the READER'S DIGEST about a seventy-five-year-old American Indian from Arizona who was reported to have the longest memory in the world.
Since the train was passing within a few miles of this famous Indian, Harvey decided to stop and visit him. Sure enough, he was directed to a large teepee in the middle of an Indian reservation. Inside the teepee an old wrinkled man was sitting crosslegged smoking a pipe.
After exchanging a few formalities, Harvey asked, "What did you have for breakfast on December 11, 1908?"
The Indian crossed his hands over his chest and grunted, "Eggs!"
Harvey was immensely impressed and left to catch his train.
Ten years later, while traveling through Arizona, Harvey decided to stop and see if the old Indian was still alive. Sure enough, he was led to the same teepee, but was cautioned to enter very slowly as the old man was very old

and must not be startled. Once inside Harvey raised up one hand and greeted him in friendly Indian style, "How!" -- upon which the old Indian grunted, "Scrambled!"

Now, I don't have that type of memory!
Meeshael, what I can say today I will say; I don't know about the other day.
Love and life cannot be measured in percentages. Nothing can be measured, in fact, because the whole is one and immeasurable. But for certain purposes it is possible to use the method of measurement, but that is only for certain purposes.
For example, life cannot be measured, but this can be said: that life exists only between a short range of temperature -- from ninety-eight degrees to a hundred and ten, only twelve degrees. Beyond a hundred and ten and you are finished; fall below the normal and you start slipping. So just twelve, fifteen degrees' span.... For a certain purpose -- for a medical purpose -- that's perfectly true.
Life cannot be measured if you think of consciousness, but if you think of the mind it can be measured. Your mind is nothing but a biocomputer -- and sooner or later, computers will be doing better than your mind. It is possible even in your life, because by the end of this century robots will be walking on the roads -- and they will look exactly like you. And many times you will be in trouble: you may think that the man is real or the woman is real, and the woman or the man may be just a robot.
Now scientists are thinking to cover the mechanism of the robot with artificial, synthetic skin. They will grow hair and they will behave exactly like you. Only once in a while you

will suspect that something is wrong -- when their battery will go down. Then, "Grrr, grrr, grrr!" Otherwise they will be perfectly okay. Just a moment before the woman was hugging you and saying, "I love you," and now she says, "Grrr, grrr...." The difference will only be known when the person will fall ill: the real one will go to the hospital and the robot will go to the factory, to the garage. Then you will know the difference; otherwise there will be no possibility of knowing.

In fact, the ordinary man is already nothing but a robot. Your unconscious life can be measured in percentages and your love can also be measured in percentages -- because what love do you have? It is nothing but chemistry!

Yes, the love of a Christ or a Buddha is immeasurable because it is transcendental to the hormones, to the chemistry, to the physiology. But your love is hormonal. Just give an injection of strong hormones and great love arises in you. Take a few hormones out of you, and it falls flat on the ground; all love disappears. Your love can be measured, but it is not love; it is just a biological urge. And your life is a chemical phenomenon. But there is a life behind your life and there is a love above your love that is immeasurable.

But neither is my memory very good, nor is my mathematics very good.

Killoran was considered by most of the villagers to be the dumbest man in the town. One day he showed up in new clothes and began buying rounds of drinks at the neighborhood saloon. The neighbors wondered what had happened.

When one of them finally asked him, Killoran replied, "I won the first prize in a big lottery."
"How did you ever guess the lucky number?"
"Well, three times running I dreamed of seven. So I figured it out that three times seven is twenty-four and I bought ticket number twenty-four, and it won."
"Why, you fool, three times seven is twenty-one, not twenty-four."
"You've got the education," said Killoran, "I've got the lottery money."

And, Meeshael, that's what I would like to say to you: you may know mathematics -- you have got the education, I have got the lottery money!

The last question:
Question 5
BELOVED MASTER,
I HAVE HEARD THAT MARRIED MEN LIVE LONGER THAN THE UNMARRIED. IS IT SO?

Satyadeva, meditate over Murphy's maxim: Married men don't really live longer. It only seems that way.
And, Satyadeva, why are YOU worried? I think you must be beyond sixty now. Are you thinking to get married so as to live longer? It is time to think of something else -- time to think of death, not of marriage; time to think of the eternal, not the longer.
Even if you live to seventy, eighty, ninety, what does it matter? What will you do? If you live ninety or a hundred years you will do the same stupidities again and again.

What have you been doing up to now for these sixty years? You will do the same things even if you are given sixty years more. Think of something new!
And death is bound to come. When you die is not important; death is absolutely certain, THAT is important. After birth only one thing is certain in life and that is death; everything else is uncertain. Don't try to escape death, don't try to avoid it. For centuries people have been trying all kinds of ways to avoid death, but death comes all the same. Whether married or unmarried it doesn't matter: you will die. You are dying!
In fact, death does not come one day suddenly; it starts the day you are born. You start dying from the very first breath. Each birthday is a deathday. Your life is slipping out of your hands and you cannot escape.

An ancient Sufi parable:
A rich merchant in Baghdad sent his servant one day to the marketplace to buy food. But after a few minutes the servant returned looking panic-stricken.
"Master!" he cried. "You must lend me your best horse immediately, so that I may flee to Damascus and thereby escape my fate."
"Whatever is the matter?" asked the merchant.
"I went to the marketplace and I saw Death standing there among the stallholders!" exclaimed the servant. "He made a hostile gesture at me and started walking towards me. I beg you, lend me your best horse so that I may flee to Damascus and escape."
The merchant was a kind man and he did as his servant asked. Then he himself walked down to the marketplace to

see if the story was true. Sure enough, Death was standing in the crowd.
"Why did you make a hostile gesture at my servant?" asked the merchant.
"I made no gesture of hostility," replied Death. "I was simply very surprised to see him, for I have an appointment with him tonight... in Damascus."

You cannot escape. Wherever you go you will find your death waiting for you. Yes, it can be prolonged, postponed, but what is the point? Rather than postponing, why not use this opportunity of becoming aware of death -- that it is approaching, that it is on the way, that any moment you will be in its grip. Don't ask for the horse and don't try to go to Damascus. You cannot escape. The only way is to transcend, not to escape.
You ask me, "I have heard that married men live longer than the unmarried. Is it so?"
If it is so, then what? Will you get married? At the age of sixty it will be so stupid. A man of twenty can be forgiven, but you cannot be forgiven.

Mr. Goldberg visited the doctor's office, complaining that he had flying crabs. A lab test was taken, and Mr. Goldberg anxiously waited while the doctor with a sad look came to give him the report. "I am sorry, Mr. Goldberg," he said, "but those flying crabs we thought you had -- well, they turned out to be fruit flies. I am sorry, but your banana is dead."

Enough for today.

The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 8
Chapter #9
Chapter title: Sannyas is for sannyas' sake
29 December 1979 am in Buddha Hall

ONE MAN DENIES TRUTH.
ANOTHER DENIES HIS OWN ACTIONS.
BOTH GO INTO THE DARK
AND IN THE NEXT WORLD SUFFER
FOR THEY OFFEND TRUTH.

WEAR THE YELLOW ROBE.
BUT IF YOU ARE RECKLESS
YOU WILL FALL INTO DARKNESS.

IF YOU ARE RECKLESS,
BETTER TO SWALLOW MOLTEN IRON
THAN TO EAT AT THE TABLE OF GOOD FOLK.

IF YOU COURT ANOTHER MAN'S WIFE
YOU COURT TROUBLE.
YOUR SLEEP IS BROKEN.
YOU LOSE YOUR HONOR.
YOU FALL INTO DARKNESS.

YOU GO AGAINST THE LAW,
YOU GO INTO THE DARK.
YOUR PLEASURES END IN FEAR
AND THE KING'S PUNISHMENT IS HARSH.

BUT AS A BLADE OF GRASS HELD AWKWARDLY MAY CUT YOUR HAND,
SO RENUNCIATION MAY LEAD YOU INTO THE DARK.

The mother superior of a convent advertised for a cleaner and retired old Cohen applied for the job. Since he was the only applicant, the mother superior had no other choice but to hire him.
Six months later the mother called Mr. Cohen to her office and said to him, "Dear Mr. Cohen, we are very very pleased with your work. You are the first of your faith to be employed by us and I must repeat that we are pleased. You are a conscientious man and the church has never been cleaner. There are, however, three things I feel I should point out to you. Firstly, Mr. Cohen, don't wash your hands in the holy water. Secondly, don't hang your coat on the cross. And thirdly, please address me as Mother Superior and not as Mrs. Shapiro."

Man ordinarily is a robot. He lives apparently awake, but not really. He walks, he talks, he acts, but it is all as if in sleep -- not conscious of what he is doing, not conscious of what he is saying, not conscious of all that surrounds him. He moves surrounded in a dark cloud of unawareness. According to Gautama the Buddha, this is the original sin: to live unconsciously, to act out of unconsciousness.
In fact, the word 'sin' comes from a root which means forgetfulness. Sin simply means that we are not conscious, aware, alert, that we don't have any inner light to guide us.

Buddha talks again and again in these sutras about falling into darkness, but you can fall into darkness only if your inside is full of darkness. Whatsoever is your inside is going to be your destiny. If the inner is full of light, the whole existence is full of light. If the inner is dark, then of course it is nothing but a dark night of the soul all around. You live through your inner core, so whatsoever is the case with your center is going to be reflected by your circumference. The whole world only reflects you, echoes you, resounds you. It is nothing but you multiplied a millionfold. So if you come across ugliness, it must be somewhere inside you. If you meet the enemy, you must have projected it. If you see death, that means something in you is rotten, something in you with which you have become identified corresponds to death.

The world is a mirror; it always shows your real face to you. Buddha insists again and again: Use the world as a mirror, and then go inside and find out the cause. The cause is always in the inner; the effect is in the outer. Don't be deceived by the effect. Don't start thinking that the effect is the cause because then you will be leading a life rooted in utter ignorance. The face in the mirror is not the cause; the face in the mirror is only the effect. Don't try to change the face in the mirror, don't try to paint it.

That's what we go on doing; that's what our whole life consists of. We are always trying to look good in the eyes of others; that is trying to look good in the mirror. What are those eyes of others but mirrors? We are always trying to convince others of our goodness, of our truth, of our sincerity, authenticity, religiousness, spirituality. What is the point of convincing anybody? In fact, by convincing

others we are trying to convince ourselves. If the others are convinced -- if the mirror can reflect a beautiful face -- than we can be at ease with ourselves. We can also believe that we are beautiful.

This is the illusion in which we live, and this is the illusion that the society helps to strengthen. The society feeds it, the society nourishes it. The whole effort of the society is to make the mirror more important than yourself, because then you can be dominated, you can be reduced to slaves. And the mirror is in others' hands.

Somebody says to you, "You are so holy!" If you believe him, if this becomes an ego nourishment for you, unconsciously you have become dependent on the person. Now you will be afraid of him -- he can withdraw any moment. He can say to you any moment, "You are no longer holy." You have to go on convincing him. You have to behave according to his idea of holiness. If he wants you to fast, you will have to fast. If he wants you to go every Sunday to the church, you will have to go to the church every Sunday. If you want to keep your face beautiful in his eyes then you have to follow his ideas of what spirituality means.

This is a very subtle slavery and the society uses it. It respects those who become instruments of the society, of the tradition. It respects those who are conformists.

Buddha says: Discover your original face. Don't be bothered about the mirror, because mirrors can be made which may show your ugly face as beautiful. You must have seen mirrors of many kinds; they can show different kinds of faces to you. One mirror shows your face very long, another mirror shows your face very fat, another

mirror shows your face very thin. They can distort, they can make it ugly, they can make it beautiful too. And the mirror is in the society's hands.
Don't trust the mirrors. Close your eyes and search for the original face. But to close one's eyes and to search for one's original face is a little arduous journey, because in your inner world for centuries, for many lives, you have accumulated only darkness. You are afraid of the inner. You have only a repressed reservoir of unfulfilled desires, greed, anger, lust.
Your religions have been telling you to repress, and to repress means you go on piling up inside your being all that the society condemns. Now you will be afraid to go in because you will have to encounter all those ugly things. They are not ugly, but you have been taught that they are ugly and you have been conditioned, hypnotized that they are ugly -- and you believe that they are ugly.
The first thing for the seeker is to get rid of all these beliefs given by others. A believer can never find the truth.

The first sutra:

ONE MAN DENIES TRUTH.
ANOTHER DENIES HIS OWN ACTIONS.

Buddha is talking about you, keep on remembering. He is not talking about anybody else, he is addressing YOU. Otherwise the mind is very clever and cunning. It goes on saying, "He is saying these things to somebody else -- you are an exception." You are not -- nobody is. When buddhas speak they speak to the universal, they don't speak to the

exceptional -- because, in fact, there are no exceptions. You become exceptional only when you become a buddha, but then you don't need any buddha to talk to you. Then you don't need any message from any awakened person. You ARE awakened.

Once it happened:
One awakened man, a Sufi mystic, Farid, met Kabir, another awakened man. They sat for two days together in absolute silence. Yes, sometimes they hugged each other and they laughed madly and they danced together, but not a single word was uttered.
When the disciples of Farid asked him, "Why for two days continuously didn't you speak a single word?" he said, "There was no need, because wherever I am, Kabir is also there. We belong to the same dimension, we are bathed in the same light. We are not separate, we only appear separate -- on the circumference, from the outside -- but our inner beings are at the same point, merging, melting. There is no need to say anything to the other."
And the same was the reply of Kabir to his own disciples. He said, "It would have been foolish to say anything, absolutely foolish, ridiculous. Something has to be said only because you cannot understand silence; if you can understand silence, then what is the need of words? What is the need of language? Between two buddhas, language is irrelevant. Silence is so beautiful, so tremendously beautiful, so deep, so profound, so expressive, so eloquent, what is the need of words? But words are needed because you cannot understand anything else."

It is out of compassion that buddhas have spoken -- compassion for those who can only understand language. And language is a poor thing, very poor, very inadequate. Remember it; then slowly you can find out something in these sutras -- not exactly in the words, but between the words; not exactly in the lines, but between the lines, in the gaps, in the intervals, some glimpses, some taste of silence, some perfume.

ONE MAN DENIES TRUTH. How do people deny truth and why? First, their lies have become their investments. Watch your own life. You have invested so much in your lies, you would not like to know the truth, because the truth will shatter all your palaces, all your dreams. The truth will shatter all that you have believed up to now. You know it deep down in your heart that you are living in lies, but they are beautiful, they are nice, they are cozy, and you have lived in them so long that it seems difficult to live without them.

There is an ancient Sufi parable:

A man gave to a Sufi mystic a present, a golden bowl with a beautiful fish in it. The Sufi looked at the bowl and the fish and felt very sorry for the fish, because the bowl is an imprisonment.

He went to the lake and he was tremendously happy in liberating the fish. He threw the fish into the lake. He was happy that at least now the fish can have the whole lake, the great freedom, the space that really belongs to her. A golden bowl -- although it is golden it is a confinement. Then he thought, what will he do with this bowl? So he threw the bowl also into the lake.

The next morning he went to see how the fish was. He was surprised: the fish was in the bowl and the bowl was in the lake. What had happened to the fish? She had again chosen the bowl. Now the bowl is in the lake, but the fish is not in the lake; the fish has entered into the bowl again. She has lived so long in it, it is her home. The mystic thinks it is a prison, but not the fish; she may have been afraid of the freedom.

People become very afraid of freedom, more afraid than of anything else. You will be surprised to know that people talk about freedom, but when freedom is really given to them they become afraid, frightened, scared, because freedom is vast, unmanageable, uncontrollable. You cannot dominate it. Slavery is small, it is smaller than you. You feel good with it -- you seem to be big compared to your slavery. But compared to your freedom you are nobody, a nonentity, a nothingness. And who wants to be a nothingness? Everybody wants to be somebody; even though one has to live in a prison, one is ready.... If you can be made the head of the prisoners -- a president, a prime minister, or something like that -- you would like, you would love to live in the prison rather than be free and nobody.

The first requirement for attaining to truth is the capacity to be free, the capacity to be nobody. The ego is the greatest barrier. The ego can exist only in a golden bowl; it can't exist in a lake. It is bound to melt, merge and disappear. Lies are good for the ego. In fact, the ego is the greatest lie; it feeds on other lies. Although truth has a way of coming up again and again... howsoever repressed, it surfaces,

because it is truth; you can repress it only for the time being. And to repress truth you will have to be constantly on guard. Of course you will get tired, you will need a little rest, and whenever you are resting the truth surfaces. The truth comes in your life again and again; you can go on denying it, but it never denies you. You can deny God, but God never denies you.
Friedrich Nietzsche declared: There is no God. God is dead. But God has remained silent. He didn't become annoyed; otherwise at least he would have shouted.

I have heard about one atheist, Diderot, who used to argue against God. He had a special argument. In front of the audience he would take his pocket watch and would say that it is such a time -- eight thirty: "Now if there is a God and if you are almighty, omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, then you must be here, because you are everywhere. And if you are really there, do only one thing: stop this watch, even for five minutes, and that will be enough proof of your existence."
His whole life he used that argument. People would wait without breathing, that maybe God is going to do something. But God never stopped his watch, not even once.

You can go on denying God, but God never denies you. You can go on refuting truth, but truth never refutes you. Your denial does not become an irritation; your denial is only a childish act. Truth goes on again and again visiting you; it never tires of you. And if you watch your life, you will be surprised in how many ways it comes.

Bobby's mother had been away for a few weeks and was questioning her small son about events during her absence.
"Well, one night we had a thunderstorm and I was scared, so daddy and me slept together."
"Bobby," said the boy's pretty young French nursemaid, "you mean daddy and I."
"No," said Bobby, "that was last Thursday. I am talking about Monday night."

Truth has its own ways. It may speak through your child, it may speak through a flower, it may speak through a sunray, it may speak through a distant call of the cuckoo. It has different ways of approaching you. Unless you are absolutely deaf, and nobody is absolutely deaf; unless you are absolutely blind, and nobody is absolutely blind.... You recognize it, but you go on denying still. You go on avoiding it. You don't want to LOOK at it. You escape; you know ways how to escape from it, although your escapes are not of much value. In fact, in escaping also you emphasize truth.

Grace and Martha were from a very prim and proper Eastern finishing school, and they were spending their vacations together in New York. They met a bohemian artist and at one of his exhibitions Grace noticed that a canvas of a provocative nude bore a striking resemblance to her girlfriend.
"Martha," she gasped, "that painting looks exactly like you! Don't tell me you have been posing in the nude."

"Certainly not," Martha stammered, blushing furiously. "He must have painted it from memory."

Even your escapes emphasize something from which you are escaping. There is really no way to escape from truth. There is no way to run away from truth because wherever you run, truth is there; in whatsoever direction you run, truth is there.
Buddha says: ONE MAN DENIES TRUTH.
The first and the most fundamental way of denying the truth is to believe in certain systems. Systems of belief are the most cunning ways of denying the truth. One is a Hindu, another is a Mohammedan; one is a Christian, another is a Jew. These are all ways of denying the truth. Rather than seeking and searching, rather than inquiring, you believe. Belief means you have borrowed it from others, who had borrowed it from others and so on, so forth. Belief means it is not your experience -- and unless it is your experience it is not truth.
But belief can give you a very deceptive feeling that you know. The Mohammedan, the Christian, the Jaina, the Buddhist, they all think they know. And what is the cause of their feeling? -- because they have learned from scriptures, from priests. Like parrots they have become efficient in repeating -- beautiful words, logical systems; but all is speculation, guesswork. All is imitation. They have not known a single truth in their lives... because a single truth is enough to deliver you.
Jesus says: Truth liberates. But remember one thing which he has not said -- or maybe he said it and it has not been reported in the gospels: Truth certainly liberates, but the

truth has to be your own. Only then it liberates. If it is somebody else's it creates only a new bondage, a beautiful bondage; golden chains, maybe, studded with diamonds, very valuable, difficult to lose because you don't think in terms of chains; you think they are ornaments. Beliefs are chains, not ornaments.

A believer is the ugliest person in the world because his belief becomes a barrier into inquiry. I am not saying to become disbelievers, because disbelief is again belief from another side, from the negative side. Belief and disbelief are two aspects of the same coin. Don't be a theist and don't be an atheist.

The real inquirer remains an agnostic. He remains open, he has no conclusions. He says, "I know only one thing: that I know nothing." He remains available. The moment you have conclusions you become unavailable to truth; conclusions close you. The moment you have a priori prejudices, how can you know truth? You have already concluded, you have already accepted certain beliefs; they will be like clouds in front of your eyes. Your eyes are no longer empty, clean, mirrorlike; they can't reflect that which is, they can only distort. They will distort according to your belief.

So when the Hindu comes to experience God he sees Krishna with his flute. A Christian never sees that; that's strange. A Christian always sees Christ on the cross; a Hindu never sees that. That's strange! A Jaina will never see Krishna, Rama, Christ -- no, not at all; and a Buddhist will never see Mahavira, Mohammed, Moses. They all see their own belief. The phenomenon is very simple: you see whatsoever you project. Your mind functions as a

projector. You don't see that which is, you see that which you want to see.
Avoid beliefs. Drop all beliefs, Catholic or communist. Don't believe in Kaaba, or Kashi or the Kremlin. Don't believe in the Bible or the Gita or the Koran or DAS KAPITAL. Avoid all beliefs. Remain clean, empty.
That's what meditation is all about: a state of silence, a state of no prejudice, a state of no belief. And then you are very close to truth. It suddenly explodes upon you, and its explosion is such a blessing that you cannot imagine it unless you have experienced it. There is no way to imagine it. Buddhas have been talking down the ages, but still you cannot imagine it. It is unimaginable because it is inexpressible -- but it can be experienced. It is experienceable but not expressible.
First you will have to be ready to drop the ego, because the ego can live only in lies. Secondly, you will have to drop belief systems because belief systems distort; they never allow things to be known as they are. And thirdly, you will have to drop your mind, because mind is a constant occupation with the past and the future, and truth is always in the present. Truth has no past, no future. Truth is always here, always now -- and you are never here and never now. Whenever you are also now and here, there is a meeting; then something transpires. Between you and the whole a bridge suddenly happens. In fact, the bridge has always been there, you were just not aware of it.
Bring your consciousness to the present. Don't go on wandering into the past, in the jungles of the past, in the memories. Howsoever beautiful they are, they are dead -- they are no more. And don't go on great journeys into the

future, because whatsoever you desire in the future is never going to happen. Existence has no obligation to fulfill your desires. Existence has no obligation to follow your projections into the future. Whatsoever you desire is going to be wrong.
When you are not there to desire, then existence starts guiding you into the ways of truth, into the ways of tao, dhamma. AES DHAMMO SANANTANO: this is the inexhaustible law. Drop the mind and you are possessed by the whole; cling to the mind and you remain as far away from the whole as one can be. The moment you drop the mind you start becoming alert and aware. It is mind that is your sleep. You are sleeping either in the past or in the future: both are ways of sleeping.
When I say, "Wake up!" again and again, when Buddha says, "Wake up!" a simple phenomenon is indicated: come to the present.

Mrs. Weissman lived in the thirtieth-floor penthouse of her Park Avenue building. Every day when she went up or down in the elevator, Manelli the elevator man would see her making the sign of the cross. After watching this for several days he could not resist asking her if she was Catholic. She replied, "Definitely not. I am Jewish."
"I no understand," said Manelli. "If you Jewish why you cross yourself every time you get in and out of the elevator?"
"Cross myself!" barked Mrs. Weissman. "Don't be ridiculous! I am checking to see if I have my tiara, my brooch, my clip... MY CLIP!"

People are living in absolute unawareness. Even if they are checking, it is through a deep deep layer of sleep. They are somnambulists. Everybody is in a kind of psychedelic state. ONE MAN DENIES TRUTH. ANOTHER DENIES HIS OWN ACTIONS. And if you deny the truth you are bound to deny your actions too, because unless you are conscious you cannot take responsibility for your actions.

There are a thousand and one ways to deny your actions. In the past, people used to say, "It is karma." Now that disease has gone to the West; now in the West people are saying, "It is karma. What can we do? It had to happen. It was predetermined by a past life." That is simply a way of denying your action, of shirking your responsibility.

In the past, people used to say, "It is fate, KISMET. What can we do? God has already written it; we are just puppets in his hands. If he wants us to be a murderer, we are a murderer; if he wants us to be a thief, we are a thief." Cunning, tricky minds!

Now those old ways are no longer relevant, they have become outdated; we have found new ones. Karl Marx says, "You are not responsible. It is the society, the social structure, the economic structure, it is capitalism. You are not responsible." It is again fate in new words, in modern language, in contemporary jargon. Karl Marx is a fatalist.

And then there is Sigmund Freud who is even more sophisticated than Karl Marx, even more clever. He gives you new ideas. It is the unconscious which is responsible, not you. If you do something, what can you do? -- it is beyond your capacity to avoid it. It is coming from the unconscious, from the dark layers of your being. You have

no access to those dark layers. And Sigmund Freud says there is no way to change it; man is a hopeless project. According to Sigmund Freud, man is bound to live in misery; at the most we can help him to live in misery more comfortably. We can make him accept the misery so he will be a little more comfortable. We can make the misery a little more convenient by giving him good explanations so he is not so much disturbed; otherwise there is no hope. Man is determined by unconscious forces.

These are just new ways of saying the old things: karma, fate, God. The idea of predetermination has dominated the unconscious man up to now.

It is only once is a while that a buddha says, "Accept your act as your own and don't escape from the responsibility, because escaping from the responsibility means you will never be free of it." And you CAN be free of it. Be responsible, whatsoever is the case, good or bad. Remember, except you, no one else is deciding about it.

If you are living in misery it is your decision. It hurts, of course, to think that "I am living in misery out of my own decision." But if you observe a little more silently, this will give you great freedom. In the beginning it hurts; otherwise it is the harbinger of a new consciousness. If I am creating my hell it implies that I can create my heaven too. If I am the cause of my darkness I can be the cause of my light too. I can be a light unto myself. The very idea that "I am solely and wholly responsible for my actions" is a deliverance.

Buddha says: BOTH GO INTO THE DARK....

The man who denies truth because of the ego, because of belief systems, because of the mind wandering in the past or the future, or the man who denies his actions either because of karma or fate or social structure or the unconscious, they both go into the dark. They are missing the opportunity of becoming light; they are choosing darkness.

... AND IN THE NEXT WORLD SUFFER
FOR THEY OFFEND TRUTH.

And whatsoever you do here and whatsoever you are here is going to be the cause, the continuity, in the next world too -- because the next moment is born out of this moment and the next life is born out of this life. Life is a continuum. Death does not create any discontinuity; you remain continuous. By death you simply change your house; you are the same person. You can come from the hut to the palace, from the palace to the hut. You can move from one city to another city, from one planet to another planet, from man to woman, from woman to man. You can go on changing your houses, but YOU, the real consciousness inside, the real self remains always the same.
So if you are creating darkness here, remember: this darkness will hang around you in the next world too. So you are not only destroying this life, you are creating wrong foundations for the next life too. Beware of it.
... AND IN THE NEXT WORLD SUFFER FOR THEY OFFEND TRUTH. The whole cause of suffering is offending truth. What does he mean by "offending truth"? Whenever you deny a truth because of your prejudices,

whenever you avoid taking responsibility for your actions, you are offending truth. And by offending truth you are offending the universal law. You are falling apart. You are becoming a separate entity enclosed within yourself. You are no more part of the whole. You will suffer.
Suffering means going against the universal law and bliss means going in tune with the universal law. Bliss is nothing but harmony with the whole and suffering is discord.

WEAR THE YELLOW ROBE.
BUT IF YOU ARE RECKLESS
YOU WILL FALL INTO DARKNESS.

Read instead: WEAR THE orange ROBE. BUT IF YOU ARE RECKLESS YOU WILL FALL INTO DARKNESS.
Buddha had chosen the yellow robe just as I have chosen the orange. He chose it for a certain reason. The orange robe had been the robe of the sannyasin before Buddha; it is the ancientmost robe of the sannyasin. Buddha dropped it and chose instead the yellow robe for the simple reason that sannyas, the very idea of sannyas, had gone wrong, and he did not want to associate with it. And because he wanted to emphasize death and he wanted you to remember death again and again -- because death can bring awareness to your life -- he chose yellow.
Yellow is the color of death: the color of the yellow leaf, the color of the setting sun, the color of the dying man's face. Yellow is the color of death. Orange is the color of life, of youth, of love. Orange, in the East, is the color of spring, when all the trees bloom and birds sing and bees

hum and there is fragrance all over. The whole climate is full of youth, freshness, rejuvenation.
Buddha emphasized death to make you aware, but now twenty-five centuries have passed and much dust has gathered on Buddha's ideas. Just as orange had become meaningless in Buddha's time, now the yellow robe has become meaningless.
I have chosen again the orange, and with a totally new vision. The old orange sannyasin was a renunciate. My sannyasin is not an escapist; he lives in the world, but lives with such skill and art that he remains transcendental to it.
But it is not a question only of the robe. You can change the robe to orange or yellow or whatsoever. Unless you become heedful, unless you start listening to the buddhas, to their message.... And their message is simple and very short: Wake up! It can be condensed into only these two words. If you don't listen to their message, IF YOU ARE RECKLESS YOU WILL FALL INTO DARKNESS.
It is not a question of formality, it is not a question of ritual. Buddha was as much against ritual as I am, he was as much against formality as I am; hence I feel a tremendous affinity with him. Twenty-five centuries simply disappear between me and him; we become contemporaries.

A pregnant woman was told that if she wanted her child to behave in a certain way, she should say every day, "I want my child to be so-and-so...." This would condition the fetus and the child would be born already having this trait.
She had noticed how hard it was to teach children manners, so every day without fail she said, "I want my child to be polite."

She was pregnant for nine months, then ten and eleven and for years she went on being pregnant. Finally she died without having given birth. The doctors did an autopsy on her body, and when they cut her open they found two little old men bowing to each other and saying, "After you!"

We are not interested in such formality; otherwise you will never be born. We are interested in the essential, not in the accidental. We are interested in the intrinsic, not in the incidental.
And the robe is accidental -- orange, yellow, green. The essential is awareness.

IF YOU ARE RECKLESS, says Buddha,
BETTER TO SWALLOW MOLTEN IRON
THAN TO EAT AT THE TABLE OF GOOD FOLK.

If you are reckless, unaware, if you go on living heedlessly, without listening to all these awakened ones, you will suffer much more than you can suffer by swallowing molten iron. Beware! You are creating suffering every moment. By being unaware you create suffering; by being aware you create bliss.

IF YOU COURT ANOTHER MAN'S WIFE
YOU COURT TROUBLE.
YOUR SLEEP IS BROKEN.
YOU LOSE YOUR HONOR.
YOU FALL INTO DARKNESS.

What to say of another man's wife? -- one's own wife is trouble enough, or for that matter, one's own husband. Buddha is saying: Are you not yet aware of the phenomenon? Is not your wife enough to make you aware? Is not your own husband enough to be finished with this game?

But the mind goes on saying, "Maybe this woman is not good; some other woman may be good. Who knows? It didn't fit with this woman; I may be happy with another." And you cannot be happy with anyone. Happiness has nothing to do with the other; happiness is something that you have to create inside you. And you go on asking for trouble. Whenever you depend for your happiness on the other you ask for trouble. Dependence IS trouble. YOU COURT TROUBLE.

The other IS hell, and depending on the other you become a slave. YOUR SLEEP IS BROKEN. Your peace is lost, your rest is gone. Your whole life becomes a constant disturbance, because you are trying to exploit the other and the other is trying to exploit you.

YOU LOSE YOUR HONOR... your grace, your beauty, your sincerity. Buddha does not mean respectability; by "honor" he means grace.

YOU GO AGAINST THE LAW,
YOU GO INTO THE DARK.

The law is that bliss or misery both arise in the innermost core of your being. Nobody can give you bliss or misery. You need not go to anybody; you are enough unto yourself. Just go in. Dive deep in your consciousness.

And the more conscious you become, the more full of light your life is, the more and more benediction goes on showering on you. The more dark you are, the more unconscious, the more misery is bound to happen.

YOUR PLEASURES END IN FEAR
AND THE KING'S PUNISHMENT IS HARSH.

Buddha calls the ultimate law "the king." The punishment is harsh, but YOU are responsible. The law is not cruel; the law is simply law. It is just like gravitation: if you walk rightly, the gravitation cannot punish you. It is not interested in punishing you, it helps you to walk. But you drink too much, you become a drunkard, and you walk, and you fall on the ground and you break your leg. Can you blame the law of gravitation? The law of gravitation is simply there. If you go against it, you will be punished; whereas if you follow it, you will be benefited.

BUT AS A BLADE OF GRASS HELD
AWKWARDLY....

Even such a soft thing, a blade of grass, held awkwardly....

MAY CUT YOUR HAND....

It all depends on you. If you are conscious you can hold a sword and it will not cut your hand; if you are unconscious, even a blade of grass may cut your hand.

SO RENUNCIATION MAY LEAD YOU INTO THE DARK.

A tremendously important saying. Buddha says: Even renunciation, taken unconsciously, is not going to help. You can become a sannyasin out of fear, you can become a sannyasin out of greed. These things are not going to help. Unless you become a sannyasin out of awareness, nothing is going to help.
People become religious for wrong reasons, and you cannot be religious for wrong reasons. And the person who lives rightly need not be religious: he is religious already.

Perlman made millions in the bakery business. While on a visit to Rome he went to see the pope and made a huge donation to the church.
The pope was very pleased and said, "Mr. Perlman, is there anything I can do to show my appreciation?"
"Yes, Your Holiness," answered the baking magnate. "Could you make a little change in the Lord's Prayer?"
"Ah, Mr. Perlman," frowned the pope, "I am afraid that would not be possible. The Lord's Prayer is repeated daily by millions of Christians."
"I know," said Perlman, "but I only want a small change. Where it says, 'Give us this day our daily bread,' just make it, 'Give us this day Perlman's pumpernickel bread.'"

Now, that great donation to the church has nothing to do with religion, it has nothing to do with charity; it is business, pure business.

And that's what people are doing. They donate to the poor, they serve the poor, to go to heaven. It is an investment, it is not service. Unless you are conscious, whatsoever you do is going to be wrong. In Buddha's definition, wrong means a thing done unconsciously and right means a thing done consciously. It has nothing to do with the thing itself but with the quality of consciousness through which it is done.

A Catholic priest took his new assistant to the hospital for the first time. The novice priest walked into an intensive care room and went up to a man in bed under an oxygen tent.
"I am here to help you in any way I can," he said. There was no response from the patient so again the priest offered his help. Still no response. Then suddenly the patient grabbed a pencil and paper and furiously began writing, after which he fell back dead.
The priest took the note and excitedly ran out of the room crying, "Father, Father! I got my first confession!" The father looked at the note and read, "Get off the oxygen hose, you sonofabitch!"

Buddha was perfectly aware that many people were becoming sannyasins in his day -- as it has always been -- for wrong reasons. Somebody was poor, somebody was a thief and the king was after him, somebody has committed murder and he wanted to hide and to be a sannyasin was the best place to hide.
BUT AS A BLADE OF GRASS HELD AWKWARDLY MAY CUT YOUR HAND, SO RENUNCIATION MAY LEAD YOU INTO THE DARK. Renunciation has not to

be done for any motive. Sannyas has to be out of the sheer joy of being a sannyasin. Just as art is for art's sake, so sannyas is for sannyas' sake. Then it has tremendous beauty, and then it brings bliss, it brings paradise to you. Do whatsoever you want to do, but do it consciously. To be conscious is to be a sannyasin.
Enough for today.
The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 8
Chapter #10
Chapter title: Towards a new humanity
30 December 1979 am in Buddha Hall

The first question:
Question 1
BELOVED MASTER,
IF BY ANY CHANCE I MIGHT NOT GET ENLIGHTENED THIS LIFETIME, HOW CAN I MAKE SURE THAT I WILL BE A WOMAN IN MY NEXT LIFE? IT SEEMS SUCH A JUICY EXISTENCE.

Anand Baul, the first thing to be remembered is that nobody ever gets enlightened. Enlightenment is your nature; you are already it. It is not something to be achieved, it is not a goal to be reached. It is the source, not the goal. In the innermost core of your being you are all buddhas, and you have always been so, and you will always remain so.
Yes, you have forgotten it. So the question is not of realizing it, the question is only of remembering it. Hence Buddha says: Be more mindful, be more alert, be more

watchful. Nothing else has to be done, one has nowhere to go, no pilgrimage is sacred. All pilgrimages are just going astray. You are already there where you want to be; just look within, just turn in, tune in. This is the first thing to be remembered, that it is not a question of achievement.

You say, "If by any chance I might not get enlightened this lifetime...."

There is no chance at all to miss it. It is impossible to be other than enlightened. It is your self-nature, your very being. This whole existence is enlightened.

Then what is the difference between a buddha and you?

The difference is very simple. It has nothing to do with your quality. Your quality is exactly the same as that of Gautama the Buddha, or Jesus Christ, but you are asleep and they are awake. They know where they are, who they are, and you are dreaming. But one can come out of the dreams; dreams cannot hold you, dreams can't hinder you. Dreams are dreams, they have no substance in them. They can't prevent you from becoming awake. Dreams, desire, sleep -- they are all like darkness. When you light a candle the darkness cannot prevent it. The darkness may be very ancient, it may have existed for millions of years and the candle may be fresh and just a small candle, but that's enough. Light has a positive existence. Darkness has no existence at all; it is only absence of light. You can wake up any moment, the candle can be lit any moment, and all dreams and desires will disappear; hence devices have been invented.

What Buddha says, Patanjali says, Lao Tzu says, is that these are only devices to wake you up, alarms and nothing else.

Secondly, whether you want it or not, if you remain asleep next lifetime you are going to be a woman. Even if you don't want it, it is going to happen. There is a simple law. This is my observation of many people's past lives, this is how mind functions, this is very fundamental to the mind: it always moves to the opposite end. If you are rich the mind thinks poverty is religious, spiritual; it has something of innocence in it, and "Look how the poor are free from anxiety, and how the beggar sleeps soundly. I have got everything and I cannot sleep, I cannot rest, not even a moment's rest... continuous worry, anxiety."

The rich man thinks always that the poor are really in a better space than he is. It is the rich people who have given the idea that poverty is spiritual. You will be surprised, take note of it, that all the TIRTHANKARAS, all the great masters of the Jainas were kings. Buddha himself was a king. All the AVATARAS of the Hindus -- Rama, Krishna, they were all kings. It is because of these rich people that a deep idea has prevailed down the ages that poverty is spiritual.

There is nothing spiritual in being poor, there is nothing spiritual in being rich either. The poor man thinks that the rich people are enjoying real life; hence the poor man projects. If he cannot be rich in this life, then let it be next life; if not in this world, then let it be in the other world. It is the poor man's projection -- the paradise, the heaven, where he dreams that he will be rich, and he will have all that rich people have. Not only that, the poor man also dreams that no rich man will ever be able to reach heaven, they will be thrown into hell: "They have enjoyed enough

here, now they have to suffer for it. And I have suffered enough here so I have to be rewarded."

Jesus is a poor man, he is not like Krishna, Buddha and Mahavira. Krishna, Buddha and Mahavira have not said that no rich man can enter into paradise. Jesus says: Even a camel can pass through the eye of a needle, but the rich man cannot enter through the gate into heaven. He is a poor carpenter's son; he knows what poverty is. And because of that poverty he speaks a totally different language than Buddha.

In India the idea has prevailed that if you are rich it is because of your past lives' good karmas that you are rich now. And Jesus says: Rich people cannot enter into the kingdom of God. He says: Those who are the first here will be the last there, and those who are the last here will be the first. It is not an accident that Christianity goes on spreading in poor countries; it has an appeal for the poor. It is not an accident that communism is a by-product of Christianity.

The East has not given birth to communism, it could not have done it. And whenever a country becomes rich, remember, it will start becoming Buddhist, it will start becoming more and more Hindu. It is not an accident that America is so much interested in Eastern wisdom. Whenever a society is affluent it starts thinking in a different way than a poor country thinks.

My observation is that if you are a man in this life, you must have been a woman in your past life, and if you are a woman in this life you must have been a man. That's how the pendulum of mind goes from one extreme to the other. Every man thinks -- not only you, Anand Baul -- that the

existence of a woman is beautiful, it is juicy. But ask the woman: she desires to be a man, deep down she feels humiliated that she is a woman, a second-class citizen. Deep down she herself wants to behave like a man. Women all over the world are trying in every possible way to behave like men. They are wearing men's clothes, smoking cigarettes like men, and whatsoever they can do. They use language like men have always used it, becoming arrogant, aggressive, losing the feminine quality. See the women of the liberation movement: they have lost something -- something soft, feminine, receptive, passive, is no more there. They are aggressive, violent. They can't wait for another life. In this very life they are in a hurry, they want to become like men. They want the same jobs, the same kind of work, the same kind of freedom. Even if that freedom is just stupid, even if that job is hard, they want to prove that they can manage it, that they are not less than men. Their next life they are bound to be born as men. So don't be worried about that. You will be a woman, watch out! Don't tell me then that you weren't warned. I am giving you the warning. And what do you mean by "juicy existence"?

It appears to you through the eyes of a man that the woman is beautiful; through the eyes of the woman the man is beautiful. This is a biological attraction. That's why two women cannot tolerate each other; it is impossible to find women friends. They are very jealous of each other, suspicious of each other. They cannot trust other women; they know too much about the woman's heart, about the woman's mind. They can't see any beauty. In fact, they cannot believe what man goes on seeing in women. There

seems to be nothing. To a woman there is nothing, just as to a man there is nothing in man. It is the biological attraction, chemical attraction.
And the last thing, Baul: it seems you are not much acquainted with women. Become a little more acquainted. Suffer a little with women, let them torture you a little more, and then you will forget all this nonsense.

A man had decided to take a trip with his eighteen-year-old daughter. "Hey, how about me?" his wife exclaimed.
"Oh no," the man said. "You and your big mouth are not going on any vacation with me. I got enough of your big mouth all year long. I am taking our daughter and that's all."
So off they went. The train on which the man and his daughter rode was held up by robbers. They lost everything. "I'm ruined!" the man said. "Everything I own is gone!"
"No, Papa," the daughter said, "I saved the jewelry. The minute I saw the robbers coming, I took my rings, my diamonds and my bracelet and put them in my mouth."
"That's marvelous," said the father. "If your mother was here, we could have saved the suitcase."

The second question:
Question 2
BELOVED MASTER,
WHAT IS THE USE OF ESOTERIC TEACHINGS AND SPIRITUAL KNOWLEDGE? HOW CAN I FIND OUT IF THEY ARE TRUE OR NOT?

Sef Kicken, the esoteric teachings are only for the fools. The fools are very much interested in anything they cannot understand. The idea of the foolish mind is that anything it cannot understand must be very mysterious, must be very superior, must belong to higher planes.

A really religious person has nothing to do with esoteric nonsense -- with theosophy, with anthroposophy, and with so many Lobsang Rampas... and all kinds of nonsense that goes on being written. It must be fulfilling some people's needs. Just as a few people like detective novels, a few others are interested in esoteric knowledge.

There is nothing esoteric in existence. Existence is nude, naked; nothing is hidden.

Once Buddha was asked, "Have you said everything, or is there something esoteric which you have not said?"

Buddha showed his hand -- an open hand -- and he said, "I am like an open hand, not like a fist."

And so is existence -- like an open hand, not like a fist. It hides nothing; all is there, all around you. God is overflowing... and you are pondering over esoteric things -- seven planes or seventeen, seven hells and seven heavens. And the more complicated is the system, the more appeal it has.

Theosophy is more or less sheer nonsense, but it attracted thousands of people around the world. It has become a great world movement. People were talking of hidden masters, guides, astral, ethereal.... And in Madam Blavatsky's room letters used to drop from the ceiling -- letters from hidden masters who live in the Himalayas. Later on it was found that a man used to hide there on the roof and he used to drop those letters. The man himself

confessed in the court that "My whole work was that whenever the session of the theosophists would be there and they would wait with closed eyes and pray for masters, hidden masters, to guide them, I had instructions from Madam Blavatsky what letter to drop. Those letters were written by Madam Blavatsky." They were examined later on by experts and it was proved that they were written by Blavatsky herself. But she fooled people for years.

You ask me, "What is the use of esoteric teachings and spiritual knowledge?"

To fulfill the demands of the fools, that is the use. And there is no spiritual knowledge at all.

Spirituality is an experience, not knowledge. You cannot reduce it to knowledge; it is always knowing, never knowledge. It is an insight, irreduceable into words. You cannot put it into theories, into systems of thought; that is impossible. And those who try to do it don't know anything... only then can they do it. This is a strange phenomenon: those who know, they never try to reduce their knowing to knowledge; and those who don't know, they are absolutely free. They can create any knowledge, that is their invention.

All spiritual knowledge is the invention of the mind. Real spiritual knowing happens only when the mind is dropped, when you are in a state of no-mind.

And you ask me, "How can I find out if they are true or not?"

Why should you be worried? Rather try to find out who you are. That's the only real religious question, the only quest: "Who am I?" That's enough; no other questions are significant. Avoid all other jargon -- spiritual, religious,

theological, esoteric. Avoid all jargon. Just stick to a simple quest: "Who am I?" That's enough. If you know yourself you have known all; if you don't know yourself you may know everything in the world, but that is of no use. It is unnecessary burden and bondage.

Clarence and Lulu were sitting on the front porch in Kentucky on a warm summer evening, holding hands.
Lulu turned to Clarence and said, "Clarence, say something soft and mushy."
And Clarence embarrassedly turned to Lulu and said, "Ah, shit!"

That's what esoteric knowledge is -- soft and mushy!

The third question:
Question 3
BELOVED MASTER,
YOU TOLD US THE STORY OF KRISHNA AND ARJUNA. BUT IS THERE NO VALUE IN RESISTING WAR IN A TIME WHERE A HANDFUL OF MADMEN PLAY WITH ATOMIC BOMBS?

Peter Bohm, how can you resist these few madmen who are playing with atom bombs? What will be your strategy of resistance? In fact, your resistance may bring the war sooner than otherwise; your resistance is not going to prevent it.
The only thing that can prevent the world war is that you start a totally new consciousness, that you start a new kind of humanity... a man who is capable of love, a man who is

capable of meditation. Let love and meditation spread far and wide. Let meditation reach to as many people as possible. Except that, all your efforts at resistance are impotent.

You can protest and you can go on a long march, but have you ever watched the protesters, the people who are against war, the pacifists? Have you watched their processions? They look so aggressive, they themselves look mad! If they had the atom bombs, just to protect peace they would be the first to drop the atom bombs. They are as mad as the other party; there is no difference at all. Their minds are as political as the people who are in power; the only difference is that they are not in power. And their anger, their pent-up anger, you can see on their faces, in their slogans.

Every peace protest ends in a fight with the police, with the military. It ends in burning buses, post offices, police stations, cars. What kind of love is this and what kind of resistance is this? It is impotent! But they are feeling they are doing something great. It is an ego trip and nothing else.

The meek little bank clerk had his suspicions. One day he left work early and sure enough, when he arrived home, he found a strange hat and umbrella in the hallway and his wife on the couch in the arms of another man.

Wild for revenge, the husband picked up the man's umbrella and snapped it in two across his knee.

"There, now, I hope it rains!"

What can you do? Yes, you can shout and you can go for a long march with great posters, and it will give you a certain satisfaction because your pent-up energies will be released. It is a kind of catharsis. Unknowingly, you are doing Dynamic Meditation -- but it would be better if you do it knowingly.

Yes, war has come to a point where it can destroy the whole humanity, and not only humanity but the whole earth. Life as such can be destroyed. What can we do? Scientific knowledge has gone far ahead of man's spiritual growth; that is the problem, the real problem. Who are these madmen you are talking about? Are they any different from you, Peter Bohm? Richard Nixon, Brezhnev, Ayatollah Khomeini -- are these different people from you? Maybe there is some quantitative difference, but there is no qualitative difference. If YOU come in power you will prove the same. And one day these people were not in power; they were also just like you. When they are in power, then their real faces show up.

Lord Acton says: Power corrupts. It is not true. Power never corrupts, but corrupted people are attracted towards power. Of course, without power they cannot show their real faces. Power only gives them the right context in which they can reveal their heart's reality. Power does not corrupt, it only reveals the truth. Powerless people may not look mad because they cannot afford to be mad. Give them power and then you will see: they are as mad as anybody else.

I don't see any difference between warmongers and pacifists; they are the same kind of people. They appear to be polar opposites but they belong together. Deep down

they are one; two ends of the same stick. Yes, I would like the earth to become a paradise and not a cemetery... but what kind of resistance?

Even if Krishna was here, at THIS juncture he would not have suggested war. I am absolutely certain about it. I say categorically that Krishna would not have said to Arjuna to fight at this moment, because this is global suicide. Five thousand years have passed since Krishna and much has changed.

We have come to the point where total war is possible. Nobody is going to be the winner, so what is the point of war? War has been significant in the past because somebody would win and somebody would lose. Now there is going to be no winner; all are going to be the losers. War has lost all significance -- war is absolutely stupid today. It may have had some meaning in the past; it has none anymore.

Krishna's message is irrelevant today; Buddha's message is more relevant. Krishna's message is out of date; Buddha's message is very contemporary. But what is his message? His message is: If you really want peace on the earth, create peace in your heart, in your being. That is the right place to begin with -- and then spread, radiate peace and love.

If more and more people become peaceful, joyous, if more and more people can dance and sing, if more and more people can say "Alleluia!" from their very innermost core, it will become impossible for these few mad people to create a war. Then we can put these mad people into mental asylums very easily. We can convert our capitals into mental asylums; that is not a big problem, once many many people's inner consciousness is transformed.

Be a meditator.
Be a lover.
Be a celebrant.
Create the whole existence with as much bliss and joy as possible. Make life so beautiful that nobody wants to die. Right now, the situation is just the opposite: life is so ugly that who cares? If war happens, in fact, people will feel relieved. They don't have to commit suicide and still the war is going to do the work for them they always wanted to do themselves.
Psychologists say it is very difficult to find a man who has not thought at least four times in his life of committing suicide. But to commit suicide is not easy; it goes against the life instinct. But if somebody else can take the responsibility and somebody else can drop an atom bomb or a hydrogen bomb, then we are freed of the responsibility of committing suicide and still the suicide happens. And not only WE are dying but everybody else with us.
We have to change people's suicidal mind. Why do people think of suicide? -- for the simple reason that life is ugly and they don't know how to beautify it, how to make a song out of it. It is just sadness, a long long anguish, a nightmare. That's why people become interested in war and they support war -- for any stupid cause, for any excuse they are ready to kill and be killed.
And in fact, all political causes are stupid, all so-called political revolutions are stupid. The only revolution which is not stupid is spiritual, is inner, is individual.
If you really want a world without war, create this individual revolution I call sannyas. This is real resistance. Without resisting anybody you create a different space, a

different context, in which life starts blooming, life becomes creative.
And if people are creative, blooming, joyous, politics and politicians will be things of the past. Yes, you can save a few politicians to keep them in the zoos for future children to come and see: "Look, this is Morarji Desai!" You can stuff them with straw -- they are already stuffed with straw and nothing else; they won't need much more straw, just a little bit will do.
And this is possible now. It was never possible before because war was never such a danger. Politics is now the most stupid game, mad, utterly mad.
These are tremendously significant moments, because we can change the whole human consciousness from being political to spiritual.

The fourth question:
Question 4
BELOVED MASTER,
WHAT IS PRESENCE OF MIND?

Kavita, presence of mind is really a state of no-mind. You can call it mindfulness, awareness, or you can call it a state of no-mind. The words seem to be contradicting each other, but they are indicative of the same state. Presence of mind means to be in the present, to be spontaneous, to be available to whatsoever is happening right now. To be available to here and now is presence of mind. But the only way to be available to here and now is not to be in the past, not to be in the future.

And mind consists of past and future; mind knows nothing of the present. Mind is always occupied, it is never unoccupied. And whenever the mind is unoccupied, utterly without any thought, just watchful, alert, conscious, there arises a great presence. That presence functions on its own accord. That presence makes your life a life of responses, not of reactions.

Ordinary life is of reactions; you react. Reaction means you are reacting to a present situation according to the past. It never fits because life never repeats itself. History may repeat, because history is a mind phenomenon, but life never repeats. It is always new, always fresh; something new is always transpiring. You go on carrying old ideas according to your experience, and you act out of those ideas thinking that you are acting out of experience. This is reaction: you are lagging behind, you are not true to the situation.

A response means being true to the situation; not acting out of the past but acting out of the present moment. Just like a mirror, it simply reflects that which is. If there is a flower, it reflects a flower; if there is a face, it reflects the face. Your mind never reflects that which is; your mind always reflects that which WAS. That's how your mind never comes into a state of communion with reality. Then whatsoever you do is wrong.

Presence of mind is a state of thoughtlessness, but not of sleep, not of unconsciousness. Thoughtless consciousness, contentless consciousness -- a mirror utterly empty, ready to mirror anything. The beauty of the mirror is that it never catches hold of any reflection; it is not like a photoplate. The photoplate immediately catches hold of the reflection

and that's why it is destroyed. You can use it only once, then it clings to the past. That's what memory is, mind is -- a photoplate.
The mind of a buddha is not a photoplate but a mirror.
Try to be more and more and more responsible and less and less reactive.

A woman was driving her car at about eighty miles an hour, when she noticed a motorcycle cop following her. She did not slow down; she figured that maybe she could shake him off by doing ninety. When she looked back again there were two motorcycles following her. She boosted her speed again. The next time she looked, three motorcycles were screaming along behind her.
Suddenly she saw a service station looming ahead. She screeched to a stop in front of it, dashed out and ran into the ladies' room.
Ten minutes later, she walked demurely out. The three cops were standing right there, waiting for her. Without batting an eyelash she said coyly, "I bet you thought I wouldn't make it!"

The fifth question:
Question 5
BELOVED MASTER,
YOU SAID, "UNLESS YOU BECOME A SANNYASIN OUT OF AWARENESS...." AT THE TIME I ASKED FOR SANNYAS BECAUSE I FELT SAFE WITH YOU AND YOUR SANNYASINS, BUT NOT OUT OF AWARENESS AT ALL. IN FACT, I HAVE MUCH DIFFICULTY IN BECOMING A LITTLE AWARE AND

ALSO WITH MEDITATION. DOES THIS MEAN THAT IT WILL BE BETTER TO DROP SANNYAS?

Shridhar, you can drop it -- but only out of awareness!

The sixth question:
Question 6
BELOVED MASTER,
Although You keep telling us that we have to be in the marketplace -- and coming from the West, that should be my marketplace -- I have that strong feeling now that I want to be here near You, that this is my home. Is this also a desire?

Prem Satyam, this is the marketplace I go on talking about!

The seventh question:
Question 7
BELOVED MASTER,
SHOULD ONE TRY TO BE RICH OR NOT?

Asango, meditate on Murphy's maxim: Don't care if you are rich or not as long as you can live comfortably and have everything you want.

That's exactly what I have been doing and that's exactly what I would like you to do. Why bother whether you are rich or not? In fact, people go into unnecessary worries. Whatsoever you have, enjoy it -- it is already too much. You cannot look at it because your mind is constantly occupied with doing this, becoming that. And all that

existence goes on giving you, you go on neglecting. You never even thank existence for it; you don't have any gratitude. Otherwise, even if you don't possess anything, you can live a very rich life.

A rich life is something inner. And I am not against outer things, remember, but basically a rich life is something inner. If you are inwardly rich you can make even outer things richer by your inner light. For example, if the buddha lives in a hut, he lives in the hut as if the hut is a palace. If the buddha lives in the palace, of course he will be able to enjoy the palace more than anybody else in the world. If he can enjoy the hut as a palace, what to say about the palace itself? Wherever he is he finds ways to enjoy life.

The whole art of sannyas is to live a rich life -- but the richness comes through your inner awareness. You can live a very poor life and you can be very rich outwardly; you can have a big bank balance, but you can live a dog's life.

I know very many rich people. I feel sorry for them. They have all, but they are living in such a poor way that I cannot conceive what blindness has befallen them. Can't they see their beautiful houses, their beautiful gardens? But they don't have any sensitivity. So the flowers come and go and they pass those flowers every day, but they don't see. Otherwise a single flower is enough. And whether the flower has grown in your garden or in your neighbor's garden, who cares?

You don't possess the stars, still you can enjoy them. Or do you first have to possess them, and only then you will be able to enjoy them? You don't possess the birds in the sky, but you can enjoy them.

What you need is not more possessions. What you need is more sensitiveness, more aesthetic sensibility, more musical ears, more artistic eyes. What you need is a vision which transforms everything into something significant and meaningful.

You ask me, Asango, "Should one try to be rich or not?" You ARE rich! You have been given already that which you need. Let it grow, and then whatsoever you have on the outside will be enough.

You can see my sannyasins living here. They have not anything really that you can call possessions, but you cannot find more happy people anywhere in the world. For no reason they are happy, there is nothing to be happy about! But something inner has started growing, something like a subtle fragrance which only people who have sensibility, sensitiveness, can feel; others can't see it.

Many people have asked me, "Why do your sannyasins look so happy?" The why cannot be answered easily, because they want to know something on the outside which is causing the happiness. On the outside there is nothing but all kinds of troubles -- the Indian government, the police, the Indian rotten society and the rotten mind. There is nothing on the outside. But still, my people are immensely happy. And they are not just sitting idly, they are working hard, and working hard for no rewards, no pay; they don't get anything. But something inner is happening; that is real richness.

Asango, think of that. You are a new sannyasin; soon you will become aware of it.

The eighth question:

Question 8
BELOVED MASTER,
I WANT TO GET MARRIED. HOW CAN I BE SURE THAT THE WOMAN I AM MARRYING IS PURE IN CHARACTER?

Suresh, this is what I call the rotten Indian mind! If the woman is really pure, why should she be marrying you in the first place? And why this desire, this imposition on the other? And what do you mean by purity, purity of character? Do you mean that she has not known anybody sexually before you? But that will mean marrying a woman who is immature, marrying a woman who is inexperienced. If you are going to employ an engineer, will you ask him, "The first requirement is that you shouldn't know anything about engineering"? Then you ask about experience; you want proofs, certificates.

If you are wise you will inquire whether the woman has been loved by other people too. If a woman has not been approached by anybody up to now, escape! What does it mean? It simply means the woman is dangerous!

Only very ugly people can have that kind of purity you are asking for. But I don't see that by having a few love affairs a person becomes impure. Love purifies. How can it make somebody impure? The more one loves, the more one becomes artful, skillful, intelligent in love.

Millions of marriages fail because two inexperienced persons are trying to work things out. If both are inexperienced, it is bound to fail.

There are a few primitive societies still existent in the world where it is thought to be a must that a woman should

know a few men, that the man should know a few women, before they decide to marry. Marriage needs artfulness; it is a great effort to create a symphony between two persons' beings.
So don't ask foolish things. And if you are too much after such a kind of purity, then please, why are you deciding to make the woman impure? You will suffer for it, and she will suffer because she will be making you impure. Don't do such harm to each other. Why in the first place think of marriage? Remain pure!

"Daddy," said young David, "what is puppy love?"
"The beginning of a dog's life, my son."

Murphy says: Anything good in life is either illegal, immoral or fattening.
The three faithful things in life are money, a dog and an old woman.

So either get married to money or to a dog or to an old woman! If you are so much interested in purity, if you are so much wedded to purity, don't ask for a real woman. Find a plastic woman. You can always clean it and soap it. Why bother with real people? Real people are real people.

Two expectant fathers paced the floor in the waiting room of the hospital.
"What tough luck," said one. "This had to happen during my vacation."
"You think you've got troubles?" said the other. "I'm on my honeymoon!"

Real people are real people. Things happen to real people, not to plastic people. Yes, even on honeymoon things can happen!

A pair of good friends, Frenchmen both, were strolling down the Champs Elysees one day when they spied two women approaching. "Sacrebleu, Pierre!" cried one. "Here come my wife and my mistress walking toward us arm in arm."
"Mon Dieu, Henri!" cried out the second. "I was about to say the very same thing."

Charlie was taking his out-of-town pal for a stroll through the city. The friend observed a good-looking girl and asked Charlie if he knew her.
"Yes, that is Betty. Twenty dollars."
"How about that one?"
"That is Dolores. Forty dollars."
"Here comes one that is really first class. Do you know her?"
"That is Gloria. Eighty dollars."
"My God, aren't there any nice, respectable girls in this town?"
"Of course, but you could not afford their rates."

Suresh, either get rid of this idea of marriage or get rid of the idea of purity of character. If you keep both the ideas together you will be in trouble.
And who are you to decide about others' character? If you love the woman, you love the woman with all her

limitations, with all her imperfections; she loves you with all your imperfections and limitations.
But this is what -- particularly to the Indian mind -- is very significant: perfection. And to demand perfection is a kind of neurosis. It will drive the other neurotic, and as far as you are concerned, you are already neurotic. If you ask perfection in any human being you will create trouble for yourself and for the other, and your life will be nothing but misery.
The real man of understanding and intelligence accepts the imperfections of the other and still loves. Love is great enough; it can even love people who have no character, people who are not pure according to your ideas, people who sometimes go astray, people who sometimes commit small sins. Love is big enough to accept all this and to transform it too.

The ninth question:
Question 9
BELOVED MASTER,
WHY DO SO MANY PEOPLE BECOME SANNYASINS?

Murphy.... My God, are you the same Murphy I have been quoting and misquoting? You should have told me before! But you must be, I hope, some other Murphy, because if you were the same Murphy you would not ask such a question. That old guy is so wise he only gives answers, he never asks questions.
You ask me, "Why do so many people become sannyasins?"

Everybody does so for a different reason; hence it is very difficult to answer. The real sannyasins cannot even give any reasonable answer why they have become sannyasins. It is a kind of love affair; they fall in love with this madman. It is utterly mad, it is absurd. They simply find some inner communion; something happens to their heart, not to their head. And when something happens to the heart it is unanswerable.

But a few people become sannyasins out of the head; then they are only pseudo sannyasins. They can give you answers why they have become sannyasins.

So this much can be said: one who can answer WHY he has become a sannyasin is a wrong sannyasin, a pseudo sannyasin; the real one can only shrug his shoulders. He can say, "I don't know, it simply happened." He will not be convincing to you -- he can't be -- but try to be sympathetic with the person. It is a love affair.

Who has ever been able to say why he has fallen in love? One simply falls in love for no reason at all. Suddenly something clicks; it clicks in such a subtle way that you cannot figure out why. The why is unanswerable. And whenever it is answerable, the person is not a real sannyasin. This is the paradox: those who can answer, they are not real sannyasins; those who cannot answer, they are real sannyasins.

And then there are different people and they come with different backgrounds, they come here for different reasons. They open up to me in different ways, they take different time, they have different paces.

A modern-day Lewis and Clark exploration team had returned from a two-year exploration of the upper Amazon. Having bravely gone where no men had gone before, they were greeted by members of the press from every nation.
"Tell us, sir," asked a reporter of the first explorer, "what made you go?"
"I had to go," he replied. "I had to meet the challenge, to test my mettle, to meet the unknown, to face hardship, and to ponder the real meaning of life."
"And you, sir," he inquired of the second explorer, "why did you go?"
"You should meet my wife," came the weary reply.

Different people will have different reasons. Somebody is here for the exploration of the unknown; somebody is simply here because of the wife. Somebody is here because this has been his search for many lives; somebody is here accidentally. He was just passing Poona, from Kabul to Goa, and seeing so many crazy orange people he became intrigued. He said to himself, "Man, something far out is going on!" And then he got hooked... then he forgot all about Goa. Then slowly slowly, people forget about the whole world. Then this small place becomes their whole world.

Anxious to be on time for his date, Carl stopped at the drugstore for a hasty purchase. The druggist gave him a knowing smile, and he told the druggist about a lovely chick he met at a party. He was going to spend the evening with her, and her parents would be out at the opera.

When he got to her house, she and her mother were waiting for her father to return from work.
When her father walked in, she introduced both parents to Carl, and Carl said, "Say, why don't Nancy and I join you this evening?"
"You children don't want to spend your evening with us old folks," said Nancy's mother.
"Sure we do," said Carl.
"I didn't know you liked opera," the bewildered Nancy said to her date, as he was helping her on with her coat.
"No, and I didn't know your father was a druggist, either," he said.

So there are different reasons. I cannot give you a single answer. I cannot say why people become sannyasins.
All that I can say is that I am utterly mad, and a few people find themselves in tune with me.

The last question:
Question 10
BELOVED MASTER,
WHAT IS UNAWARENESS?

Shivananda, yes, the question arises and is significant too. It is like the fish asking, "What is the ocean?" Obviously the fish cannot see the ocean; it has lived in the ocean always, from the very beginning. It was born in the ocean, it opened its eyes in the ocean, it has lived as part of the ocean. The ocean is so close, the fish does not feel itself separate from it. There is no space between the fish and the ocean to know about it.

And that's actually the case with unawareness. You are born in unawareness, you live in unawareness, you sleep in unawareness... you wake up in unawareness. You walk in unawareness, you talk in unawareness... you read Bibles, Korans, Gitas, in unawareness. It is so close, you are so permeated by it; it is in your every fiber and cell. There is no distance between it and you. Hence the question is very significant and one has to ask it. Only then can one move slowly out of unawareness towards awareness.

Unawareness is a state of robotlike existence. You go on repeating mechanically. You go on living without any alertness in it; sleepy, a somnambulist you are.

Out of ten people, one person can walk in his sleep, do you know it? That is a big number. Out of a hundred, ten people are capable of walking in their sleep. If you have ten persons in your family, that means one person is capable of walking in his sleep. People get up, they can walk in darkness, they can reach the fridge, they can eat things, they can come back to the bed. In the morning they have forgotten all -- and then they are worried why they go on becoming fatter and fatter! In the day they fast or diet and in the night they compensate as much as they can.

You will have to be a little separate from your acts; then you will be able to know what unawareness is. Somebody insults you; immediately, instantly, anger arises. It is like pushing a button and the light comes on. There is no gap: you push a button and the light comes on. The light has no time to think whether to come on or not. Somebody insults you; he pushes a button and immediately you are enraged. Gurdjieff used to say to his disciples, "Wait at least for five minutes. What is the hurry? Let him insult you, let him

finish first. Then you close your eyes and wait for five minutes, and watch what is happening inside you -- anger boiling."

Gurdjieff himself became enlightened through this simple procedure: that whatsoever is mechanical in man he tried to make it nonmechanical. And all is mechanical in you -- anger, lust, greed, jealousy -- all is mechanical. It simply is there whenever somebody pushes a button. You are functioning like a robot. Become a man.

That's what meditation is all about, that's what sannyas is all about. Create a little distance. Next time somebody insults you, give it five minutes, sit silently for five minutes, and then you can become angry. I am not saying "Don't become angry" -- because that will be too much. I am saying that just for five minutes allow a gap, and you will be surprised: after five minutes it is not the same anger that it would have been five minutes before.

Dale Carnegie remembers an incident in his life. He delivered a radio broadcast on Abraham Lincoln. He mentioned a few wrong facts about Lincoln; even his birthdate was wrong. He received one letter, a very angry letter, from a woman, calling him a fool, calling him stupid. "If you don't even know the right birthdate, what right have you got to speak on Abraham Lincoln?"

He became enraged, and he immediately wrote an angry answer. But it was too late in the day, so he thought, "Tomorrow morning I will post the letter."

Before posting it he read the letter again. It looked too angry -- twelve hours had passed. He read the woman's letter; it was not so insulting as it had appeared at the first

glance. So he changed his letter, he wrote it again. When he was writing it again he said, "Why not wait twenty-four hours more and see what happens? What is the hurry? The woman is not going to die."

So he waited twenty-four hours and read his letter again. Now he was even more cool, and still the letter looked a little too strong. He changed it and thought, "Why not wait forty-eight hours? Let it be an experiment! I can always send the letter, but after twelve hours I had to change it, after twenty-four hours I had to change it much more. Let us see what happens after forty-eight hours."

After forty-eight hours he had to change it totally. All anger had disappeared. He said, "Now I will wait two days more and then I will send it."

And when finally he wrote the letter he apologized; he was no longer angry. The woman was right: what right has he if he does not know the facts? At least he should have checked the facts before going to broadcast. It was absolutely right on her part to get angry.

So he wrote, "You are perfectly right. Next time I will not commit such a mistake. I am deeply sorry that I hurt your feelings. I apologize. If any time you happen to be in this city, please come to see me, or, if I come to your town, I will come to see you. I would like to know more about Lincoln -- because I feel you know more than I know."

Naturally, the woman was tremendously impressed by the humbleness of the man; she was not expecting that he would be so humble. Next time she came to that town where Dale Carnegie lived she phoned him. He went, received her, invited her for a dinner. And finally the woman and he became so friendly, they fell in love!

It looks like a fairy tale -- does not happen in real life! In real life only tragedies happen. But we are responsible for all those tragedies because of our unawareness.

So the first thing I will suggest, Shivananda, is that if you want to know what unawareness is, allow a gap. This is the process of de-automatization. You have become automatic, you function automatically. You have to reverse the whole process, de-automatize it, slowly slowly, in small matters. For example, you have gone for a walk. Don't walk the same way as you walk every day. Go slow or go fast, but don't just repeat the same routine. And you will be surprised: if you go slow you are more aware, if you go faster you are more aware; if you go exactly the same speed as you follow every day, you lose all awareness.

Buddha told his disciples to walk very slowly, as slowly as possible. Try it and you will be surprised. A great awareness arises if you walk very slowly. You speak in a certain way; one day try to speak in some other way. Speak slowly, and you will be surprised that the slowness of the speech makes you alert. Suddenly something is changed, because you are not functioning according to the robot.

Mind has two parts: one is the learning part, the other is the robot part. The learning part learns; whenever you are learning something you are more aware. For example, if you are learning driving you are more aware -- you have to be. The moment you have learned it, the learning part gives its information to the robot part. Once you have learned driving, then you don't need any awareness; you simply go on doing it mechanically. You turn towards your house,

you arrive in your garage, you lock the car. You are doing everything like a robot.

And this is the story of your life, twenty-four hours a day. Change it!

Gurdjieff's method was this: if some vegetarian had come to him as a disciple, the first thing he would insist was, "Eat meat!" Now this is a very shocking thing for a vegetarian -- to be told to eat meat. And Gurdjieff was a tough master; he would throw you out if you didn't listen to him, if you didn't follow the command, if you didn't follow the discipline. He would force you to eat meat. Now, when a vegetarian eats meat he becomes very conscious -- he has to. He has no idea in the past, no experience in the past, of eating meat. Just think of Mahatma Gandhi eating meat... he will become tremendously aware!

And if there was a meat-eater, then Gurdjieff would say, "For a few weeks you be just vegetarian. Don't eat meat at all -- no eggs, no meat, no milk, no animal food of any kind. Just go on eating vegetables." The whole body system had become accustomed to a certain pattern. He would change people's eating hours. If you were eating every day at one o'clock, he would say, "Eat at nine." If you were going to sleep every day at twelve, he would say to go at two or at ten. He would change everything. A man who had never been drinking wine, he would force to drink wine just to change and shatter his pattern. The man who had been a drunkard, he would stop him from drinking.

Gurdjieff was puzzling to people, but the method is simple: he was trying to de-automatize. He was one of the greatest masters of this age, very much misunderstood. Naturally, everybody was against him. Who has ever heard of

religious masters forcing their disciples to drink? -- FORCING, actually forcing. And he would sit there.... The greatest thing in his commune was the dinner. It used to last four, five, six, seven hours. Every evening it would start... and it would end in the middle of the night. And he himself would take care of everybody, of what was being eaten, of what was given to them -- and he would go on forcing. People would become so drunk they would fall on the ground, and they would start saying things in their drunkenness -- and he would sit by the side and listen. He also used to drink with them, but he had worked hard on the way. He was a tantra master. He had been to India and to Tibet too, just to learn tantra.

Tantra has special methods how to go on drinking and yet remain aware. YOU cannot be aware even without drinking. Tantra has methods to slowly slowly drink, and keep awareness, not to lose track of your awareness. Slowly slowly, the quantity of your drug has to be increased as you increase in your awareness. A moment comes when -- you will be surprised to know, still there are people in the East who practice it -- a moment comes, when no drug can affect your consciousness at all.

Then the last thing they try is this: they keep poisonous snakes and they allow the snake to bite them on their tongue; that is the last method. Ordinarily a man will die.... These snakes are absolutely poisonous. Three percent of the snakes in India are dangerous; you cannot survive their bite -- once bitten you are gone. But these tantra masters will remain alert even in that moment and they will not die. Their bodies have become accustomed to all kinds of

poisons and they have become alert, so alert that no drug can affect them.
Gurdjieff used to use that method with his disciples, simply to shatter your settled habits.
My approach here is to send you to this group, then to another group, then to still another group. When you go to different groups for two, three months, each group has its own structure and pattern and each group destroys other groups' patterns and structures.
And finally I send you to Zazen or to Vipassana. They are beyond all ordinary structures. Those are the methods given by Buddha himself. Then you are in a very simple state, watching your own breath -- the breath going in, the breath going out, and you are simply watching.
This watchfulness will make you aware of what unawareness is and what awareness is, both. You become aware of both simultaneously.

It was springtime, and two lovers were cuddling in a meadow on a dark, new-moon night.
The young man whispered to his girlfriend, "I sure wish we had a flashlight!"
The girl replied, "I do too. You have been munching on grass for the last five minutes!"

Get it? -- otherwise I will have to tell another! Meditate over it later on!

Marlene, a pretty Philadelphia secretary, was taking her first trip across the United States. Driving through the desert she ran out of gas. An Indian gave her a ride, sitting

behind him on his pony. Every few minutes as they rode he let out a wild, whooping yell that echoed across the desert. Finally he deposited her at a gas station and went off with a last "Yaa-hoo!"
"What were you doing," asked the station owner, "to make that redskin do all that hollering?"
"Nothing," said the girl. "I just sat behind him with my arms around his sides holding onto his saddle horn."
"Miss," said the man, "Indians ride bareback!"

Enough for today.
The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 8
Chapter #11
Chapter title: The psychology of egolessness
31 December 1979 am in Buddha Hall

The first question:
BELOVED MASTER,
GURDJIEFF SAID THAT IN ORDER TO ATTAIN TO REAL WILL ONE WOULD HAVE TO SURRENDER ONE'S FALSE WILL FIRST. IS THIS ALSO TRUE HERE?

Peter Markee, it is true everywhere. It is true forever. Truth is universal: time makes no difference, place makes no difference. And this is one of the most fundamental truths of spiritual growth: the false has to be given up because the false is the barrier. You remain deluded by the false; hence the search for the true never starts. You believe the false to

be the true. Then why should you endeavor to realize the true?

If you think that darkness is light, then where is the necessity to search for light? If you think this life is all, then there is no question of seeking and inquiring about another life. If time is your total reality, then eternity never becomes a quest for you.

The false will means the ego; the true will means egolessness. The false will is yours; the true will is God's. The false will is personal; the true will is universal. The false will simply means that you believe yourself separate from the whole; and the true will is dissolving this illusion of separation, becoming that which you really are -- a part in this cosmic harmony, totally one with it. Then you don't have any separate destination, you don't have any private goal. Then wherever the whole is going, YOU are going. You are just a wave in the ocean.

And before the real can be known, the false has to cease, because the false is covering your eyes. You are clinging to the false, to the toy. And unless you see the point -- that the toy is only a toy, not worth clinging.... In that very moment of seeing the toy slips out of your hands on its own accord because you no more cling to it. Seeing the false as false is the beginning of the truth. But that seeing is arduous.

For lives we have lived with the false and we have believed in the false. We have nurtured, nourished the false. All our hopes, all our dreams, are rooted in the false. Our whole lives are investments in the false; hence we are afraid even to look, we are afraid to observe, watch.

The most frightening experience for human beings is to remember, to watch, to be aware; hence the difficulty in

meditation. It does not arise from the outside; there is no disturbance outside. The real disturbance is within you. You really don't want to meditate. You are in a double bind. You listen to buddhas talking about the beauties and the blessings and the benedictions of meditation, and you become greedy for it. But then you look at your own investment and you become frightened, so you try to meditate. Yet you don't really want to meditate because meditation means you will have to see things as they are -- the false as false, the true as true -- and that is going to shatter your whole effort of lives in a single moment.

Great courage is needed to meditate, courage to drop all the investments. Great intelligence is needed. In fact, this is true intelligence: to see that howsoever and whatsoever efforts you make to realize the false, to make it come true, they are going to fail. To see it -- that the whole effort is an exercise in utter futility -- is intelligence. It has nothing to do with intellectuality; it is very simple.

See, watch, and don't be afraid and don't avoid seeing. And don't go on playing with yourself, deceiving yourself. Don't remain in a double bind, with one hand creating and with the other hand destroying.

That's what people are doing: half of their being wants to continue as they are -- the stupid half, the rational part, the arithmetic of their minds. And the other half, the intelligent half, the intuitive half -- the heart -- wants to start anew, because you have seen for so long that nothing succeeds. And still you go on in the same rut. It is time, the right time, to get out of the rut and to have a new birth.

What Gurdjieff was saying has been told by all the great masters of the world. "Awake," Buddha says. It is the

same; words differ. "Be watchful," Jesus says. Be as watchful as if the master of the house has gone out and he has told the servants to remain alert because he may come any moment and he does not want them to be asleep -- any moment he can come. They have to be alert, on guard, all the time. Jesus says to be alert.

In alertness the first experience is that you have a personality which is false. Gurdjieff calls it the false will. And you have something else, something impersonal in you, which is the true will. Your appearance from the outside is false; what you experience from your innermost core is true. You are a mixture of the accidental and the essential, of the incidental and the intrinsic. You are the meeting point of time and eternity, a crossroads where matter and consciousness meet, where body and soul meet, where real and unreal shake hands. Yes, you are exactly a crossroads. And you have to be very alert not to choose the false -- because the false is very appealing. The false makes all kinds of propaganda for itself; the false will try to convince you with all kinds of arguments.

The truth remains silent. Unless YOU are ready to receive it, it will not even knock on your doors. The false is afraid that if much smoke is not created around it the falsity of it will be seen by you. So beware of the rationalizations of the false, its propaganda, its argumentation, its proofs. And also remember the silence of truth -- utter silence, absolute silence. Truth will never persuade you; it will wait -- it can wait for eternity. But the false cannot wait, it is momentary, it can't be so patient. It has to persuade you, it has to seduce you as immediately as possible. The false is very hypnotizing. Their ways are totally opposite.

Truth is achieved through awakening, and the false is achieved through deep sleep. The false is like a tranquilizer: it is very consoling, comforting, cozy, secure, safe. It gives you all kinds of protections, insurances. It goes on telling you, "Be with me and I will protect you. I am your guardian, your guide, your friend, your philosopher." The truth never claims anything.

Unless you become utterly fed up with the false and its claims -- which are all bogus.... It talks much, but it never delivers any goods. Unless you become totally frustrated, fed up, bored with it, you are not going to look at the silent truth; you are not going to listen to the still, small voice within. And that voice is God's voice. It is universal; it has nothing to do with you.

The true will is not yours. It is the whole speaking through you, functioning through you. The false gives you the idea of great ego -- "I am somebody" -- and the true takes all ego away. It makes you a nothingness, a nobody. Only through your nobodiness the whole can function unhindered.

Yes, Peter Markee, Gurdjieff is right. And whatsoever is true with Gurdjieff is true here too -- is true forever. Wherever a master exists, the false has to be surrendered. That actually is the function of sannyas. It is a device to surrender the false. Sannyas means you surrender your ego. You say to the master, "Please take this burden off my head." You bow down, you touch the feet of the master. That is simply symbolic that "Now I will not function as a separate entity from you."

And the master is one who has surrendered his will already, who exists no more as a person, who is only a presence, a

window into God. And when you surrender to the window you are surrendering to the sky beyond. The window will only make the sky available.

The West has not developed the technique of the master/disciple relationship yet. A few rare individuals tried, but they failed. Socrates was trying in Athens but he failed; he was not listened to. Jesus was trying again; he failed. The West has remained concerned, concentratedly focused on the false. It believes in the ego. The East believes in egolessness.

The Western psychology says to make the ego stronger. It is a psychology of the false -- rooted in the false, supporting the false. The East says: Let the ego melt, disappear, evaporate. It is the psychology of egolessness. This is a totally different standpoint.

Gurdjieff was again trying to bring the East to the West. He also failed. It is very difficult; centuries are against it, and the hypnosis and the conditioning of the society is against it. Even his own chief disciple, P.D. Ouspensky, could not understand him, misunderstood him. He betrayed him, just as Judas betrayed Jesus.

And do you know? -- Judas was the most cultured, educated person amongst Jesus' disciples; hence he must have had the most polished ego. He was an intellectual. The other followers were simple people: fishermen, carpenters, tax collectors, gamblers, drunkards, prostitutes -- simple people. The only person who was not simple was Judas; he was complex. He could have been a professor in Oxford or Cambridge or Harvard and he would have done perfectly well as a professor -- he was a good arguer. There are a few moments when he even argues with Jesus. And if you listen

to the argument you will agree with Judas, you will not agree with Jesus.

One day Jesus is staying in Mary and Martha's home and Mary brings very costly perfume and washes Jesus' feet with that costly perfume. Judas immediately raises a question; he says, "This is stupid -- wasting so much money unnecessarily!" And he gives a good argument -- a socialistic argument. He says, "This much money could have been given to the poor. There are beggars outside the house. This money could have fed many beggars for many days. It was rare perfume! Why waste it? The feet can be washed with water -- there is no need!" And she had poured the whole big bottle of perfume!

Now, with whom are you going to agree? And do you know what Jesus said? Jesus said, "The beggars will always be there. I will not be here always."

This does not seem to be a very appealing argument! Jesus says, "Don't disturb her. Don't disturb her love, her faith, her trust. It's perfectly alright. It is coming from her deep love for me. Let her do it. And beggars will always be there. Even if this money is given to them, nothing much is going to happen. Maybe for a few days they will be able to eat; then again...."

With whom are you going to agree? Ninety-nine percent is the possibility you will agree with Judas -- and more so after Karl Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin, Mao; after so much socialistic communist propaganda all over the world, who will not agree with Judas? He seems to be the forerunner of socialistic philosophy. And Jesus' answer does not seem to be very appealing, convincing. It seems to be evading the question, evading the issue. But Judas betrayed Jesus for

the simple reason that he was too much in his intellect, too egoistic, too proud.

The same happened again with Gurdjieff and Ouspensky. Ouspensky was the most articulate disciple of Gurdjieff. In fact, it is because of Ouspensky that Gurdjieff became famous in the world. It is Ouspensky's books that have made Gurdjieff's name known to the world at large. But why did he betray him? In the last years of his life he was very antagonistic to his master. Even to mention Gurdjieff's name in Ouspensky's presence was an offense to him; he did not tolerate even mentioning Gurdjieff's name. It has been completely dropped -- even in his books which were written before he disconnected himself from Gurdjieff. He changed the name from Gurdjieff to just G; he would not write the whole name. He would simply mention, "G said..." -- just like XYZ. And then -- he was clever enough -- whenever somebody asked, "You yourself mentioned G," he said, "Those were the days when he was right. The later Gurdjieff has gone insane. I am against the later Gurdjieff."

And why did he go against him? Gurdjieff was trying to destroy his ego totally and it was impossible for him to accept that. He was in London, Gurdjieff was in Russia, in Tiflis, and Gurdjieff sent a message, "Come immediately. Sell everything there. Don't waste a single moment. Bring all the money and come."

Those were the days of the first world war; it was very difficult to travel, dangerous to travel, and going back to Russia was dangerous for Ouspensky because the Bolsheviks, communists, had come into power and Russia, the whole of Russia was in a turmoil. There was no order, no government.

Still, the master had asked, so he sold all his possessions, his house, took all the money and traveled back to Russia knowing perfectly well he was going into danger. The journey was long; three months it took for him to reach, sometimes traveling by train and sometimes by horse and sometimes he was prevented and the police were after him. But somehow he reached there -- the master had asked him to come, and he did. He was hoping that as he had made a great sacrifice, so he was going to be patted on the back by the master.

And do you know what Gurdjieff did? The moment Ouspensky arrived he said, "Put down your money and go back! Leave your money here and go back to London immediately!"

This was too much. He became antagonistic. He thought Gurdjieff had become insane. He was not insane. Had Ouspensky followed that too, although it was very illogical.... But Ouspensky was a mathematician, a logician, a great intellectual of this century, one of the most profound mathematicians that we have ever produced. He could not believe all this nonsense. He traveled back, but he turned against, turned very sour -- saying that Gurdjieff had gone mad.

That was his rationalization to avoid seeing the truth, that Gurdjieff was trying to destroy his ego totally. That was the last hit on his head. If he had allowed it he would have become enlightened. He missed the point -- and from the last rung of the ladder he missed and fell down. Sometimes it happens: you can miss at the last moment.

Then for his whole life Ouspensky was talking against Gurdjieff; his name became unmentionable. Whatsoever he

was teaching he had learned from Gurdjieff, but he was very secretive. He wouldn't allow his disciples to read Gurdjieff's books. He wouldn't allow his disciples to go and see Gurdjieff. Ouspensky's disciples could see Gurdjieff only after Ouspensky's death; and then they were surprised at how much they had missed. Ouspensky was only a professor, nothing else. Gurdjieff was an enlightened man. But the problem is always how to drop the ego. Gurdjieff offended many people in the West for the simple reason that in the West there is no tradition, no background, no context for the psychology of egolessness.

That's why I have chosen to be here in the East. Even if people are coming from the West they have to come to ME, because only in the Eastern space is it possible so surrender the ego. The whole milieu is helpful; much effort is not needed.

And once the new commune is established it is going to become a very easy phenomenon, a child's play, to drop the ego. When you see ten thousand sannyasins moving without the ego, without a head, you will look foolish with a head. You will be in a hurry immediately so that your head can be cut off and you can also run without a head and do all kinds of things which were not possible before -- because of the head.

Gurdjieff is right: the false has to be dropped. The false has to cease for the real to be.

The second question:

BELOVED MASTER,

PLEASE NEVER SPEAK AGAINST THE INDIAN MIND BECAUSE I GET SO ANGRY THAT I START THINKING HOW TO KILL YOU.

Deva Kumar, people who only think of killing never kill. You can go on thinking; thinkers can't do anything. And why do you get so much disturbed if I speak against the Indian mind?

I am against all kind of minds -- Indian, German, English, American -- and I speak against all kinds of minds, because mind is mind. There is not much difference, just different patterns, different ideas, but the basic structure is the same. Mind means you are not conscious, and you can be unconscious in the Indian way or the Chinese way or the Japanese way; what does it matter? And if you cannot listen to words said against your mind you need not come here; this is not the right place for you.

I am not here to buttress your egos; I am here to destroy them. I have to speak against them. My whole work consists in destroying. First a great destruction is needed, only then your energies are released for some creative work.

And what really is an Indian mind? -- just an accident that you are born in India and you have been conditioned in a certain way. Somebody else is born in Japan and he is conditioned in some other way, but both are conditionings. And the function of the master is to uncondition you.

I can understand your anger, but that anger is not going to help you. Only understanding can help. Try to understand. Your anger will cloud your being more and more; you will become more and more incapable of seeing the truth.

Once upon a time there was a dog who was sitting by the side of the railway line when an express train roared by and cut off an inch of his tail.
Seeking revenge, the dog waited patiently for the train's next trip and tried to bite it as it went past. The train wheels ran right over the poor dog's neck slicing off its head.
The moral of this little story is simple: Never lose your head over a little piece of tail.

And this is only just the beginning, Deva Kumar; just a little piece of your tail has been cut. If you remain here long enough the tail will go, the head will go... and then only, for the first time, you will be reborn: reborn as consciousness, neither Indian nor French nor Italian.
But have you observed this? I speak against the Italian mind, I speak against the German mind, I speak against the Jewish mind, but nobody takes any objection to it. But if I speak against the Indian mind, immediately somebody is there to object. Indians have become very touchy; deep down they feel some kind of inferiority, and on the surface they pretend superiority. Particularly as far as religion and spirituality is concerned, they feel that they are the spiritual guides of the world, that God has chosen them as messengers, that they are the source of religion, that they are holier than everybody else in the world, that their country is divine and all other countries are evil, that they are saints, holy people, and all others are sinners, that they are spiritualists and all other people are materialists.
And because your stupid so-called mahatmas go on telling you these false ideas, when you hear me speaking anything

against the Indian stupidity you become enraged. You cannot absorb it, you cannot remain open to it, because all your mahatmas go on buttressing your ego. It is because of this that the Indian masses are against me, for the simple reason that I cannot buttress their egos. I cannot say that "You are great spiritual people" -- and that's what they want to hear. They don't have anything else. They don't have science, they don't have technology; they don't have money, they are poor; they don't have food, they are starving. The only thing that can give them a little hope, a little satisfaction, is spirituality.

So when I say, "You don't have even that," it hurts very much. Then nothing is left.

Remember it: Buddha had it, Krishna had it, Mahavira had it, Nanak had it; that does not mean that all Indians have it. Socrates had it, Pythagoras had it, Heraclitus had it, Plotinus had it; that does not mean that all the Greeks have it. Lao Tzu had it, Chuang Tzu had it, Lieh Tzu had it; that does not mean that all the Chinese have it. These rare people have happened everywhere; it is nothing special to you.

So stop bragging about it. This bragging keeps you unaware of your real situation; it has become very intoxicating to you. It keeps you in a kind of unconscious state.

A fellow called up Mr. Vanderwater on Park Avenue and said, "Mr. Vanderwater, did my friend Bill come to your house party uninvited last night?"

"Yes, he did."

"Ah, the curse of drink! What a man will do when he is drunk! I would like to ask you another question, Mr. Vanderwater. Did he start beating up some of your guests and finish by throwing some of your art works out on Park Avenue?"
"Yes, he did that."
"I am so sorry. One more question: was I also there?"

Ego is very intoxicating, remember it. It is more alcoholic than any alcohol can be. And it is pious; when it is pretending to be holy it is very pious -- and a pious poison is the purest poison. Avoid it. Come back to the earth. Be simple and see the reality as it is.

Two drunks were passing the door of the honeymoon suite at the Ritz Hotel when they stopped a moment to listen. Inside the room the bridegroom was saying to his bride, "Darling, you are so deliciously lovely. Your fabulous beauty should be captured for posterity by the greatest artists in the world."
The two drunks started banging on the door straight away, and the husband called out, "Who the devil is that?"
"Rubens and Rembrandt!" replied both.

Deva Kumar, come down to the earth! Killing me is not going to help much. If you feel like doing that, you can do it; that's perfectly okay. That is not going to help you. What is going to help you is killing your ego. Put your energy into killing your ego. I am not interested in hurting anybody -- I am not against anybody. If sometimes I

hammer on your heads, it is only out of love and compassion.

The third question:
BELOVED MASTER,
IS TO LISTEN TO DISCOURSE WITH COMPLETE, UNQUESTIONING ACCEPTANCE A FORM OF UNCONSCIOUSNESS?

Ra, if you are unconscious you cannot be complete in anything. The unconscious mind cannot manage to be complete, to be entire, to be total in anything. One thing is certain: if you can manage to be entire, total, whole in anything, you are not unconscious. You may be anything else but not unconscious.
You ask me, "Is to listen to discourse with complete, unquestioning acceptance a form of unconsciousness?"
No, it cannot be a form of unconsciousness, because to bring conscious effort is a must if you want to be absolutely, totally accepting. You will have to bring deliberate effort; you will have to be very conscious about it.
Unconscious mind is always fragmentary; it is many, it is not one. It cannot be one; it is a crowd, it is a mob, many voices within you. When you are unconscious you are many people; you are not a single individual. You are not integrated. Any effort to be total integrates you. And this is just a device, to listen with totality.
But who told you that I am telling you to accept it? Totality is needed in listening, but I have not asked you to accept it. If you accept, you will not be total, because accepting

means you are choosing, and choice is always partial: something has been not chosen and something has been chosen.

Acceptance means you are rejecting many things: rejecting your own ideas, rejecting that which goes against me. If I am saying one thing and you accept it, that means you are rejecting the opposite of it. It is a constant choice.

I am not asking you to accept what is being said; I am only asking you to listen totally. Then what is it? It is a totally different phenomenon, neither acceptance nor rejection -- just awareness. When you listen to the birds singing, do you accept, do you reject? Do you agree, do you disagree? You simply listen. The sound of a waterfall... what do you do? You simply listen. The wind passing through the pines... is agreement needed, disagreement? Nothing is needed; you simply listen. The music of the wind passing through the pines, the dance of the trees in the sun... you simply see, you listen. You are just a mirror. The mirror does not agree and does not disagree; it only reflects.

And that is required from the disciple -- not acceptance, remember. I am not creating a creed, I am not giving you a dogma. I don't want you to be believers, neither do I want you to be disbelievers. But what is the point of bringing belief and disbelief into it? Just listen to me silently, fully, so nothing is missed, that's all.

And the beauty of truth is that if you listen silently, totally, it penetrates to the very core of your being; it reaches to the heart. You need not agree; the seed of it falls into your consciousness and starts growing.

Just the opposite is the case with the untruth: if you listen totally, no untruth can penetrate in your being. That totality

is enough to throw any kind of untruth out. In a total state of consciousness, in total silence, untruth cannot penetrate; only truth can penetrate.

So I am not interested in your agreement; I am only interested in your openness. And I am not telling you to be unquestioning, neither am I telling you to go on questioning. Both are futile activities while you are listening. If you listen with a thousand and one questions in the mind, how can you listen at all? Those questions create so much clamor, so much noise; they don't allow anything to enter in. And if you listen with an unquestioning mind, that means you are being gullible, you are being just unintelligent. So there is no need for questions and there is no need for unquestioning acceptance.

What is needed, what is required from the disciple, is a total silence; just being here with me in deep communion, bridged, so slowly slowly, your breath falls in tune with my breath, your heart starts beating in the same rhythm as my heart, so we lose separation, so these three thousand people here become almost one entity, so attuned, so deep in accord that they can't feel separate. A great melting, merger, happens. And those are the moments of truth, moments of great joy, moments of meditation.

The disciple is required to listen meditatively, because in those meditative moments windows open into the divine, doors open -- doors where you have never suspected that doors exist, where you have always thought there are walls. Suddenly doors open. Where you have never thought that there is any bridge possible, bridges suddenly appear. It is a mysterious phenomenon.

So those who are here as outsiders, they will only get the most superficial thing: my words. They will not be able to participate in my heart. They will not be able to drink out of my being. They will not be able to be part of my dance, of my song.

The fourth question:
BELOVED MASTER,
ARE YOU FALLIBLE?

Nityam, I am not the pope of the Vatican -- I am not infallible. I enjoy fallibility. And Buddha was not infallible and Jesus was not infallible. Only these stupid popes, they started claiming to be infallible, because they wanted to dominate, they wanted to exploit people. I have no desire to dominate anybody, I have no desire to exploit anybody. I have no desire at all.

Fallibility is natural; infallibility is unnatural. Even God has committed so many errors! The first error he committed was to create the universe; that was the beginning of the whole mess. But he did it and he continues to do it; he has not stopped. He created the Devil; if anybody is responsible for the Devil's existence, then God is responsible -- he created him. He created all kinds of sins in you, all kinds of instincts in you. If anybody is responsible, if anybody is punishable, then God is.

Whenever you meet God you can simply throw the whole load on him. You can simply say, "Why did you create me in this way? You should have created me a saint and you created me a sinner. It is up to you. If you are the creator, then it is your responsibility." If something is wrong in the

painting, the painter is responsible not the painting. If something is wrong in the music, then the musician is responsible, not the musical instruments. If something goes wrong in the poetry, the poet is responsible.

God is very fallible, that's the beauty; otherwise, God would be too inhuman a concept. It is very human, and in the East we even have ideas of God which are far more human -- far more human than the Christian God. The Jewish God is far more human than the Christian God -- the Jewish God becomes angry. The Christian God is always love, always sweet, very saccharin. The Jewish God can be very bitter. The Old Testament says that God is very jealous and very angry. Be watchful. A very human God. And if you come to the East you will be surprised. We have a beautiful story: God created the world because he was feeling lonely. Such a beautiful idea, God feeling lonely! So you need not feel too worried sometimes if you feel lonely -- it is divine. God was feeling very lonely, hence he created the world -- just to fill his loneliness. And when he created the first woman he fell in love with her. That is really going too far!

The people who wrote this story must have been really courageous people. That is falling in love with your own daughter. And of course, as women are supposed to do, the woman started the game of hide-and-seek. They love that game very much. They still love it, and they will always love it; that is part of feminine psychology. The man takes the initiative and the woman starts hiding; and the more she hides, the more the man becomes enchanted.

That's why Eastern women look more beautiful than Western women: for the simple reason that the Western

woman has forgotten how to hide; she has become available. She is trying to be just like the man. The Eastern woman is not trying to be like the man; she tries to be absolutely feminine -- very shy, never takes any initiative. No Eastern woman ever will say to somebody, "I love you." She simply waits for you to say it to her.

So the woman started hiding. She became a cow just to hide from God. But how can you hide from God? He is omniscient. He looked around and he saw that the woman had become a cow, so he became the bull! Now that is going too far! And that's how the whole of creation happened: she became the mare and he became the horse, and so on, so forth. She went on hiding in new forms, and he went on finding her again and again. This seems to be something very close to the truth.

Even God is fallible. There is no need to be perfect.

These two words have to be understood as deeply as possible: one is perfection, the other is totality. My emphasis is never on perfection but on totality. The old religions have been teaching you for centuries to be perfect. You cannot be perfect; nobody can be perfect. Even God is not perfect -- because to be perfect means to be dead. If something is perfect then there is no evolution possible anymore. Perfection means the full point has come, the cul-de-sac; the road ends. Now you are stuck, nowhere to go. You cannot come back -- because how can a perfect person come back? That will be becoming imperfect again. You cannot go ahead because you have become perfect; there is nothing ahead. Existence is imperfect and will remain so.

I don't teach perfection. Perfection simply creates neurosis in people. Perfectionists are neurotics; they drive

themselves crazy in trying to be perfect, because they are trying to do the impossible.

I teach totality; I teach wholeness, not perfection. Be total in whatsoever you are doing. Be total. If you are angry, then be totally angry. If you are in love, then be totally in love. If you are sad, then be totally sad. Don't be halfhearted in anything. That is a totally different approach towards life.

The perfectionist will say, "Never be angry, never be sad." The person who believes in totality will say, "Whatsoever is the case, just be total in it. Don't be halfhearted, don't hold yourself back. Go into it totally."

Then life becomes really a tremendous adventure. Then even sadness is beautiful when it is total. If you can cry and weep totally, then even crying and weeping has a beauty of its own. It will refresh you, it will rejuvenate you, it will unburden you. If you can be totally sad you will come to know something immensely beautiful in sadness which no joy can ever give to you, because sadness has depth; joy is shallow. A person who has not known total sadness has missed a great experience of life.

And total anger also has its own beauty. It will give you the experience of boiling at one hundred degrees, of intensity, of passion, of fire, of becoming aflame. And the miracle is: the person who can be totally angry can be totally compassionate too, because anger will teach him compassion. And sadness will teach him ways of being blissful.

My approach is not that of a perfectionist; I am utterly against it. It has destroyed humanity. It has driven the whole of humanity into a kind of madness. The whole idea

has to be dropped. We have to learn a new language -- the language of wholeness. And I call a person holy when he is whole in whatsoever he does.
If you are doing cleaning, then do it totally. Then be utterly lost in it, and it will give you as much as a musician gets when he gets lost totally in his music or a dancer gets when he is utterly lost into his dance. Even cleaning the floor or cooking the food or taking the bath or going for a morning walk -- anything.
Let this be your foundation of life: that whatsoever you are doing at the moment, be utterly lost into it. Nothing of you should be left behind. Don't keep any reservations. And you will come out of it immensely benefited, enriched.
I am as fallible as anybody with only one difference: I am totally fallible!

Moses and Jesus were sitting together in a boat reminiscing.
"I really liked the one where you parted the water of the Red Sea, Moses," said Jesus.
"Ah, yes," said Moses, "but that was nothing compared to your walking on the water -- that beats all. Say, do you think you could do it again?"
"Sure," said Jesus, "but it has been a long time."
He stepped out of the boat. Everything was fine, so he started walking slowly. Soon he noticed the water was coming up over the top of his feet. He was a little concerned, but kept walking. Soon the water was up to his ankles. He turned back towards the boat, worried. By the time he reached the boat again the water was up to his knees. He scrambled back in, relieved but puzzled.

"I don't understand," Jesus said, "I know it has been a long time, but I really thought I had it down. I wonder what went wrong."
Moses was thoughtful too. Finally he said, "I bet I know what it is! The first time you did it you did not have holes in your feet!"

The fifth question:
BELOVED MASTER,
IS NOT LIFE AT ALL BEAUTIFUL ACCORDING TO GAUTAMA THE BUDDHA?

Punito, life as you know it is not beautiful. When Buddha says life is misery, he is talking about the life that YOU know; he is not talking about the life that HE knows. There is no point in talking about the life he knows -- you won't understand it. You have not even any idea of it; you cannot even imagine it.
You know a life which is lived through the mind; he knows a life which is lived without the mind. You know a life which is nothing but nonessential, superfluous, peripheral; he knows a life which is lived from the very center of his being. He knows a life which is not temporal but eternal; you know only the life which is momentary.
He goes on saying that your life is misery -- misery and nothing else -- for the simple reason that it is so momentary. It cannot satisfy you, it cannot give you contentment. It cannot quench your thirst; on the contrary, it makes your thirst more and more persistent. It makes you more and more discontented.

The Irish paratrooper jumped from a plane and then discovered that he had forgotten his parachute. As he was falling through the air he looked around at the scenery and said to himself, "This would be very pleasant if it would only last!"

But this is our situation: without parachutes, falling towards the earth. Of course, it is beautiful scenery: clouds with sunrays and all greenery underneath you and a very silent atmosphere, no noise and unpolluted air. Everything is beautiful, but the problem is, it cannot last. Within moments all will be gone; within moments you will be shattered on the earth.

Hence Buddha goes on reminding you about death: death is there by the corner. We try to make our life to last forever. We try in every possible way to avoid death, but death is unavoidable. We try to befool ourselves that we are exceptions, but nobody is an exception. Death comes inevitably.

The only thing inevitable in life is death. But we go on creating illusions around ourselves that this is not going to happen -- not at least today. And who takes care about tomorrow? "We will see about tomorrow when it comes. Let us enjoy this moment -- eat, drink, be merry."

Buddha says that this "Eat, drink, be merry" philosophy is sheer unconsciousness. And this unconscious state can create more and more misery for you. Unconsciousness is misery, so if your life is unconscious it IS misery. Consciousness is bliss. If your life is consciousness then it is bliss, but then it becomes a totally different kind of life.

It becomes the life of the awakened one, of the enlightened one.

Shanahan staggered out of the saloon. He wandered up the street and by mistake went into a house where a wake was being held. He spotted the refreshments and helped himself. The wake lasted all through the night and well into the next day. Shanahan made himself useful by serving as bartender and always had one with the guy who was drinking.
At the end of the second day the party thinned out quite a bit, until at last Shanahan was alone with the widow. She approached him for the first time. "You must have been a great friend of O'Leary to stay on like this," she said sadly, "so I feel I can ask your advice. Do you think we should take poor O'Leary to a funeral home or should we hold the services here?"
Shanahan took a final swig of gin and said, "Missus, why don't we just stuff him and keep the party going?"

Yes, everybody would like that, tries that, but it is not possible. The party cannot go on and on and on; it is bound to come to an end.
Buddha simply wants you to be reminded again and again that when death is there, what kind of life are you living? It can't be much of a life. There is another life which is beyond death, which is deathlessness, and it is your birthright to attain to it. But the false has to be dropped first. The false has to be seen as false and then the quest starts for the real. The moment you recognize your life as nothing but a slow kind of death you will start looking for the real life.

And the real life is available and not very far away; it is available inside you, within you. Whatsoever you do on the outside is to be taken away by death. Do something for your inner transformation, because that is the only treasure which cannot be taken away by death.

The last question:
BELOVED MASTER,
CAN MAN LIVE IN THIS CUNNING WORLD WITHOUT BEING CUNNING HIMSELF?

Anahato, the world is cunning because you are cunning, not vice versa. It is not that you are cunning because the world is cunning. The world is nothing but you; you are the world.
You project your world. And even though the world is cunning, what are you going to gain by being cunning? Even though the world is cunning, what are you going to lose by being innocent, simple?
Nothing of real value can be lost by being simple. In fact, by being simple and innocent the real is attained. Yes, by cunningness you can attain to power, to money, to prestige, but what is the point of attaining all that? Death is bound to take everything away from you. And can't you see the people who are powerful? Are they happy? Do you see any joy in their lives? Can't you observe the rich people? They live a dog's life, in utter misery!

Alexander the Great said to Diogenes, "If I am going to be born again I would not like to be Alexander again. I would like to be Diogenes."

Diogenes was a naked mystic, had nothing, not even a begging bowl. Buddha at least had a begging bowl with him; Diogenes was absolutely without any possessions.
He used to have a begging bowl, but one day he saw a dog drinking water and he meditated over it, and he thought, "If a dog can manage without a begging bowl, can't I manage without a begging bowl?" He threw the begging bowl into the river and he became very friendly with the dog. He used to tell people, "He is one of my teachers. He has given me one of the most important lessons of my life. Since I have thrown the begging bowl in the river I feel such freedom; otherwise, even in the night I used to remain afraid that somebody may steal my begging bowl. I used at least two, three times in the night to look around to see whether the begging bowl was still there or not. Since I have thrown it away, I have no worry left in the world."
Alexander heard about the joy of Diogenes and he came to see him, and he was tremendously impressed. He had never seen such a man! And to Diogenes he said, "Next time, if God is going to send me again to the world, I will come as Diogenes."
Diogenes laughed. He looked at his dog -- his friend and teacher -- and said to the dog, "Listen to what this man is saying. If he really wants to be Diogenes, who is preventing him? He can be Diogenes just this very moment!" It is said that he laughed and the dog smiled too. Must have been some ancient Snoopy!
Alexander said, "What is the matter? Why are you laughing and why is your dog smiling?"
Diogenes said, "What else can we do? You are talking such nonsense! If you want to be Diogenes, forget all about your

world conquest and be here! I live on this bank of the river, and it is a big bank. We both can live here, there is no problem. Why wait for the next life? And why remain miserable meanwhile?"

Alexander said, "I cannot answer it. I understand -- you are right -- but I have my own investments, my own ideas to fulfill first. I have to conquer the world! Once I have conquered it, I can renounce it but not before that."

Diogenes said, "You will never conquer it, because nobody can conquer the whole world. And even if you conquer it you will never be able to renounce it, because then you will say, 'I have put so much energy into it and I have wasted my whole life. Why should I renounce it?'"

Alexander died in misery; Diogenes died in bliss. By coincidence, both died on the same day, and when they were crossing the river that separates this world from the other, Alexander was ahead, Diogenes was just a few feet behind. Alexander looked, felt very ashamed because he was naked. Diogenes was not ashamed at all because he had been naked his whole life. Just to hide his shame Alexander laughed -- a shallow laughter -- and said to Diogenes, "It is strange that an emperor and a beggar are meeting on the boundary line of these two worlds. It may not have happened before, it may not happen again."

Diogenes had a real laughter -- a belly laughter. He said, "You are right -- an emperor and a beggar meeting on this boundary is a rare phenomenon -- but about one thing you are wrong. You don't know who is the emperor and who is the beggar. The emperor is behind and the beggar is ahead!"

And Diogenes was right.

Buddha insists that by being cunning you can accumulate wealth -- but what is the point of it if it only brings misery, anxiety, anguish? By being innocent you may be cheated, you may be taken advantage of, but what is there to lose? Anahato, you ask me, "Can man live in this cunning world without being cunning?"

Don't call the world cunning, because that is just a cover-up. You want to be cunning and you cover it up with an explanation, with the rationalization that "The world is cunning, that's why I have to be cunning." It is your world: you make it, you create it.

And remember, everybody who is part of the world thinks in the same way. All the constituents of the world think in the same way: "The world is cunning, that's why I have to be cunning." Who is creating the world? We are the world and we are creating it. But we want to be cunning and we don't want to accept the fact, the ugly fact, that we want to be cunning; hence we call the whole world cunning.

Drop such explanations. And of course, others will also support your explanation because they are in the same boat. So your explanation will look almost like a valid truth. It is not.

Times in the fifties were not easy for Ma and Pa in the rural area of West Texas, as a ten-year drought took no mercy on small farmers. Still, Pa was determined to send Junior off to the prestigious University of Texas, if only for one semester, to boast of his son's academic achievements to the neighbors. So money was saved for several years until one thousand dollars were accumulated.

As Junior boarded the bus ready for departure, Pa sternly announced, "Junior, your Ma and I have sacrificed a lot to send you to the university, and if you really watch yourself you can make it through the year with this money." And he handed the boy an envelope containing the one thousand dollars.

Junior, however, arrived at the university with notions other than that of earning a degree. He enjoyed nights and days of fun and games, recklessly spending Pa's money until one month later all was spent.

In spite of his desperate situation, Junior wrote a letter, saying, "Pa, there are many smart teachers here and one of my professors says he can teach old Blue, our hound dog, to talk... for only five hundred dollars."

When Pa read the letter he became excited and told Ma, "This may be our lucky day at last. If the boy is right, we can put that useless hound dog in the circus, become rich, and retire for life!"

So Pa mortgaged the farm and all the equipment, borrowed five hundred dollars from the bank, and sent it along with Old Blue on the bus. When the dog arrived with the money, Junior, not wanting to be bothered with the animal, killed it and forgot about it. As he continued his carefree life-style for a few more weeks, the money again ran out.

By now, however, Junior had learned the trick, so he again wrote to his Pa, "Gee, Pa, Old Blue had us all fooled. He is smarter than we thought. The professor has already taught him to speak English, and now he says that this dog is so intelligent that for only five hundred dollars more he could be taught two more languages, to sing and to dance."

After reading the letter, Pa and Ma were overtaken by visions of great wealth and fame. They immediately hocked all of their belongings, borrowed from all of their friends, and finally raised another five hundred dollars to send to Junior. This time the money lasted until the Thanksgiving break, at which time Junior and Blue were both expected home.

Excited, Pa went to meet Junior at the bus station, but to his surprise, Junior was without the new superstar hound dog. Running up to him he cried, "Hi, Junior! Where is old Blue?"

Junior pulled Pa aside and with a serious look explained, "Pa, the damndest thing happened on the way here. Old Blue was sitting here beside me talking up a storm, when suddenly he said, 'Junior, I got to shit real bad!' And I said, 'Blue, just hold back till we get to the next town. I got to shave, also, and we have a ten-minute layover. We can use the restroom there.'

"So, Pa, Old Blue was sitting on the crapper and I was shaving with that straight-edged razor you gave me last Christmas, when Blue said, 'Say, I wonder if your Pa is still fucking that old cross-eyed mare at the farm?' And Pa, I got so damn mad I just cut that dog's head off!"

Pa bolted forward, very excited, and said, "Are you sure you killed that sonofaxbitch, son?"

This goes on and on. Somebody has to come out of it. If you are waiting for the whole world to become innocent, and then you will become innocent, then it is not going to happen ever. Forget about the world. You be innocent and

lose anything that is bound to be lost by dropping cunningness. And you will not be a loser, remember. Innocence will give you the real treasure, the kingdom of God. Blessed are the innocent, for theirs is the kingdom of God.
Enough for today.
The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 8
Chapter #12
Chapter title: Rivers don't exist
1 January 1980 am in Buddha Hall

The first question:
Question 1
BELOVED MASTER,
HOW CAN YOU, AS A MAN, TALK ABOUT THE FEMININE PSYCHE? HOW DO YOU KNOW THAT GOD IS A HE?

Gudrun Hofmann, I am not talking as a man, I am not talking as a woman. I am not talking as a mind at all. The mind is used, but I am talking as consciousness, as awareness. And awareness is neither he nor she, awareness is neither man nor woman. Your body has that division and your mind too, because your mind is your inner part of the body and your body is the outer part of your mind. Your body and mind are not separate; they are one entity. In fact, to say body and mind is not right; 'and' should not be used. You are bodymind -- not even a hyphen between the two. Hence, with the body, with the mind, 'masculine', 'feminine' -- these words are relevant, meaningful. But there is

something beyond them both; there is something transcendental. That is your real core, your being. That being consists only of awareness, of witnessing, of watchfulness. It is pure consciousness.

I am not talking here as a man; otherwise it is impossible to talk about the woman. I am talking as awareness. I have lived in the feminine body many times and I have lived in the masculine body many times, and I have witnessed all. I have seen all the houses, I have seen all the garments. What I am saying to you is the conclusion of many many lives; it has not to do with only this life. This life is only a culmination of a long long pilgrimage.

So don't listen to me as a man or a woman; otherwise you will not be listening to me. Listen to me as awareness.

Secondly, you say, "How do you know that God is a he?"

God is neither he nor she. God simply means the totality of consciousness in existence. God simply means life eternal. Life expresses in two ways, man and woman. God is the unmanifest source of life; you cannot call him "he," you cannot call him "she." But because for centuries the word 'he' has been used, I go on using it. You have to remember that I don't mean it.

If you really want to go deep into the phenomenon of God, then God does not exist at all -- as a person. God is only a presence. In other words, there is no God but only godliness: a quality that pervades, permeates, the whole of existence; that is everywhere, in every leaf, in every dewdrop. It is a quality. Once you start thinking of God as a quality, your whole outlook on life, on religion, on love, will be totally different.

Existence consists not of nouns but of verbs. Nouns are inventions of man and so are pronouns. Verbs are real. When you say "a river" what do you mean? Have you ever seen a river as a noun? The river is always flowing, it is always a movement. It is never static, it is dynamic. How can you make it a static noun? The word 'river' seems to be static.

If you ask the buddhas, the awakened ones, they will say, "Rivers don't exist." But you see the river flowing by! The flow is there, a kind of rivering is there, but no river. You see so many trees, but in fact what exists is a kind of treeing, not trees, because every tree is changing every moment. The time that you will take in using the word 'tree', the tree is no more the same. A few old leaves have fallen, a few new leaves have started coming out, a flower has opened up, a bud is getting ready to open. There is great activity; the tree is constantly in momentum.

The whole existence consists of verbs, and God is nothing but the totality of all these verbs. God is not a quantity but a quality, not a person but a presence. God is an experience, not an object of experience but experience itself. God is subjectivity. And how can you call subjectivity "he" or "she"?

I know why the question has arisen. All over the world, particularly in the West, the liberated woman is asking, "Why call God 'he'?" And she is right, in a way. Why make God identified with the masculine mind? It is a kind of male chauvinistic approach. For centuries, the male has dominated everything, hence he has called God "he." And the rebellion against it is absolutely right.

But to start calling God "she" will not put things right; it will be moving to the other extreme. That will be another kind of chauvinism, it won't change anything. Simply the wrong that man was doing will be done by woman; both are wrong. God is neither.

Hence in the East, where for ten thousand years hundreds of people have arrived to the ultimate pinnacle of experiencing godliness, we don't call God "he" or "she," we call him "it." That is far more beautiful because it takes God beyond he and she. But something has to be called, and whatsoever words are used are going to be inadequate -- he, she, it -- because the word 'it' has also its own dangers. 'It' seems to be dead because we use it for things, and God is not a thing either. 'It' seems to be too neutral, and God is not neutral; he is tremendously committed, involved. 'It' seems to be lifeless, and God is life itself, love itself. Any word will have its own limitations.

So you can use any word -- he, she, it -- but remember, all words are limited and God is unlimited. If you use these words mindfully, then there is no danger. The basic remembrance is that God is a presence, otherwise many foolish questions arise.

If you call him "he" or "she," then the question arises, "Where does he live? Where is he?" And then the question seems to be very relevant because you have reduced him to a person; then where is his dwelling?

"Where is the dwelling of God?"

This was the question with which the rabbi of Kotzk surprised a number of learned men who happened to be visiting him.
They laughed at him, "What a thing to ask! Is not the whole world full of His glory?"
Then he answered his own question: "God dwells wherever man lets him in."

There is no dwelling outside somewhere. Whenever you allow yourself, you open up to existence, whenever you allow the wind and the rain and the sun to reach to your innermost core, suddenly there is God, godliness. Suddenly you are overwhelmed by something bigger than you, by something which is oceanic. You start disappearing into it like a dewdrop.
The moment we say, "God is a person," then we start praying, praising. That is a kind of bribery. That is a kind of buttressing his ego. If God is a person he must have an ego. Then praise him and he will be happy with you, and you will be rewarded either here or hereafter. The moment we think of God as a person we start searching for him not IN the world but somewhere far away in heaven, and we miss the whole point. God is now-here, God is nowhere else.

There is a tale that a man inspired by God once went out from the creaturely realms into the vast waste. There he wandered till he came to the Gates of Mystery. He knocked. From within came the cry, "What do you want here?"

He said, "I have proclaimed your praise in the ears of mortals, but they are deaf to me, so I come to you that you yourself may hear me and reply."
"Turn back!" came the cry from within. "Here is no ear for you. I have sunk my hearing in the deafness of mortals."

God is in the stones, God is in the waters, God is in the animals, God is in the birds, God is in people, in sinners, in saints. God is equivalent to isness. Now, is isness he or she? The question will be utterly meaningless.
So don't be worried whether God is he or she. Rather, look within yourself and find the place where he and she both disappear. And that will be the beginning of your understanding of reality, of what it is.
This thing cannot be decided by argumentation. It is not a metaphysical question, it is something existential. If you can find something within yourself which is neither masculine nor feminine, then you will know that there is something in existence which is neither, which is beyond both. And that beyondness is God.

The second question:
Question 2
BELOVED MASTER,
I AM SIXTY YEARS OLD, BUT YET THE SAME DESIRES PERSIST. WHAT IS THE MATTER WITH ME?

Narayandas, growing old is not growing up. Time by itself does not bring wisdom. Yes, it brings many experiences,

but experiences by themselves cannot deliver wisdom to you.

Wisdom is a totally different phenomenon. It does not happen through experiences of the outside world. It happens when you become centered within your being, when you become rooted in your being, when you become integrated, when you are no more a crowd and you become a crystallized soul.

Desires can't disappear just because you have become sixty years old. You can be six hundred years old and desires will be there, in fact more, because they will be also six hundred years old. Your desires are sixty years old; they have gone deep in you in sixty years.

People have this idea that when you are young you suffer from desires, when you are old you go beyond them. Just by being old? That is ridiculous! You don't go beyond desires just by being old. You simply become a hypocrite; you start pretending that you have gone beyond desires. Maybe you can't go into desires because there is no energy available, but the mind thinks more and more. Because you can't do anything, your whole energy becomes cerebral. The young person can do something about his desires; you cannot do, so you only think.

And as death starts coming closer and closer, a great fear arises: so many desires are there which are unfulfilled. You become afraid: if death comes and takes you away.... It is bound to happen sooner or later, and the possibility is of sooner than later. All those desires start taking possession of you. "Fulfill us," they say. "Time is short. Do something." You start going crazy. You continuously become obsessed.

A moralist addressing an audience thundered, "Remember, my friends, when temptation comes your way you must resist it -- resist it!"
"I would like to," said one of the old men, "but I am always afraid it may never come again."

That fear is natural. Death may come before the temptation comes again. Who knows? -- it may not come again.
The old man becomes more and more afraid of losing his desires.
It is not an accident that Buddha introduced a new idea into the world of sannyas. He started initiating young people into sannyas. In India, the tradition was that you should take sannyas only when you are very old, after seventy-five years -- the fourth stage, when you have done everything and only death is left. Then take sannyas. That was the idea and it was a very comfortable idea, a very cozy idea.
In the first place, very few people are going to live beyond seventy-five, particularly in those days and in India. Even today very few people will live beyond seventy-five, so there is no fear of living after seventy-five and becoming a sannyasin. And if by chance you happen to live after seventy-five, all your energies will be already wasted, gone down the drain. Whether you take sannyas or not you will be a sannyasin, so why not take it?
People after seventy-five years used to take the vow of celibacy. You see the foolishness of it!

A man used to come to Ramakrishna each religious festival and he would give a big feast. He was a nonvegetarian, and

many animals would be cut up for the feast. He was very rich. Then suddenly all those feasts stopped. There was one great festival and the feast was not happening, and the man had come to see Ramakrishna.
Ramakrishna asked, "What happened? Why are you not celebrating this feast? Have you become irreligious or something? Are you no more interested in your religion?"
He said, "That is not the point. My teeth have fallen out. And when I cannot eat, why should I bother?"

The feast was not for any religious reasons; the feast was simply because he wanted to enjoy. Religion was just an excuse.
People can take the oath of celibacy after seventy-five, so they are saving both the worlds. They have enjoyed this world and now they are creating a bank balance in the other. They are becoming virtuous so cheaply that it is all false.
Buddha introduced the idea that young people should become sannyasins. Then it is something significant. When a young person goes beyond sex, when a young person goes beyond desires, when a young person goes beyond greed, ambition, the longing to be powerful, the ambition to be famous, then it is something tremendously meaningful, significant.
Remember one thing: when you are young you have energies. Those energies can take you to hell and those same energies can take you to heaven. Energies are neutral; it depends on you how you use them.
So the first thing: just by becoming an old person does not mean that you have become wise. Wisdom needs

meditation not worldly experience. Worldly experience makes you more cunning; hence it is very difficult to find an old man who is not cunning. You can find a young man who is not cunning; you can find many children. In fact, almost all the children are innocent, they are not cunning. They have not known anything of the world. They have not learned tricks, strategies, politics, diplomacy. They are simply whatsoever they are -- they are authentic. As they grow more and more, as they become acquainted with the world and all the hypocrisy around, naturally they start becoming part of the world. They start learning the same kind of strategies.

By the time a person becomes old he becomes very cunning -- not wise, not intelligent. Remember: if you were stupid when you were a child you will be more stupid when you are old. You will have a long, long-rooted stupidity in you with great foliage and flowers and fruits. Whatsoever you have will grow with your age. If you meditate then meditation will grow. But just by becoming old you cannot be wise.

The ex-captain's wife paid a visit to a doctor who had achieved fame in the successful treatment of impotency. His method consisted of convincing the male patient he had the virility of a horse. The doctor consented to treat the woman's husband.

A few weeks later the doctor met the woman on the street, "Have you noticed the change you wanted in your husband?" he asked.

"No," replied the woman, "but he just won the Derby!"

Now, a stupid old man...! If you tell him that "You are a horse," you can't expect anything else! He will become a horse; he will become hypnotized with the idea.
Intelligence is a totally different phenomenon; intelligence cannot be hypnotized. An intelligent person cannot be Hindu, cannot be Mohammedan, cannot be Christian -- impossible, because these are all tricks, hypnotic tricks. People are being hypnotized from their very childhood that "You are a Hindu." A constant repetition that "You are a Hindu" makes you a Hindu. It is nothing else but a conditioning. A wise man becomes unconditioned.
So the first thing I will suggest to you, Narayandas: become unconditioned. Whatsoever your sixty years' life has conditioned you for, drop it. That's what your mind is: the accumulated conditionings. Drop them!
And the beginning of meditation is when you start dropping your conditionings. A moment comes when you become unconditioned again, like a child. Then your intelligence explodes. And an intelligent person cannot desire, that is impossible, because desiring only brings misery, frustration. Desiring only creates anxiety, anguish; it never brings any fulfillment, never any contentment.
An intelligent person cannot go on desiring. His very intelligence is enough and desiring disappears -- not that he renounces, remember. Only fools renounce.
Intelligent people don't renounce the world. They live in the world, but they live intelligently, without desiring. Whatsoever comes on their way they enjoy, but they don't hanker for anything. Their sleep remains undisturbed; they don't dream for anything. They don't project for the future, they live in the present.

Yes, Narayandas, you are becoming old, but don't hope that just by becoming old you will become wise enough and desires will disappear on their own accord.

She lay in bed, blissfully happy on this, the first morning of her long-dreamed-of honeymoon.
"Darling," she called as she heard him puttering around in the bathroom, "did you brush your teeth yet?"
"Yes," he cooed, "and while I was at it, I brushed yours too."

Yes, old you can become, but just by becoming old nothing is achieved.
Real growth happens inwards. It is a transformation of your interiority. And now that you are here, forget those sixty years and all the nightmares that you must have passed through those sixty years. Start your life afresh from the very beginning again.
Jesus says: Unless you are born again you will not be able to enter into my kingdom of God. And he is absolutely right. You need a new birth; you have to be twice-born. And to be with a master is a rebirth. It is initiation into the inner world.
Sixty years you have wasted on the outside, accumulating money, accumulating this and that, trying to be respectable, famous, powerful. Now get out of all those stupid games -- no more games! Now let there be a single-pointed search for the truth: the truth that you are, the truth that resides in you, the truth that you are made of, the truth of your consciousness.

My whole effort here is to help you towards self-knowledge. It does not need time; it needs intensity, sincerity. It needs commitment. It needs a tremendous effort to go in, because those sixty years you have created so many things on the outside which will hinder you from going in. They have become walls. You have become unbridged to your own self.

You ask me, "I am sixty years old, but yet the same desires persist."

Good that you have become aware of it, that the same desires are still there. There are many people who are not aware; they have repressed their desires so deeply that even they themselves have become unaware of them. Good that you are aware. The first ray of intelligence... that you are aware that the same desires persist.

And you ask, "What is the matter with me?"

Nothing is the matter with you; it is the same with everybody. One phase of your life is over. Now it is time to grow into another dimension. Sixty years is enough time to know about the world and all that it offers -- or at least promises to offer. You have known it, and it is only by knowing it that one becomes aware of the deceptiveness of it all. You have seen the illusion -- now turn in. Now become a sannyasin! You have been a worldly man up to now. And by a worldly man I simply mean one who is absolutely unaware of himself and is concerned about trivia -- money, power, prestige.

And I call the person a sannyasin who becomes deeply interested in his own life's source, who starts asking, "Who am I?" and who starts moving towards his center. From the circumference he changes his abode towards the center.

The day you reach to your center is the day of great blessings, the day of great enlightenment. That day you transcend life and death. That day you transcend man/woman. That day you transcend all dualities. That day, for the first time, you will taste what bliss is.

The third question:
Question 3
BELOVED MASTER,
WHY ARE YOU AGAINST FOLLOWING SOMEONE WHO KNOWS THE SECRETS OF LIFE? WHAT IS THE NEED TO DISCOVER THEM ONESELF ON ONE'S OWN?

Sudhakar, truth cannot be transferred. That is one of the intrinsic qualities of truth: nobody can give it to you. Yes, words can be given to you, theories can be given to you, theologies can be given to you, but not truth. Following somebody you will be following his words. Following somebody you will become a Jaina, a Mohammedan, a Buddhist, but you will never become your own self.
And Buddha is a unique individual just as you are. What did he do? Try to understand it; that may be helpful in your journey. But don't follow him literally; otherwise that will make you only phony, that will make you only pseudo.
Existence never repeats anybody. Jesus comes only once, Buddha comes only once. There has never been a person like Buddha before and will never be again, for the simple reason that existence never repeats.
You are a totally new manifestation of God. It has never been before so there has never been a person exactly like

you. So whomsoever you follow, you will be following somebody who is not like you and you will get into trouble. You can cultivate a certain character around you, you can act, but by acting you are not going to become a buddha. That's what the Buddhist monks have been doing for twenty-five centuries -- acting, performing, literally following. The way Buddha walks they will walk, the way Buddha eats they will eat, the way Buddha sits they will sit. You can do all these things and it is possible you may do them even better than Buddha, because Buddha was not imitating anybody else; he was spontaneous. When a person is spontaneous he has no time to rehearse it; you will have enough time to rehearse. You may even defeat Buddha in a competition.

It actually happened once:
Friends of Charlie Chaplin were celebrating one of his birthdays and they found a beautiful way to celebrate it. They advertised in the newspapers all over England that there will be a competition and whosoever can imitate Charlie Chaplin will be rewarded. There were three big awards.
Many people participated. At least a hundred were chosen from different cities and they all gathered in London for the final selection of the three winners.
Charlie Chaplin had an idea. He entered in the competition from a different town hoping that he was going to win the first prize -- there was no question about it. But he was wrong; he got the second prize! People came to know only later on that he was also a participant. He was so surprised that somebody managed better than himself. Naturally, the

other had practiced it for a long time. Charlie Chaplin was just there being himself; there was no need to practice. He IS Charlie Chaplin, so why practice? What is there to practice? But the other was more polished, more practiced. He walked better than Charlie Chaplin, he talked better than Charlie Chaplin! He outdid him.
This is possible. Some Christian monk may defeat Jesus, some Buddhist monk may defeat Buddha. But still, Buddha is Buddha and you will be only an imitator. Still, Charlie Chaplin is Charlie Chaplin and the man who was acting even in a better way is just acting; deep down he is himself.

You can never be somebody else. Remember it as one of the most fundamental laws. AES DHAMMO SANANTANO -- this is the eternal law: you can never be like somebody else. That does not mean you should not learn. Learn, but don't follow. Absorb, but go on your own way. Learn from all the enlightened ones. Sit at their feet, absorb their presence, but go on your own way.
Buddha himself said as his last statement on the earth: Be a light unto yourself.

A squirrel on the ground was watching two other squirrels in a tree.
One of them fell to the ground, bounced a couple of times, looked back up in the tree and said, "That making love in the tree is for the birds."

That's why I say don't follow. Don't try to make love in the tree -- that is for the birds! -- otherwise you will be in the hospital.

A little boy and girl squirrel were chattering and playing around when suddenly a fox appeared. The girl squirrel dashed up a tree but the boy squirrel stayed on the ground.
"That's strange," said the fox. "Usually squirrels are afraid of me and run up the nearest tree."
"Listen," said the boy squirrel. "Did you ever try to climb a tree after playing with a girl for twenty minutes?"

Just look to your own situation! Buddha has a different space, different context, a different world. You cannot follow him -- literally you cannot follow him. Metaphorically you can understand him and you can be tremendously benefited by him.
You ask me, Sudhakar, "Why are you against following someone who knows the secrets of life?"
How do you know that someone knows the secrets of life? That is just a belief. Unless YOU know the secrets of life, you will never know that someone else knows them. And following somebody just out of belief you may be getting into trouble. He may not know at all. He may be a convincing talker; he may be arguing better than you can argue. He can silence you in argument; that does not mean that he knows. He may be more articulate than you are, he may have studied the scriptures. Even the Devil can quote the scriptures! How do you know that he knows the secrets of life? You can know only if you also know.
You can understand Buddha really only when you are also a buddha. You can understand Christ only when you are also a christ -- not by following them but by becoming awakened on your own accord.

Hence I say there is the need to discover the truth by yourself. The inner truth is different from the outer truth. The outer truth can be discovered by one person and then the whole world possesses it. For example, the theory of relativity was discovered by Albert Einstein. Now everybody else need not discover it again and again; that will be just wasting time. He took years to discover it; now if you are intelligent you can understand it within days. If you are really intelligent, then within hours. There is no need to waste years in discovering it again and again. Somebody discovered -- Newton discovered -- the law of gravitation. Now you need not go and sit in a garden and wait for the apple to fall and then brood over it and then come to the conclusion that there must be a certain magnetic force in the earth which pulls things downwards. Now, if everybody has to do that there are not so many gardens and there are not so many apple trees, and apples may not oblige you. You may go on sitting under the tree for hours, days, months; they may not fall.

And do you know, even before Newton they used to fall and thousands of people must have watched them falling, but nobody discovered the law of gravitation. So there is no certainty that even if they oblige you and fall in the right time that you will discover the law of gravitation. There is no need -- Newton has done it for you, for all, forever. This is the quality of the outer, objective truth: once discovered it becomes universal.

The inner truth has a totally different quality: it always remains individual, it never becomes universal.

Buddha discovers it but he cannot convey it; he cannot adequately express it, he cannot make it universal. It

remains essentially individual. And whatsoever he does is just inadequate; it never fulfills the great need of the masses -- that they need not discover it anymore. Buddha has discovered it, Jesus has discovered it; now you can simply follow it.

This is the beauty of the inner truth, that you have to discover it again and again afresh. And the very discovery is such a bliss that it is good that one person has not finished it forever; otherwise there would have been no spiritual quest left. Buddha is not the first; there had been other awakened people before him. One enlightened person would have done it and then in every primary school you could teach it to everybody. The whole joy of discovering it would have been lost. It is beautiful that the subjective truth remains individual. Thousands of times it has been discovered, but it has not become universal yet and it will never become universal; it will remain individual. You will have to seek and search it on your own.

And when you find it you will be surprised: it is the same truth that was found by Buddha, it is the same truth that was found by Mahavira, the same truth that was found by Mohammed or Moses; it is not a different truth. But this is the quality of the inner world -- that you have to go there all alone. Nobody can accompany you and nobody can give you ready-made maps.

It is a very mysterious world inside; the outside world is not so mysterious, maps are possible. But the inner world remains a secret, a hidden secret. Even when you have known it and you would like to share it you cannot. All that you can share is your desire to share, that's all -- your deep

compassion to share, your love for others. But the truth remains as unexpressed as before.
Then why do masters speak at all? They speak not to share the truth -- they know perfectly well it cannot be shared. They speak to make your thirst for truth aflame. They speak to make you more thirsty, more hungry. They speak to create a tremendous longing in you to go inwards. Their presence, their vibe, their song, their dance, all indicate towards one thing: go in.

The fourth question:
Question 4
Beloved Master,
I DON'T WANT TO DIE AND YET I AM HERE WITH YOU. AM I CRAZY?

Prem Svarupo, sane people don't come here, because the so-called sane people are the most insane in the world. The sane people are those who crucified Jesus. The sane people are those who poisoned Socrates. The sane people are those who made many efforts to kill Buddha. The sane people are in politics; they don't come to the enlightened ones, to the awakened ones. Only crazy people can come -- but these crazy people, in the real sense, are the sanest.
It is a paradox. The people who followed Jesus must have been crazy -- they were crazy. Everybody was saying that they were crazy. The people who followed Buddha must have been crazy. Even Buddha's father was saying to people, "You are crazy! He is crazy and you are crazy! He has renounced his kingdom -- he is a fool. And now so many people are renouncing and going with him. What can

you find in the jungles? Sitting under trees with closed eyes, what can you find? If you want to do something, do it in the world. If you want to find something, find it in the world."

When Buddha came back to his home after his enlightenment, his father was very angry and he said, "You ARE crazy, but I can forgive you because I have the heart of the father."

Buddha laughed and he said, "First say everything that you wanted to tell me all these twelve years I have not been here in the house. You must have accumulated much anger -- you first cathart! When you have thrown all the garbage out, then there is a possibility to communicate something to you."

The father was shocked. What is he saying? It was not expected at all! For a moment there was silence. And Buddha said, "Just look at me. I am not the same person who had gone. I am a totally different person because my inner being has changed. I am reborn. I am not your son anymore. I am not this body and I am not this mind either. I have attained to the beyond.

"So first throw out all your anger so that you can see me, so that your eyes are clear enough to recognize the change that has happened in me -- a radical change. The person that had gone has died, and the person that has come today is a totally different person -- of course in the same continuum. Hence I look the same way from the outside only; from the inside I am not the same at all."

Svarupo, you ARE crazy! All of my sannyasins are crazy. Only crazy people can be religious -- crazy in the eyes of

the world but not crazy in the eyes of the awakened ones, because in the eyes of the awakened ones the world is insane. The world is a big madhouse; you have escaped from it. You are learning how to be sane, how to be saner. You ask me, "I don't want to die, and yet I am here with you."

This happens to everybody. When you come here you start learning a new language, the language of transformation. You start seeing a new truth: that if the ego dies, then you will be really born. If the ego is dropped, then God can enter in you. The ego is the barrier.

When you come here for the first time, you come for improvement, for growth -- not to die. But slowly slowly, you start understanding that growth is possible only if first you allow a certain death: the death of the ego.

Then fear grips you and a contradiction arises in you, a double bind. The intelligent part of you starts saying, "Die -- don't waste time." And the unintelligent part -- your past -- says, "What are you doing? Are you crazy? Who knows what will happen after death? If you drop your personality and your ego, how will you keep yourself together? You may start falling apart! How will you control yourself?" You are afraid of so many things that can happen to you if the control is lost.

Hence you start doing a very contradictory work: on one hand you dismantle yourself, and on the other hand you put yourself together again. This can continue for years.

The fashionably dressed girl these days wears pants to make her look like a boy, and see-through blouses just to prove that she is not.

This is a double bind! And this is bound to happen.
Sooner or later, one day, Svarupo, you will have to take a decisive step. You will have to come out of this double bind, because this is wasting time, energy, opportunity. Who knows? I may not be here tomorrow -- or the next moment. This opportunity may be lost. Right now the door is open and I am beckoning you, "Come in!" Tomorrow the door may disappear and there will be nobody to beckon you to come in. And then you will suffer much, then you will be in deep anguish. Then you will cry and weep for the spilt milk.
Right now is the time to listen to the call, to the challenge. I am a challenge, a call: a challenge of the unknown calling you towards the uncharted sea. I know you are afraid and I know that to leave the shelter of the shore is difficult. You have lived on the shore so long and you have made such a beautiful hut. So cozy it is there, with no fear of the waves and the ocean and the dangers of the unknown. You seem to be very secure there, and I am calling you, "Come out of your cozy security!" -- because it is just a deception.
Death is bound to destroy all. Before death destroys, take the decisive step on your own accord. Move into the unknown. Before death kills you, let the ego be killed by you yourself. Then there will be no death for you, then you can transcend all death.
Great courage, of course, is needed, but if you have taken the courage to be a sannyasin, now don't look backwards. For the sannyasin there is no way to look backwards. Listen to the challenge and go wholeheartedly towards it.

Yes, it will look more and more crazy because you will see you are committing a kind of suicide. But once you have committed the suicide -- the suicide of the ego -- you will be surprised: to live in the ego was REAL suicide and to get out of it is to attain to absolute freedom. Buddha calls that freedom nirvana.

The fifth question:
Question 5
BELOVED MASTER,
WHY ARE YOU ALWAYS TALKING AND TELLING JOKES ABOUT THE JEWS? WHY NOT ABOUT INDIANS?

Shankara, Indians don't have jokes. They are such holy people, you know, so spiritual! They don't have any sense of humor. I have never come across a single originally Indian joke. All the jokes are imported. Sometimes I wonder why the government allows it! On everything else there is great taxation; only jokes can be imported and you don't have to pay three hundred percent tax on them. Indians don't have jokes, hence it is very difficult to tell Indian jokes.
And Jews are the most rich in jokes; they have the best jokes. They are very earthly people, just the opposite of the Indians. Indians have this nonsense of being very holy, and Jews are very earthly people. Their religion is also very earthly. They don't have any idea of renouncing the world. Their rabbis are not celibates; their rabbis are as ordinary as anybody else. This is something beautiful -- I appreciate it. These hierarchies should disappear. The greatest

snobbishness exists in the minds of the so-called religious people. And India is very snobbish; hence they have not created any jokes.
Jews are earthly people, ordinary people. They have enjoyed their ordinariness, and they have a great sense of humor. In fact, their sense of humor has been a great blessing to them; otherwise, they have suffered so much.... For two thousand years they have been suffering all over the world. Without that sense of humor they would not have survived. Their sense of humor has helped them survive, has helped them to always resurrect again and again. They have been crushed and killed and destroyed, and yet their spirit has come back again. They could laugh at misery, at suffering. Laughter has been a great boon. And it is very difficult to change a Jewish joke into anything else! Sometimes I try, but it loses its beauty.

A man said to a friend, "Let me tell you a joke."
"Okay," said the friend.
"Well, a Jewish man was walking down the street when he ran into...."
"Stop!" cried the friend. "Why are you always telling jokes about Jews?"
"Okay, okay, I will tell it differently. A Chinaman is walking down the street when he runs into another Chinaman. 'Are you coming to my son's bar mitzvah?' he asked."

It is very difficult to change the joke. Jewish jokes have a flavor of their own, and if you translate them, they lose that flavor; they become flat.

And why are you worried, Shankara? Why does it hurt you? Every race in the world has contributed something. Every race has lived in different situations, different climates, has evolved differently, has its own personality. Jews have their own personality, and Jewish jokes are very essential to that personality. They know how to laugh; they know how to laugh at themselves too. That is something really beautiful. It is easy to laugh at others; the real laughter is when you can laugh at yourself.

The sixth question:
Question 6
BELOVED MASTER,
SOMETIMES WHEN I HEAR YOU READING A QUESTION MY FIRST REACTION IS, "WHAT KIND OF A STUPID QUESTION IS THIS?" DON'T YOU EVER FEEL THAT WAY?

Prem Malik, once in a while... for example, reading this question.

The last question:
Question 7
BELOVED MASTER
I WOULD LIKE TO TRY EXPERIMENTING WITH ALCOHOL A LA GURDJIEFF, EXCEPT I AM BROKE. CAN I HAVE AN ALCOHOL ALLOWANCE?

Deva Shraddan, George Gurdjieff would not have given you that experiment. That was given only to people who are against alcohol! For example, if Morarji Desai had gone

to George Gurdjieff, then he would have forced him to drink alcohol -- instead of his own urine! But not for you. So it is very difficult for me to allow you an alcohol allowance -- that would be against the spirit of George Gurdjieff. He would never forgive me!
The essential core of the experiment is to disturb you, to shatter you, to shatter your patterns, fixed patterns. If you are desiring alcohol, then that is the LAST thing that is going to shatter you. It will be fulfilling, it will not be shattering. Instead of alcohol, start drinking the water of life!

"You know, you are the first man I have met whose kisses make me sit up and open my eyes."
"Really?"
"Yes. Usually they have the opposite effect."

With you, alcohol will not be of any help; the water of life may have the right effect. You may open your eyes and sit up. And one thing more is good about it: you can be broke and still you can enjoy it. No allowance is needed, so Laxmi need not worry about it. It gives you total self-dependence.

One Saturday night George ended up at a party in an unfamiliar apartment building. He got very drunk and somehow found his way home in the wee hours. When he woke up the next afternoon with a terrible hangover, he realized that he had left his jacket, tie, shirt and shoes at the party.

With much difficulty he found the apartment building, but he had no idea which apartment he had been in. The only thing he remembered about it was a magnificent gold toilet. So he knocked at the first apartment. The door was opened by a man with a hangover.
"Hello," said George. "Did you have a party here last night?"
"We sure did!" groaned the man.
"And do you have a gold toilet?"
"A gold toilet? No, we sure don't."
So George had to go to the next door, and so on for three floors. Everyone was recovering from a party, but no one knew anything about a gold toilet. By the time he got to the last apartment, George was beginning to think he had imagined the gold toilet. The door was opened by a man with a hangover.
"Uh, hello," said George. "Did you have a party here last night?"
"We sure had a party here!" groaned the man.
"And do you by any chance have a gold toilet?"
There was a long silence.
Finally the man shouted back over his shoulder, "Hey, Harry -- here is the guy who shit in your tuba!"

So, Shraddan, the allowance can be allowed... but what about other people's tubas? You will create trouble. If you listen to my advice, forget the whole idea. It is good that you are broke. This is called a blessing in disguise. If you were not broke you would have gone a la Gurdjieff, and that would have led you into more trouble.

Gurdjieff certainly forced people to drink, but only the people who were against alcohol. He used to make toasts every night for all the kinds of idiots in the world. He had twenty-six categories of idiots. I don't know to which category you would belong, but you must belong to some category. Unless you are awakened you are bound to belong to some category or other.

An idiot is a person who is trying to find joy where joy does not exist at all, who is trying to search for something which he has never lost in the first place. The enlightened person is one who has looked into his being before searching for anything anywhere else. It is better to look in your own house. He has looked in and has found it there. Now his search has disappeared.

The person who is interested in alcohol must be living in misery, in a kind of suffering. That's why he wants somehow to forget it all. Alcohol is nothing but a chemical strategy to forget your miseries, anxieties, your problems, to forget yourself.

My whole effort here, Shraddan, is to help you to remember yourself -- and you want to forget yourself. By forgetting yourself you will be creating more and more hell for yourself and for others. Remember, rather, remember yourself.

My methods are different from George Gurdjieff's. I am not in favor of any alcoholic beverages. I am not in favor of any psychedelic drugs either, because they all create illusory worlds for you and they all are distractions. They make you more and more oblivious of your own being, unaware of your own self.

My work is based in awareness. The word 'awareness' is the golden key here, the master key. You have to learn to be more aware. Howsoever painful it is in the beginning, be more aware, because it is by becoming more aware that one day you will become part of the celebration of the whole.
AES DHAMMO SANANTANO -- this is the eternal inexhaustible law.
Enough for today.
The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 8
Chapter #13
Chapter title: All words are lies
2 January 1980 am in Buddha Hall

The first question:
BELOVED MASTER,
ARE ALL WORDS LIES?

Peter Hendrickson, truth is an experience so profound that it is inexpressible, so vast that no word can contain it. Words are small things; they have a certain utility, but they have limitations. And truth has no limitations; it is vaster than the sky. Truth means the whole existence.
When you disappear into the whole you know it. Saying that you know it is not accurate; rather, you feel it. Or, to be even more accurate, you BECOME it. When you have become the whole it is impossible to say it. And truths need to be said; they have an intrinsic quality that they have to be shared.
Hence words are only hypothetical; they can be used, but one should not believe in them. They should be used as

stepping-stones. Ultimately they are all lies; at the most, approximate reflections, but a reflection is a lie. The moon in the sky and the moon reflected in the lake are not the same. The face in the mirror is not really your face; it is just an illusion. There is nothing in the mirror.

But small children become very much concerned about the face in the mirror -- their own face. When for the first time a small child is put before a mirror he thinks he is seeing somebody sitting in front of him. He tries to catch hold of the child. If he cannot -- and certainly he cannot catch hold -- he tries to go behind the mirror. Maybe the child is hiding behind.

And this is the situation of people who believe in words. But in a way the mirror is useful. By saying that the reflection is a lie I am not saying that it is of no use. If you understand, it says something ABOUT the truth, not the truth itself; it indicates. A finger pointing to the moon is not the moon, but it has tremendous utility: it can point to the moon. If you become too obsessed with the finger, that is your fault, not the fault of the finger. If you forget the finger -- and you have to forget it if you want to see the moon -- then the finger has served its purpose.

Even lies can help you to reach to the truth; otherwise buddhas would not have spoken at all. Unless lies can help you in some way to reach to the truth, words would not have been used at all. No Bible, no Koran, no Gita, no DHAMMAPADA, would have existed.

When Buddha became enlightened, for seven days he remained silent, thinking, "What is the use of saying things to people which cannot be said? -- and even if you say

them, which are bound to be misunderstood? Moreover, if somebody is capable of understanding your words, he is bound to be capable of finding truth on his own."
The story says, then the gods from heaven descended. They touched the feet of Buddha and they prayed to him that he should speak.
Buddha said, "For what? Ninety-nine percent of the people are not going to understand at all, and the one percent perhaps may be able to understand, but that one percent who can understand through words will be able to find the truth even if I don't say anything about it at all. So what is the point of saying it?"
The gods were puzzled. The logic was right, but still something was wrong, because in the ancient days other buddhas had spoken. Then they conferred together to find out how to argue with Buddha. And they found a way; and it is good that they could find a way; otherwise we would have missed these tremendously significant messages of Buddha.
They came back and they said, "You are right; the majority will never understand. And there are a few people who will reach to truth even if you don't say anything. But can't you imagine that there are a few who are in between these two groups, just on the boundary line? If you speak, that will give them a challenge, inspiration. If you don't speak they may be lost. Speak for those few who are just on the borderland, who can be lost without your words and who can find the light with the help of your words."

You are right, Hendrickson: all words are lies, because when you experience you cannot put it into words. How to

put love into words? And love is not a very rare experience. How to put beauty into words? Has any poet succeeded yet? Only the fools think that they have succeeded. The greater the poet, the more he is aware of his failure. Has any painter been able to paint the beauty that he experiences? No great painter is ever satisfied. A tremendous discontent follows him his whole life like a shadow. It haunts him. He goes on trying again and again and again; his whole life is a long failure, a tragedy. His great paintings are great for us, but he knows that he has failed. They are great for us because we don't know what beauty is. If these great paintings had not been there we would not have been aware of many things.

It is said that if all the paintings of the world disappear, you will not be able to see the beauty of a sunset. You will not be able to see the beauty of a roseflower. You will not be able to see the beauty of a bird on the wing. You have become able to see it because painters for centuries have been preparing the right context to see it. But ask the painters themselves. Ask a Van Gogh or a Rabindranath Tagore or Nandlal Bose, and they will say that they have failed. What they had seen was something totally different. It was so alive, so pulsating! And the painting is dead; it is nothing but canvas and color. How can you put a sunset on the canvas? It will be a still life and the sunset -- the real sunset -- is dynamic, it is moving, it is moment to moment changing. Your painting will be just a framed phenomenon -- and the sunset has no frame to it.

How can you sing a song that relates your experience of love? It is impossible; all words are inadequate. So first, when you try to express your experience, ninety percent of

it is lost. And when somebody hears it, the remaining ten percent is distorted. Even if one percent reaches to the other person it is more than you can ask.
When I say something to you I know how much is already lost. When I see in your eyes I again know whatsoever was left in the words has been distorted by your mind. Your mind is continuously trying to allow only that which fits with it; it does not allow that which goes against it. It does not hear it at all, and it hears only that which is nothing but a reflection of its own past.

The analyst was concerned about the results of a Rorschach test he had just given for the patient, who associated every ink blot with some sort of sexual activity.
"I want to study the results of your test over the weekend and I would like to see you Monday," he said to the patient.
"Okay, Doc. I am going to a stag party tomorrow night. Any chance I might borrow those dirty pictures of yours?"

What he sees he believes is there; and what he sees is not there, it is his projection. What he hears may not be said at all, but one can hear it very clearly, so clearly that it is impossible not to believe in it. Your mind is coloring everything every moment.

Leonora went into a drugstore to buy film. When she came out she was ripping mad. "Rodney, you go into that store and cut that man real good!" she said to her boyfriend.
"Why, honey," asked Rodney, "what happened?"
"I told him I wanted some film," she explained, "and he had the nerve to ask me what was the size of my Brownie!"

You can read something which is not written. You can hear something which is not told. You can see something which does not exist anywhere except in your own imagination. Then words become farther and farther and farther away from the truth. Words are lies: lies in the sense that they are incapable of transferring the real, the existential. In the very transfer it dies.

One poet had gone to the sea early in the morning. It was a beautiful sunrise, and the waves dancing in the early sun, and the cool sand, and the salty air.... He felt so alive, he experienced such exquisite joy, that he wanted to share it with his girlfriend who was in a hospital, who was ill and could not come to the seabeach.
So the poet brought a beautiful box, opened the box to the sunrays, to the wind, closed the box, sealed it from everywhere so nothing escaped out of it, brought the box to the hospital. Tremendously happy he was, and he said to his girlfriend, "I have brought something so beautiful you may not have ever seen. Such a beautiful sunrise, such beautiful waves, such fresh air, such coolness, such freshness!"
And he opened the box and there was nothing -- no sun, no air, no coolness, no freshness.

You cannot catch hold of beauty in a box. You cannot catch hold of beauty, truth, love, in words. They are very poor. But nothing is wrong with them; they are useful in the ordinary world. When you move into the inner you are moving into the extraordinary. If you are alert, they can be

used and they can be used profitably. Yes, lies can become stepping-stones towards truth.

An American G.I. standing outside a cathedral in Paris saw a magnificent wedding procession enter. "Who is the bridegroom?" he asked a Frenchman standing next to him.
"Je ne sais pas," was the reply.
A few minutes later the soldier inspected the interior of the cathedral himself and saw a coffin being carried down the aisle. "Whose funeral?" he demanded of the attendant.
"Je ne sais pas," said the attendant.
"Holy mackerel!" exclaimed the soldier. "He certainly didn't last long!"

Words have to be understood; they have to be understood according to the person who has spoken them. You should not bring your own mind in. You should keep your mind a little out of the way. The more you become capable of keeping your mind out of the way, the more is the possibility that you can use words as stepping-stones. Otherwise words will create a jungle and you will be lost in it.

In Leipzig, where one third of all street names have been changed since the Russian occupation, trolley conductors are required to call out both old and new names to make it easier for visitors to find their way.
The other day, the conductor of a car passing through the center of the city made the required announcement: "Karl Marx Square, formerly Augustus Square."

A passenger about to alight shouted back, "Auf Wiedersehen, formerly Heil Hitler!"

The second question:
BELOVED MASTER,
WOULD YOU PLEASE EXPLAIN THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN CONDITIONING AND DISCIPLINE?

Prem Dharmendra, there is a great difference. They are totally different dimensions, and not only different but diametrically opposite too. Conditioning is something forced from the outside upon you against your will, against your consciousness. It is to destroy you, it is to manipulate you. It is to create a pseudo personality so that your essential man is lost.
The society is very much afraid of your reality. The church is afraid, the state is afraid, everybody is afraid of your essential person, your essential being, because the essential being is rebellious, intelligent. It cannot be easily reduced to slavery. It cannot be exploited. Nobody can use your essential being as a means; your essential being is an end unto itself.
Hence the whole society tries in every possible way to disconnect you from your essential core, and it creates a false, plastic personality around you and it forces you to become identified with it. That's what it calls education. It is not education; it is mis-education. It is destructive, it is violent.
This whole society, up to now, has been very violent with the individual. It does not believe in the individual; it is against the individual. It tries in every possible way to

destroy you for its own purposes. It needs clerks, it needs stationmasters, deputy-collectors, policemen, magistrates, it needs soldiers. It does not need human beings.
We have failed, up to now, in creating a society which needs human beings, simple human beings.
The society is interested that you should be more skillful, more productive, and less creative. It wants you to function like a machine, efficiently, but it does not want you to become awakened. It does not want buddhas and christs -- Socrates, Pythagoras, Lao Tzu. No, these people are not needed at all by the society. If sometimes they happen, they don't happen because of the society; they happen in spite of the society.
It is a miracle how a few people have been able sometimes to escape from this great prison. The prison is so great, it is so difficult to escape out of it. And even in escaping from one prison you will enter into another because the whole earth has become a prison. You can become a Mohammedan from a Hindu or you can become a Christian from a Mohammedan or you can become a Hindu from a Christian, but you are simply changing your prison. You can become a German from being an Indian or you can become a Chinese from being an Italian, but you are simply changing prisons -- political, religious, social prisons.
Maybe for a few days the new prison would look like freedom -- only because of its newness; otherwise it is not freedom.
Free society is still an idea that has to be materialized.
This whole slavery of man depends on conditioning. And conditioning starts even when you are in your mother's womb. Now they have found ways to condition the child in

the mother's womb. In Russia they have developed certain kinds of belts which the pregnant woman can wear. Those belts press certain points in the growing child's brain and that pressure will create a robot. He will be born like a machine. He will be always obedient, faithful to the state, faithful to communism, faithful to the communist holy trinity -- or unholy trinity -- Marx, Engels, Lenin. He will believe in DAS KAPITAL, just as others believe in the Bible. Nobody reads the Bible, nobody reads DAS KAPITAL.

I have met many communists; I have not seen a single communist who has read DAS KAPITAL from the beginning to the end. Everybody has a copy. Russian books are so cheap and they look so good, they are bound so beautifully, that you can decorate your drawing room with Russian books. But nobody reads them, just like no Hindu reads the Vedas. There is nothing much to read either.

But conditioning starts from the mother's womb or, at the most, the moment you are born. You are circumcised and you become a Jew. You are baptized and you become a Christian, and so on, so forth. You are taken to the church and to the temple and to the mosque, and you are being brought up in a certain atmosphere where you will find all are Mohammedans or all are Christians or all are Hindus. And naturally the child is bound to follow the people who are around him.

By the time he is twenty-five and comes back from the university he is utterly conditioned, and so deeply conditioned that he will not be even aware of the conditioning. Everything has been fed into his biocomputer. And the society punishes those who are

reluctant, resistant to these conditionings. It rewards those, with gold medals, prizes, even Nobel Prizes; it rewards those who are very willing to be slaves, who are willing to serve the vested interests.

Holston was hired as a ranch hand in Texas. One day he approached Davis, the foreman. "What do you do for fun here on the prairie?"
"Well," replied the foreman, "we got a Mexican cook on the ranch and every Saturday night we dress him in women's clothes and six of us take him dancing."
"Not me!" declared Holston. "I don't go for that kind of stuff."
"Neither does the Mex," says Davis, "that's why it takes six of us."

And it is not only a question of sex. The whole society, millions of people around you, are conditioning you, knowingly, unknowingly. They have been conditioned. They may not be aware that they are destructive and violent. They may be thinking that they are being helpful to you. They may be thinking that they are doing all this great service to you out of compassion, because they love humanity. They have been conditioned so deeply that they are unaware what they are doing to their children.
The teachers, the lecturers, the professors, they are the instruments, subtle instruments of conditioning people. The priests, the psychoanalysts, they are very clever and very efficient people at conditioning; they know the whole strategy of it. They know how to manipulate, distort, how

to give you a pseudo personality and take away your essential core.

Discipline is totally different. Discipline is out of your own choice; it is out of your own will. Discipline, the very word, comes from a root which means learning. Discipline means you start learning on your own, because nobody seems to teach you the truth. People are interested in teaching you Hinduism, communism, Mohammedanism; nobody is interested in teaching you the truth. When you start seeking, searching, learning, on your own -- knowing perfectly well that nobody is going to support you, you have to go alone -- discipline begins.

Discipline is your protection against conditioning. Discipline is your effort to get rid of all conditioning. Discipline is your rebellion, your revolution.

To be a disciple simply means to be with a man who is not going to condition you. A master is one who unconditions you. That is the definition of a true master: one who UNconditions you, simply unconditions you, and does not REcondition you.

That is one of the objections against me raised in India and in other countries, too: that I am giving people so much freedom that they will misuse it. I know that freedom can be misused if it is not rooted in meditation, but freedom is such a supreme value that even if there is a risk of misuse, it HAS to be given. Slavery can never be misused by the slave because he is not his own master; then too, it is slavery and is continuously being misused by those who are in power. Slavery is a sin, and howsoever decorated, it is ugly. Freedom can be misused, but it is better to misuse

freedom than to be a slave, because you cannot misuse freedom for long.

Freedom -- its use and misuse both -- gives insight. One learns only through mistakes. That is the way of maturity. Maybe in the interim period, when for the first time you come out of the prison, you may misuse your freedom for a little while. You may drink too much, eat too much, but for how long?

And this freedom that a master gives is given through making you more conscious, more aware. And that is the safety valve: the more you are aware, the less is the possibility of misusing freedom -- because misusing it will be suicidal.

Discipline is that which you accept on your own. You are not forced to be a sannyasin; a deep longing arises in you. Something hidden in you takes the challenge. Some seed sprouts... you hear some unheard music... you become attracted to some unknown, mysterious force. But the decision is always yours; it is not imposed on you. YOU decide that you would like to learn, that you would like to seek and search. Out of that longing for truth, discipline begins.

And you are always free to stop. You are always free to drop out of sannyas. You are always free not to be related to me anymore. The guards on the gate are for outsiders so that they cannot enter inside unless they are ready; the guards are not for the insiders to prevent them from leaving. That is the difference. In a jail the guards are for the insiders so that they cannot get out.

Here there are guards, but they are not for the insiders. If somebody wants to get out he gets out with all my

blessings. It was his decision to be in; it is his decision to drop out of it. He is a free soul. It is nobody else's business to impose anything upon him.
Dharmendra, discipline comes out of your own inner feel, out of your own love. It is surrender but it is not a slavery. It is a surrender but not a slavery because YOU are doing it. If it is forced, then it is slavery, then it is conditioning. Avoid all conditioning situations. Avoid people who condition you, even though they say it is for your own sake; even though they say it is for your own good, beware of all those poisoners. They have done enough harm to humanity. It is because of these people that real humanity has not yet been born.
My whole effort here is to bring a new human being on the earth: free, alert, conscious, responsible, doing things according to his own inner feelings, likings, leanings, not serving somebody else's purpose, living his life according to his own light.

The third question:
BELOVED MASTER,
WHAT IS YOUR OPINION ABOUT COMMUNISM?

Nagesh, I will not waste my time in giving you my opinion about communism. The whole thing is rubbish, but I will tell you five stories.

The first story:
"Who is your father?" a schoolboy was asked by Khrushchev when he was in charge of Soviet Russia.
"Nikita Khrushchev is my father," replied the lad.

"And who is your mother?"
"The Communist Party."
"Very good. Now tell me, what would you like to be when you grow up?"
"An orphan," replied the child.

The second:
At a Russian factory, workers were asked to choose a new workers' committee by secret ballot. Each man, upon approaching the ballot box, was handed a sealed envelope and told to deposit it through the slot at the top of a cardboard box.
Vasili slit open the envelope and began to examine the ballot.
"Hey," shouted a supervisor. "You can't do that."
"But I want to know who I'm voting for," explained the worker.
"You must be mad," claimed the supervisor. "Don't you realize that the ballot is secret in the Soviet Union?"

The third:
An amateur radio ham went delirious with excitement when he caught a newscast straight from Moscow on his set.
"Our great athlete, Ivan Ivanovitch," the announcer was saying, "has just smashed all existing records for the two-hundred-yard dash, the mile run, the five-mile run, and the one-hundred-mile run, overcoming a blizzard, a range of mountains, and complete lack of water. Unfortunately Ivanovitch's fantastic performance was in vain. He was captured and brought back to Russia."

The fourth:
When Stalin's body was removed from the Lenin mausoleum in Red Square and buried near the Kremlin walls, a small boy asked his grandmother, "What kind of man was Lenin?"
"Lenin was a very great man," she said.
"And what kind of man was Stalin?" asked the child.
"Sometimes he was a very evil man," said the old woman.
"Babushka, what kind of man is Leonid Brezhnev?"
"It is difficult to say, child," replied the grandmother. "When he dies, we will find out."

The fifth and the last:
At a Communist Party convention, one of the delegates kept yelling, "Long live Brezhnev!"
The chairman tried to hush him saying, "Remember you used to yell 'Long live Khrushchev!'"
"Right," said the delegate. "And is he living?"

The fourth question:
BELOVED MASTER,
I CANNOT BELIEVE THAT A MAN LIKE JESUS CAN COMMIT MISTAKES. LISTENING TO YOU SAY THAT, I WAS VERY MUCH HURT.

Ronald, this is conditioning. You have been told -- centuries of conditioning is behind it -- that a man like Jesus cannot commit any mistake. Why? If you cannot believe it, you cannot believe that Jesus is human either. To err is human. Yes, he will not commit the same mistake again, that's true. To commit the same mistake again is

stupid; it is not human, it is simply stupid. But to commit a mistake is the only way in life to learn. Once it is perfectly okay to commit a mistake, and commit it with total awareness.

If it is a mistake you know it, and you know it so deeply and perfectly that you will never commit it again. But a man learns through committing mistakes. There is no other way of learning. If a man never commits a mistake he will never grow up. Jesus is a human being. Of course it is only through growing up that one day he becomes a divine flame. He was committing mistakes even to the very last. My own understanding is that he became Christ only at the last moment on the cross. Just before he became a christ, a buddha, he committed the final and the last mistake, but he learned immediately. He must have been so aware even on the cross.

The last mistake was that when he was crucified he shouted at God, "Have you forsaken me?" This is distrust, this is doubt, this is a mistake; one of the greatest that a man can commit -- and a man like Jesus. But this is the last. "Why am I being tortured, what wrong have I committed?" He was complaining, he could not believe his own eyes that this was happening to him. He must have thought deep down -- somewhere a little part of his being must have remained unconscious, and in that dark corner this longing must have remained like a seed -- that "At the last moment God is going to save me. He will do a miracle and the whole world will know that I am the only begotten Son of God." Some unconscious longing... but even if a small part of your being remains unconscious you are not yet a christ.

From where comes this complaint, "Why have you forsaken me?" A great doubt arises, overwhelms him, because this is the last moment: if the miracle is not going to happen he is finished. But he must have been a man of rare awareness. He recognized it immediately, he saw the dark point, he saw the unconscious point. He became relaxed and he said, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done. Don't take any note of my complaint, I was foolish to say so. Whatsoever is your will is my will. There is no point in saying, 'Have you forsaken me?' If this is what you want, then this is what should happen. Then this is the miracle and I should not ask for anything else. I should not have a separate will of my own."

The moment he said, "Thy will be done," he dropped his separate will. Just a small part of his being must have remained, some hidden subtle ego must have remained lurking somewhere. With the disappearance of that ego he became a flame of light. He became a buddha.

You cannot believe that a man like Jesus can commit mistakes because you cannot believe that Jesus is a man like you. And unless you believe that Jesus is a man like you, you cannot believe the other part of the story, that you are as divine as Jesus.

Remember these are two sides of the same coin. If you can believe Jesus is a man just like you, then you can also believe that you have the same potential as Jesus. If he can become a christ you can become a christ too.

A little introduction for a joke. This is an Italian story, the story of Pinocchio.

A carpenter, named Gepetto, is feeling very lonely and wishes to have a child. With some sticks of wood he creates a puppet -- with a red hat and a very pointed nose -- and calls it Pinocchio. Hardly has he finished it when Pinocchio kicks him in the leg -- and with this kick Gepetto realizes that this "son" will give him only trouble.
In fact, Pinocchio asks immediately for something to eat, and Gepetto, though very poor, manages to find some food for him and goes to bed himself without dinner. Pinocchio, without even thanking him, goes out, and this way for years he tortures his creator. He goes on doing one mischief after another until finally he is swallowed by a whale in the ocean.
Now forget this introduction as if I have not told you at all; only then will you understand the joke. I had to tell it to you; without it you would not understand the joke -- and that I have to tell you. Now forget all about it. I have not said any introduction to you.
Now the joke....

After forty years of hard work an old carpenter dies and goes to heaven. When he gets to the Pearly Gates he knocks on the door. Saint Peter opens it and says, "Yes?"
The old carpenter explains, "I am an old carpenter. I have worked hard for forty years, I never did any harm to anyone, and I am here for my reward."
Saint Peter replies, "I don't know about that. Wait here for a minute and I will go and get some information on you."
He goes inside and is about to talk to the boss, God, when he runs into Jesus. Jesus says, "Why are you all excited?"

So Peter tells him the whole story: an old carpenter, worked hard for forty years, never did any harm to anyone.
Jesus listens to the story with mounting interest and asks, "Did he have white hair?"
Peter says, "Yes!"
"Little pixie eyeglasses with chromium frames?"
"Yes!"
"About so tall? Wearing a waistcoat, a little paunchy?"
"Yes, yes, yes!" says Peter.
Jesus runs to the Pearly Gates, throws open the door, takes a look at the little old man and cries at the top of his lungs, "Daddy!"
And the carpenter looks at him and joyously exclaims, "Pinocchio!"

The fifth question:
BELOVED MASTER,
IS THIS A BLESSING? AFTER BEING ALONE FOR A LONG TIME, I FELL IN LOVE WITH THREE WOMEN AT THE SAME TIME, WHICH WAS EASY IN THE BEGINNING. BUT AS SOON AS I STARTED TO GET INTO A DEEPER RELATIONSHIP WITH ONE, EITHER I RAN TO THE NEXT ONE OR SHE WANTED TO BE WITH SOMEONE ELSE. OF COURSE THE SAME HAPPENED AGAIN AS SOON AS I GOT IN TUNE WITH ONE OF THE OTHER WOMEN. SO JOY AND SUFFERING ARE PRETTY CLOSE TOGETHER, BUT I WONDER -- AM I AVOIDING SOMETHING?

Prem Aditya, don't you think three are more than enough? Do you think you are avoiding the fourth? One woman is

enough to create hell, and you are asking me, "Is this a blessing?" It must be a curse in disguise.

"What has happened to Jack? I have not seen him for ages."
"Oh, he married the girl he rescued from drowning."
"And is he happy?"
"Rather! But he hates water now."

You must be a great soul -- either so unconscious that even three women cannot create any trouble for you, or so enlightened that "Who cares?"

While riding home from work one evening, three commuters became friendly in the club car and, after the third round, they began to brag about the relative merits of their respective marital relationships. The first proudly proclaimed, "My wife meets my train every evening and we've been married for ten years."
"That's nothing," scoffed the second. "My wife meets me every evening, too, and we've been married for seventeen years."
"Well, I have got you both beat, fellows," said the third commuter, who was obviously the youngest in the group.
"How do you figure that?" the first fellow wanted to know.
"I suppose you have got a wife who meets you every evening, too!" sneered the second.
"That's right," said the third commuter, "and I'm not even married."

Three women, and you are not even married! They will make a football of you. And you are asking, "Is this a

blessing?" -- with a question mark of course. Be a little more careful. This is a dangerous place for people like you, Aditya. There are so many women here and if you go on like this soon nothing will be left of you, and I will lose unnecessarily a sannyasin. Think of me too.

Weinstein, a very wealthy businessman, had an unattractive daughter. He found a young man to marry her and after ten years they had two children.
Weinstein called his son-in-law into the office one day.
"Listen," he said, "you have given me two beautiful grandchildren, you have made me very happy. I am gonna give you forty-nine percent of the business."
"Thank you, Pop!"
"Is there anything else I could do for you?"
"Yeah, buy me out!"

I am ready to buy you out whatsoever the price. You just inquire of the three women!
Love is significant, a good learning situation, but only a learning situation. One school is enough, three schools are too many. And with three women you will not be able to learn much, you will be in such a turmoil. It is better to be with one, so that you can be more totally one with her, so that you can understand her and your own longings more clearly, so you are less clouded, less in anguish, because love in the beginning is only an unconscious phenomenon; it is biological, it is nothing very precious. Only when you bring your awareness to it, when you become more and more meditative about it, it starts becoming precious, it starts soaring high.

Intimacy with one woman or one man is better than having many superficial relationships. Love is not a seasonal flower, it takes years to grow. And only when it grows does it go beyond biology, and start having something of the spiritual in it. Just being with many women or many men will keep you superficial -- entertained maybe, but superficial; occupied certainly, but that occupation is not going to help in inward growth. But a one-to-one relationship, a sustained relationship so that you can understand each other more closely, is tremendously beneficial. Why is it so? And what is the need to understand the woman or the man?

The need is because every man has a feminine part in his being, and every woman has a masculine part in her being. The only way to understand it, the easiest way to understand it, the most natural way to understand it is to be in deep, intimate relationship with someone. If you are a man be in a deep, intimate relationship with a woman. Let trust grow so all barriers dissolve. Come so close to each other that you can look deep into the woman and the woman can look deep into you. Don't be dishonest with each other.

And if you are having so many relationships you will be dishonest, you will be lying continually. You will have to lie, you will have to be insincere, you will have to say things which you don't mean -- and they all will suspect. It is very difficult to create trust with a woman if you are having some other relationship. It is easy to deceive a man because he lives through the intellect; it is very difficult, almost impossible to deceive a woman because she lives intuitively. You will not be able to look directly into her

eyes; you will be afraid that she may start reading your soul, and so many deceptive things you are hiding, so many dishonesties.

So if you are having many relationships you will not be able to dive deep into the psyche of the woman. And that is the only thing that is needed: to know your own inner feminine part. Relationship becomes a mirror. The woman starts looking into you and starts finding her own masculine part; the man looks into the woman and starts discovering his own femininity. And the more you become aware of your feminine -- the other pole -- the more whole you can be, the more integrated you can be. When your inner man and your inner woman have disappeared into each other, have become dissolved into each other, when they are no longer separate, when they have become one integrated whole, you have become an individual.

Carl Gustav Jung calls it the process of individuation. He is right, he has chosen the right word for it. And the same happens to a woman. But playing with many people will keep you superficial, entertained, occupied, but not growing; and the only thing that matters ultimately is growth, growth of integration, individuality, growth of a center in you. And that growth needs that you should know your other part. The easiest approach is to know the woman on the outside first, so that you can know the woman inside.

Just like a mirror -- the mirror reflects your face, it shows you your face -- the woman becomes your mirror, the man becomes your mirror. The other reflects your face, but if you are having so many mirrors around you and running

from one mirror to another and deceiving each mirror about the other you will be in a chaos, you will go nuts.

The sixth question:
BELOVED MASTER,
WHAT IS WRONG WITH KNOWING MORE AND MORE ABOUT GOD? CAN IT NOT HELP THE SEEKER?

Kamalesh, knowing and knowledge are different. I am all for knowing and I am all against knowledge. Knowing is your insight, it is your capacity to see, it is philosia. Knowledge is philosophy. It is not your capacity to see, it is just your capacity to memorize what others have said. How is it going to help, knowing about God? A blind man can know about light; how is it going to help? A deaf man can know about music, he can read about music, he can even read music, but how it is going to help? It is not going to help at all. The danger is that the blind man may start thinking that he knows so much about light that he must be knowing light itself. And that's what happens to the knowledgeable people.
Knowing about God, they start thinking that they know God. To know love is one thing; to know about love is totally another. To know God is a transformation of your being; to know about God needs no transformation. You can just go to the library and collect information. You can go to the pundits and the scholars and accumulate information.
You ask me, "Can it not help the seeker?"

No, not at all. It will hinder. The seeker has to be empty, unprejudiced. The seeker has to be without any idea of what God is, or truth is. If he has some idea, the danger is he will project his idea on the existence and he will think that he has come to know the truth. Truth can be known only when you are utterly empty, when there is nothing to distort or project inside you; when you are so silent that you are only receptive, not projective. In total receptivity truth is known.
Meditation is nothing but an effort to cleanse your mind of knowledge. Knowledge is dust that has gathered on the mirror of your being; it has to be cleaned.

A naked girl is standing, speaking endlessly to a naked man kneeling and embracing her belly, later lying supine at her feet. She says, "My life is empty... it is a mockery... I am nothing -- just a facade -- a shell... a dead and useless thing! I am twenty-six years old... and I have never had a meaningful relationship... never had a truly meaningful relationship.... I should not even admit that, I suppose. It is very humiliating! I have passed from one shallow sexual episode to another. That's the story of my entire life... one tawdry, shallow, clutching incident after another. My relationships have no deep, lasting significance -- if I could just ONCE lie down and have something meaningful happen!"
The man replies, from the floor, "Have you ever tried talking less... and lying down SOONER?"

People go on talking and talking about God. Better to be silent, better not to say anything but to sit. You don't know;

it is better not to hide your ignorance in big words, in spiritual jargon. To know that "I don't know" is a great step towards real knowing. To know that "I know" without knowing is going astray, is going farther and farther away. Truth asks only one thing: Be silent, so that you can listen, so that you can hear the still, small voice within.

The seventh question:
BELOVED MASTER,
WHY DO I CRY AT THE SUTRAS AND NOT LAUGH AT THE JOKES? IS IT BECAUSE I AM BLOCKED OR BRITISH? I KNOW THERE IS NO QUESTION. THE TRUTH IS THAT I WANT TO COME CLOSER.

Sagaro, feel blessed if you are blocked, because if you are British there is no remedy. I have not heard of any therapy that can help. Blocked persons can be unblocked. Encounter will do, Primal Therapy will do, Gestalt will do, and we have here at least ninety groups.
But if you are British, then I am helpless; then nothing can be done about it. To be British is like cancer: no remedy has been discovered yet. Then you will have to wait for the future. But I hope that you are not British; otherwise you would not have been here.
Sometimes British people come here.... Anurag's mother has come, she is British. For weeks she has been here, and she has come only to one lecture, yesterday. And what was her response to it? Her response was that I confirmed her ideas.
Just being here and being a sannyasin is enough proof that you are not British. And don't be worried: if you can cry at

the sutras, this is a good beginning. Sooner or later you will start laughing at the jokes -- because a person who can cry, can laugh. The real problem is with those people who cannot cry; they cannot laugh either.
These are not two different things, they are the same. Crying and laughter are deeply related. Whenever you are overwhelmed by something, either you cry or you laugh. Crying is not necessarily sad, laughter is not necessarily joyous. Sometimes crying is a joy, sometimes laughter is ugly and maybe just a device to hide your sadness.
Remember one thing: it is only man who can cry and laugh. No other animal can do it, because no other animal is conscious enough to feel overwhelmed. Only man has that much consciousness that he can feel overwhelmed, flooded with something so much that either he starts crying or he starts laughing -- and both capacities are tremendously needed.
Crying will help you to relieve your tensions, laughter will help you to dance, to sing. Both are interlinked. Crying prepares the way for laughter: your tears will cleanse your heart, and then laughter will arise. If the first process has started the second is not far away.

The eighth question:
BELOVED MASTER,
THE OTHER DAY YOU SAID THAT THE OLD PEOPLE BECOME CUNNING. WHAT ARE YOUR GROUNDS FOR SAYING SO?

Kumarel, I am a crazy person. I don't say things because there are grounds to say them. I simply say something

because I enjoy saying it. I cannot give you any proofs and I am never interested in proofs, but I can tell you a story. Those who understand, for them this will be a proof; and for those who don't understand, nothing can ever be a proof. I stated a simple phenomenon; no proofs are needed. Just watch, just watch yourself and others.

As you are growing older, if you don't start growing in awareness, you are bound to become cunning. These are the only two alternatives: either you become wise or you become cunning. If you don't become wise, you will have to become cunning. Cunning is a substitute for wisdom. Either become a buddha or you are bound to become cunning. And very few people become buddhas; others are out of necessity cunning. Life teaches them to be more cunning than others because it is such a struggle for survival and only the cunning ones survive.

Charles Darwin says that the fittest survive. That is not my observation. Not the fittest but the most cunning survive -- unless Darwin means by the fittest, the most cunning. Man is the most cunning animal; he is not the fittest, certainly not. Try to fight with a monkey and you will know who is fittest. Try to run with a horse and you will know who is fittest. Try to fly like a bird and you will know who is fittest. Try to see in the night like an owl and you will know who is fittest. You just look around: you are not the fittest animal on the earth. In fact man is the most unfit animal, the weakest.

Look at the human child. Can the human child survive without the support of the society and the family? But animal children survive; they are born more perfect. It is only man's child who seems to be prematurely born, as if

he needed at least nine months more in the womb. But the problem is that if he lives eighteen months in the womb then he cannot come out; it will be too late, he will be too big. So he comes out, but utterly helpless. The human child is helpless, weak; he has to be taught.
In fact he becomes of any worth only after twenty-five years -- that is one third of his life. He needs preparation to be worthy enough to compete in the world. Then why has man survived and all other animals have either disappeared or are disappearing? They have all been defeated for the simple reason that man is the most cunning. Because of his cunningness he could invent; he does not have strength enough to fight with any animal but he could invent weapons. He has not the strength to tear an animal apart just with his bare hands, but he has invented swords. Swords are nothing but magnified nails. He cannot use his teeth to kill so he has invented many things to kill. He is the most cunning, and as the centuries have passed he has become more and more cunning.

A farmer bought a new rooster for his chicken coop. He already had a rooster, but he felt it was getting too old to service all his chickens, of which he had quite a few. When the farmer introduced the new rooster to all his chickens, the old rooster came up to the newcomer and arranged a meeting for later that night after the farmer went to bed.
"Listen," exclaimed the old rooster at the meeting that night, "that farmer thinks I'm too old to service all his chickens, but that's not true. I've still got a few good years

left and I don't want to become the family's Sunday dinner prematurely. So let's make a deal!"
The deal that the old rooster had in mind was that the two roosters would get into a make-believe fight which would end up with the young rooster chasing the old-timer around the coop pretending not to be able to catch him. The noise of this make-believe altercation would bring out the farmer who would see the old rooster running faster than the new one and thus spare the old stud from the knife for a few years at least.
For doing this, the young rooster would get to fuck all the pretty chickens. The deal was made.
The next day the action started, with all the chickens squawking and the roosters cock-a-doodaling. The farmer came out and spied the new rooster chasing the old one. Picking up his rifle he shot the young rooster dead and exclaimed, "Goddamn! That is the third faggot rooster I've shot this week."

The last question:
BELOVED MASTER,
IS REPRESSION ALWAYS BAD?

Prasado, absolutely bad, always bad, with no exceptions bad. Repression simply means you don't understand your life energies. Repression means you are forcing your life energies into the unconscious, throwing them into the basement of your being. There they will go on growing, there they will go on boiling, and sooner or later the explosion. That's why so many people go mad.

Madness is the outcome of repression. That's why so many people are mentally ill -- even if not mad, mentally disturbed -- all over the world. In America they say that out of four, three persons are mentally disturbed. And don't think that is so only for America; the only difference between America and other countries is that America has the latest data, that's all. If you want to know about India you cannot know anything because there is no data available. And America is more honest: if you ask a person anything he will answer it more sincerely than an Indian. The Indian may be sexually boiling within but from his outside he will always keep that holier-than-thou look. He will not be sincere. You cannot find real figures in India about anything. If you ask any woman, "Have you ever fancied any other man except your husband?" she will say, "No. Never. Not only in this life but in no other life either. And not only in the past, in the future also, I am going to cling to this man." Now this is patent nonsense.

Unless you are utterly a rock inside it is impossible not to fancy someone once in a while, not to be attracted. If you have sensibility, sensitivity, intelligence, it is natural to be attracted once in a while. That does not mean that you are committing a sin; that simply means that you understand what beauty is. That simply means that you are observing life all around you.

It is very difficult to find any data in India. America in that way is the most sincere country in the world. They will say whatsoever is the case. Three persons are mentally ill out of four, and in India my own observation is that four are mentally ill out of four -- but they are blissfully unaware of it.

Repression of any kind is destructive to the body, to the mind, to the soul. Energies have to be transformed, not repressed. Energies are your potential wealth, raw; you have to polish them, then they can become great diamonds. These same energies, sexual energies, can become your spiritual liberation. Repressed you will be in a bondage.
I am not saying to become indulgent; that is going to the other extreme. Buddha will also not support your indulgence. He is absolutely for the middle way, the golden mean. Neither be repressive nor be indulgent. Be watchful, be alert; be friendly to your energies, sympathetic. They are your energies; don't create a rift, otherwise you will always be in conflict, and to fight with your own energies is an unnecessary dissipation. Fighting with your own energies, you are fighting with yourself: you cannot win. You will be simply wasting the whole opportunity of life. Be aware, don't repress, don't indulge. Be aware, be natural. Let energies be accepted and absorbed, and then the same energies, crude energies, become so refined, passing through awareness, that great flowers bloom in your being -- lotuses of enlightenment.
Unless that happens you will never feel at home in existence, you will never feel blissful, you will never feel what God is, you will never feel what nirvana is, what liberation is.

When a young nun comes to tell the mother superior that she has sinned with a man and wishes to do penance so she can be forgiven, the mother superior begins packing a suitcase.

"Oh, please don't put me out!" the young nun cries. "Where will I go? What will I do?"
"I'm not putting you out," says the mother superior grimly, "it's me that's leaving. For thirty years here it's been nothing but fucking and forgiving, fucking and forgiving. Beginning now, I'm through doing the forgiving, and I'm going to get in on some of the fucking before it's too late."

Enough for today.

The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 9

Talks given from 11/02/80 am to 20/02/80 am
English Discourse series
10 Chapters
Year published: 1990
The original tape and book title was "The Book of the Books, Vols 1 - 6". Later reissued as twelve volumes under the present title.

The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 9
Chapter #1
Chapter title: Be on guard
11 February 1980 am in Buddha Hall

FOR IF IN YOUR RENUNCIATION

YOU ARE RECKLESS AND BREAK YOUR WORD,
IF YOUR PURPOSE WAVERS,
YOU WILL NOT FIND THE LIGHT.

DO WHAT YOU HAVE TO DO
RESOLUTELY, WITH ALL YOUR HEART.
THE TRAVELER WHO HESITATES
ONLY RAISES DUST ON THE ROAD.

IT IS BETTER TO DO NOTHING
THAN TO DO WHAT IS WRONG.
FOR WHATEVER YOU DO, YOU DO TO YOURSELF.

LIKE A BORDER TOWN WELL GUARDED,
GUARD YOURSELF WITHIN AND WITHOUT.
LET NOT A SINGLE MOMENT PASS
LEST YOU FALL INTO DARKNESS.

FEEL SHAME ONLY WHERE SHAME IS DUE.
FEAR ONLY WHAT IS FEARFUL.
SEE EVIL ONLY IN WHAT IS EVIL.
LEST YOU MISTAKE THE TRUE WAY
AND FALL INTO DARKNESS.

SEE WHAT IS.
SEE WHAT IS NOT.
FOLLOW THE TRUE WAY.
RISE.

Gautama the Buddha has given to the world the most psychological religion. It is incomparable; no other religion

even comes close to it. Its heights, its depths, are tremendous. And the reason why Buddha succeeded in giving such a beautiful vision of life is very simple: he did not believe; he inquired, he explored. He did not believe in the tradition, he did not believe in the scriptures, he did not believe in the priests.

This was one of his fundamentals: that unless you know, you don't know. You can borrow knowledge, you can become knowledgeable, well informed, a scholar, a pundit, a professor, but you will not be a seer. Deep down the ignorance will persist and will affect your life. Deep down you will remain the same childish self, immature, ungrounded, uncentered, unintegrated. You will not be an individual, you won't have any authenticity. You will be pseudo, false, phony.

It is a quantum leap into the unknown. When you don't believe in the tradition, when you don't believe in the scriptures, when you don't believe in anything except your own experience, you are going into the unknown all alone. It needs guts, it needs courage. And only a courageous person can be truly religious.

Cowards are there in the churches, in the temples, in the mosques in millions, but they don't create any religious beauty, any religious fragrance in the world. They don't make the world more beautiful, more alive, more sensitive. They don't create anything. They only go on doing formalities, rituals. They themselves are dead and they go on deceiving others; they themselves are deceived. Borrowed knowledge creates great deception because you start feeling as if you know -- and that "as if" is a big "as if."

Truth liberates, belief binds. Truth liberates because it has to be yours; it has to be an inner experience, an encounter with that which is.

Buddha is a nonbeliever. He is not an atheist like Karl Marx or Friedrich Nietzsche; neither is he a theist like all the priests of all the religions. He is an agnostic. He neither believes nor disbelieves; he is open. That is his great gift to the world: to be open to truth.

Go utterly naked, without any conclusions, without any ideology, any prejudice. Otherwise there is every possibility that you will project your own idea. You will not see that which is, you will see only that which you want to see. You will be creating your own reality which is bound to be false. Reality has not to be invented, it has to be discovered. It is already there. And remember, it is not the reality which is hidden, it is your eyes which are covered with layers of dust.

Buddha gave to the world a nonmetaphysical religion, a psychological religion. He simply helps you to go beyond mind. He helps you to understand the mind because it is only through understanding that transcendence happens.

But when I say that Buddha has given the most psychological religion to the world, don't misunderstand me. He has not given a psychology; he has given a psychological religion which is a totally different phenomenon. He has not given a psychology like Sigmund Freud, Carl Gustav Jung, Adler, Pavlov, Skinner, etcetera. These people are confined to the mind; they think mind is all. There is nothing beyond the mind, so analyze the mind. If you have found the truth of the mind you have found the

truth, according to them. That is beginning with a wrong attitude.

Man is neither the body nor the mind. Man is the awareness within which can look at the body, which can look at the mind, which is capable of witnessing all. You are the witness.

Hence I say, Buddha has not given a psychology. A psychology is a very ordinary phenomenon. It does not bring transformation to your life because it cannot bring any transcendence. At the most it helps you to be a little more adjusted to yourself and to the world that surrounds you, to the society, to the people with whom you have to live. It helps you to become a little more adjusted.

Psychology is basically orthodox; it is not revolutionary, it cannot be. It serves the status quo, it serves the establishment. It keeps you within the boundaries; it does not help you to go beyond the boundaries. It is not in your service. It is controlled by those who are in power -- by the state, by the church, by the society. In a very disguised way it keeps you tethered to the collective mind. It does not help you to become an individual, because to be an individual is to be rebellious, to be an individual is to go on your own, to be an individual is to be a danger to the society. Capitalist, communist, whatsoever the society is -- Hindu, Christian, Mohammedan -- it doesn't matter; the individual is a danger because the individual tries to live out of his own light. He does not follow anybody. He is not a follower, he is not an imitator.

Buddha gives a psychological religion. Religion means he helps you to understand the mind so that you can go beyond it -- not so that you can become adjusted to the

collective but so that you can rise to the heights of your individuality, to the peaks of your destiny.

Psychology believes that man lacks meaning in his life and meaning can come only through therapy. Psychology in essence means meaning through therapy. And religion is just the opposite; religion means therapy through meaning. Religion gives you meaning first and then automatically the meaning becomes a healing force, it becomes therapeutic. Buddha says again and again that, "I am a healer," that "I am a physician," that "My function is not that of a philosopher but that of a physician. I help people to become healthier, to become whole." And what is his process? His process is to impart meaning to your life. That too he does in a profoundly new way; it has never been done before like that. He does not give you an arbitrary meaning because the arbitrary meaning will be seen sooner or later to be arbitrary, and the moment it collapses you will fall into deep darkness. The darkness will be far darker than it was before. Now you have lost meaning. You will feel suicidal; you will not feel life is worth living at all. Even breathing will become hard, difficult. The question will arise: Why? Why should I go on living if there is no meaning?

Buddha does not give you any arbitrary meaning. Hence I say he has no metaphysics. He helps you to discover the intrinsic meaning of your life. He does not give you meaning, but he gives you methods and means to discover the meaning that you are already carrying within yourself like a seed.

Psychologists go on saying: First seek ye the kingdom of Freud, Jung, Adler, Pavlov, Skinner and company, and then

all else shall be added unto you. It never happens; it has never happened yet to a single individual. It can't happen in the very nature of things. Even Freud knows no meaning, lives without meaning, lives deep down in despair. He says that there is no hope for man, that man can never be happy, it is impossible. It must be his own understanding, his own experience of life. He says that at the most we can help man to be less miserable, that's all. What kind of goal is this? -- helping man to be a little less miserable! It is not very appealing.

Man needs blissfulness, not less miserableness. Man needs something positive -- something to live for and something to die for, something so full of worth that even life can be sacrificed to it. But it should not be arbitrary. There are many arbitrary meanings.

Adolf Hitler gave Germany an arbitrary meaning: Live for the Aryan race, live for the pure Nordic blood, because you are born to rule the world. He gave great hope, but it flopped. It was bound to happen. He himself committed suicide; that was almost destined.

Religions go on giving false meanings to your life. They go on talking of the other life, the beyond: "After death there is paradise for those who are virtuous and there is hell for those who are not virtuous." And who is virtuous? The person who follows the priest is the virtuous person. The person who does not follow the tradition, the convention, the person who is not a conformist, is bound for hell.

Yes, out of fear and greed you can give a little meaning to life, but it is so arbitrary, so artificial, that there is not a single individual on the earth who is so stupid that sooner or later he will not see the falsity of it.

And now man has come of age; hence religions are disappearing. There is no possibility in the future for Christianity, for Islam, for Hinduism, for Judaism, to exist. And if they want to exist they will have to change their whole outlook, their very foundations.
But there is every possibility for Buddha and his message to prevail. In fact, his day has come. He came twenty-five centuries ahead of his time. Now is the time, the right time for him. He does not talk of fear, he does not talk of greed, he does not talk of hell and heaven, he does not talk even about God. He is so modern, so contemporary; he belongs to our century. Even we are not so contemporary as he is. He destroys all the old structures. He frees religion from all frozen ideologies. He brings many revolutionary changes in the religious outlook.
First he says there is no need to be knowledgeable; one has to be innocent. It is through innocence that the truth is known, not through knowledge.

A neighbor was saying, "Your cat was making an awful noise last night."
The other replied, "You are right. Ever since she ate the canary, she thinks she can sing."

You can go on eating the scriptures; you will not be able to sing at all. You can know all the Vedas, the Upanishads, the Gitas, the Korans, the Bibles, but you will remain as stupid as ever. Of course you will start bragging about your knowledgeability. You will start showing it, you will become an exhibitionist. Even when you don't know anything you will pretend that you know.

Spinster Peabody's proudest possession was Count, her exquisite cat. Unfortunately, he had been missing for two days. When she opened the freezer door, Miss Peabody nearly died of shock. There was Count frozen solid.
She immediately called the priest, who said there still might be a chance to save the poor animal. "Give it two tablespoons of gasoline," he told her.
With trembling hands, Miss Peabody opened Count's mouth and carefully spooned in the priest's strange prescription.
The seconds ticked away and nothing happened. She was about to give up hope when suddenly the cat opened his eyes, let out an ear-piercing screech and shot across the room at a hundred miles per hour, running over the furniture, the walls, even the ceiling. Count kept this up for two minutes and then suddenly stopped dead in his tracks, not moving a muscle.
Miss Peabody called the priest again.
"What do you think happened?" she asked.
"Simple," said the priest. "He ran out of gas."

The priests have all the answers. Ask them anything, any stupid thing. They can't say, "We don't know," that is impossible. The priests have never said that they are ignorant; their whole business depends upon their knowledgeability.
Socrates says: I know only one thing, that I know nothing. That is exactly Buddha's approach too -- and Socrates and Buddha were contemporaries; they have much in common. If Socrates was born in India he would have been called a

buddha. He also trusts innocence, the innocence of a child who knows nothing. If you can become a child again, then only the doors of the mysterious can open for you. You can see. The dust on your eyes is nothing but knowledge, information, scripture.

The psychotherapists are called by people "shrinks"; they are! A psychotherapist's whole effort is to reduce you; he is a reductionist. He studies rats, and whatsoever he comes to know about the rats he applies to you. It is so disgusting, so humiliating, so absurd, illogical! He studies the lowest to know the highest.

You can know nothing of the flower by studying the seed, by dissecting the seed, by analyzing the seed. For thousands of years you can go on analyzing the seed; you will never come across the colors of the rose, the lotus, or the fragrance. You will never know what fragrance was hidden in the seed. Analysis cannot yield it to you.

Studying rats and then applying that knowledge to man is simply saying that man is nothing but a kind of animal, a little more complex maybe, but nothing more than that. Reductionism means always bringing things to "nothing buts."

The real understanding of man is only possible not by studying the rats but by studying the buddhas, the christs, the krishnas -- the highest. By studying the peaks you will know exactly who you are, not by the lowest denominator but by the highest manifestation. When you study a buddha, a great longing arises in you to reach to those heights. When you study rats, then there is no longing. In fact, you feel very satisfied whatsoever you are. In fact, you feel greatly contented that you are a little better than the

rats, a little more complex, a little more clever. You feel gratified. Religion disappears.
Religion lives in your longing to reach to the peaks, to attain to the ultimate heights, to bring your total potential into manifestation, into actuality. Religion is the science of self-actualization.
If a psychotherapist can be called a "shrink," then a real religious person should be called a "stretch." He stretches you to the ultimate possibilities.

Now the sutras:

FOR IF IN YOUR RENUNCIATION
YOU ARE RECKLESS AND BREAK YOUR WORD,
IF YOUR PURPOSE WAVERS,
YOU WILL NOT FIND THE LIGHT.

Buddha will talk again and again about light and darkness; hence those two words have to be understood. They are metaphors. Buddha has to use metaphors. All the buddhas, all the awakened ones, have to use metaphors. The ordinary language is not enough, is very inadequate. When you start expressing something inner you feel the difficulty. The language has no words for it, or even if the words are there they are too small and the experience is too big. The experience cannot be contained in those words, hence the use of the metaphor.
A metaphor simply means, don't cling to the literal meaning of the word. Understand it as a finger pointing to the moon. Don't cling to the literal meaning; otherwise you will be in difficulty because then you will only

misunderstand. A metaphor is a metaphor. It is poetry, it is not prose. You have to be a little poetic, a little imaginative, a little sympathetic to understand it. Literal meaning has been a disaster.
But that's how we always read. Even if we are reading a buddha we try to read him literally. Then light means light and darkness means darkness. That's not so.

Jack was home from college for the holidays. One day he asked his uneducated mother if he could tell her a narrative. His mother, not being used to such big words, asked him the meaning of 'narrative'.
"A narrative is a tale," Jack said.
That night, when going to bed, Jack asked his mother if he might extinguish the light. She wanted to know the meaning of 'extinguish'.
"To put out," Jack said.
A few days later Jack's mother was giving a party at their home, and the cat wandered into the room. Jack's mother raised her voice and said confidently, "Jack, take the cat by the narrative and extinguish him."

Beware of that fallacy.
When Buddha uses the word 'light' he means the state of no-mind, because the state of no-mind is a state of tremendous light, as if thousands of suns have risen simultaneously within your soul. And whenever Buddha says 'darkness' he means the state of mind. Mind is dark; it is a dark night, not even a ray of light. And we all live in the mind, we all live in the dark night, and we have no idea

of the dawn because we never go out of the mind. We cling to the mind. Mind is our blindness.
A man has eyes only when he goes beyond mind. Then he starts seeing things as they are. The mind distorts. The mind never allows you to see reality as it is; it projects. It does not allow the whole reality to penetrate to your heart. It allows only two percent; ninety-eight percent is rejected. And this two percent that is allowed in is distorted in a thousand and one ways -- interpreted, colored -- and by the time it reaches you it is no longer real. So you live in a very unreal world. If you live in the mind you live in dreams, you live in sleep.
So whenever Buddha says 'darkness', he means a state of unconsciousness, a mechanical state in which you function but you are not aware what you are doing, in which you move but your movement has no quality of alertness in it. You talk, you listen, you eat, you walk, you go to sleep, but like a zombie, unconscious. This is darkness.
When you start becoming more aware of what you are doing, of what you are thinking, of what you are feeling, when you become more and more aware, more and more light penetrates you. When you are a hundred percent aware you are full of light.
That's exactly the meaning of the word 'enlightened'. The word 'enlightened' is a translation for the word 'buddha'. Buddha means the enlightened one, the awakened one, the aware one. He says: FOR IF IN YOUR RENUNCIATION YOU ARE RECKLESS AND BREAK YOUR WORD, IF YOUR PURPOSE WAVERS, YOU WILL NOT FIND THE LIGHT.

Renunciation means sannyas. Renunciation can be of two types. The first type -- the wrong type -- is the renunciation that happens through fear or greed. You have been told that if you renounce the world then you will attain the pleasures of heaven. You have been told if you don't renounce you will suffer eternal pain and hell. Many people become afraid of hell and many people become greedy for heaven, and they renounce the world. This is a wrong renunciation. Anything that you do out of fear and greed is bound to be wrong because fear and greed are unconscious states. Out of fear you have dreamed about hell, out of fear you have dreamed about heaven. There is no hell, no heaven. These are all your dreams. When you are not dreaming at all, when the sleep has disappeared and you are awake, there is no heaven, no hell. That state Buddha calls "liberation": liberation from greed, liberation from fear.

And if you act out of awareness, if your renunciation happens out of awareness, it is true renunciation because then you really don't do anything, things start happening. You see something is wrong; it drops, it simply drops. You don't have to make any effort. You see the ugliness of anger and anger evaporates; the very seeing becomes the transformation. You understand your desire and the futility of your desire -- that it cannot be fulfilled, that it is unfulfillable, that you are in a vicious circle. Seeing it -- that you are moving in circles -- you jump out. This is also renunciation, but you don't jump out of desire for another desire: to get into heaven, to avoid hell. You are not jumping out of desire; you are only changing one desire for another. You are exchanging worldly desires with

unworldly desires, but desire is desire. You can change the object, but the nature of desire remains the same.
This is a great contribution of Buddha to religious consciousness. He says: Don't renounce, let renunciation happen. If it happens on its own accord it has a beauty of its own, it has grace, and you never repent, you never look back. If you renounce, if you make effort, your renunciation will bring sadness to you. And many times you will start thinking whether you have done right or wrong. Many times your mind will waver, many times desire for the renounced will again surround you like a cloud. Many times you will be full of lust and greed and fear. Many times the world will attract you again. That is natural.
Hence Buddha says: FOR IF IN YOUR RENUNCIATION YOU ARE RECKLESS AND BREAK YOUR WORD, IF YOUR PURPOSE WAVERS, YOU WILL NOT FIND THE LIGHT.
It can happen only in a wrong kind of renunciation that your purpose wavers, because when you renounce with effort it is always a halfhearted affair. A part of your mind says, "Renounce, because if you don't renounce you will suffer." A part of your mind says, "Don't renounce. Who knows whether there is any life after death or not? And who knows whether renunciation is rewarded or not? Nobody comes back from the other shore to tell the truth. It may be all imagination, it may be all a strategy of the priests. Who knows?"
Doubt is bound to persist, and when doubt is there there is wavering, and when doubt is there you are split. When doubt is there you can never be wholeheartedly into

anything; you remain divided. You can never be an individual, indivisible. And the person who renounces for some motive is renouncing through the mind -- and that is impossible. You cannot renounce through the mind.

Mind is the first thing to be renounced -- and you are trying to use mind for renunciation? Mind will poison everything. It will create new desires in you, it will create new greeds, it will create new ambitions, it will create new egos in you. Look at the so-called holy people, the so-called saints and mahatmas. They look more egoistic than anybody else. Their faces look sad, as if they are in great pain, suffering. And their eyes? They are looking at you always with that attitude of "holier-than-thou." They are condemnors; they will call you sinners. They are ready to throw you into hell and hellfire. For themselves they are hoping that they will be in heaven enjoying heavenly pleasures forever and forever.

What kind of renunciation is this? This is a wrong kind of renunciation and you cannot attain to light through it; you will go on falling into deeper and deeper darkness. You have taken the first step in a wrong direction, and the first step is the most important step because the second will follow the first, and so on, so forth. And you will go on farther and farther away from the truth.

Hence I don't tell my sannyasins to renounce, although renunciation happens. Many of my sannyasins write to me, "Beloved Master, you deceived us. We were thinking nothing has to be renounced, and now many things are simply disappearing."

Just the other day there was a letter. One sannyasin has written that his sexual desire has completely disappeared --

and he had tried his whole life to renounce it and he had never succeeded. And here we are not teaching to renounce anything, not even sexual desire, so his letter has a relevance. He says, "You tricked us. I was thinking that I have come here to enjoy my sexual desire for the first time, because the whole life I have been trying to be a monk. Tired of it, utterly a failure in renouncing it, I had come here -- and now it has disappeared!"

This is beautiful, if it has disappeared on its own accord. If you have not dropped it, it won't come back again. If you have dropped it, it is bound to come back again because dropping it simply means repressing it. Dropping does not mean anything else; it simply means you have repressed it forcibly. Sooner or later, in some weaker moment, it will be back again -- and with a vengeance. But if it drops on its own... you have not done anything to drop it, not even a decision; you have not willfully acted on it, it is through understanding. Seeing the futility of it, seeing that it does not fulfill, that it is a kind of a toy.... You can remain engaged in it, it keeps you occupied. It keeps you so much occupied that you don't have any time to look inwards. But it never takes you anywhere; you are always the same. It brings no integrity, it brings no joy. The more you know it, the more it becomes a boring phenomenon. The more you know it, the more boredom it brings.

If you really want to enjoy sex, be a monk, be a nun. Then you will enjoy it. Then you will not think of anything else; twenty-four hours you will be enjoying it. In a monastery what else is there to enjoy? Of course it will be just fantasy. Fantasy is personal pornography. Nobody else can see what you are seeing and you can go on giggling and enjoying.

You can go on reading the Bible, the Koran, so everybody thinks how religious you are, how pious -- and nobody knows what you are really doing inside.

The so-called religious people are very pornographic; they are bound to be. The more you make an effort to escape from men and women, the more the unfulfilled, the repressed, is bound to become cerebral. It will become a fantasy in your mind, it will capture your imagination. You will dream about it, you will think about it, you will be surrounded by it. You can look into the records of all the monks and the nuns of all the world and you will be surprised: things were happening to them which are not happening to anybody anymore.

In the Middle Ages the nuns were reporting in thousands that the Devil comes and makes love to them. Now what has happened to the Devil? He does not come anymore. The ordinary devils are enough. But those nuns, they were imagining. And when for years you have been starved, you have willfully tried to do something, the imagination gathers force. A moment comes when you start dreaming with open eyes; you can see the Devil standing there.

And what imagination those nuns had! If you just look into the records you will be surprised. The Devil has a forked penis! It is not an ordinary genital organ -- but forked, so that it can enter both the holes! Now these nuns must have been mad, utterly mad. And false pregnancies were happening... nothing but hot air in the belly, but the belly would go on becoming bigger and bigger. Just fantasy has taken so much grip of the mind, of the body, that the nun thinks she has become pregnant, so she starts accumulating air in the belly. She looks to everybody as if she is

pregnant. She walks like a pregnant woman. And of course, what can she do? If the Devil comes, she has to yield. Who knows? -- he may not come again!

And this is not only about one religion; this is the case with all the religions. In India, the scriptures tell so many stories of the great monks, ascetics, doing their penances in the forests. And when they are coming just on the verge of success, beautiful women descend from heaven to distract these poor fellows. They have not done any wrong to anybody and even if they have done wrong, what kind of punishment is this? This is something like reward! Beautiful women come from heaven, goddesses, APSARAS, and they dance naked around them, and they make all kinds of obscene gestures to the poor fellows. Details are given in the scriptures, very detailed descriptions, what they do, how they do, how they seduce the poor fellow. And then he falls from his great heights, becomes an ordinary mortal. Then they don't come anymore. This is nothing but mental masturbation, but this is bound to happen if you repress. This is a wrong kind of renunciation. It has dominated the whole religious scene for ages, it has been very destructive.

The right kind of renunciation is very natural and spontaneous. It is not AGAINST anything. It allows you to watch, see, understand, be more meditative, so that you can bring more understanding to your actions, to your thoughts, to your feelings. Out of that accumulated understanding, things start happening. Then the mind is no more there to waver. Nothing has been repressed so nothing can come back again. Then things simply start disappearing like

dewdrops in the early sun. That's the only possibility to find the light.

And remember, even these people who have been teaching repression, they don't call it repression -- they call it willpower. They give it beautiful names. Ugly things can be hidden very easily behind beautiful names. Willpower is nothing but ego power. When you call it willpower it looks beautiful; when you call it ego power you see the ugliness of it.

A religious person is one who has no more use for ego. Ego means violence with yourself. It may be very subtle, it may not look like violence. You may be doing violence to yourself in a very graceful manner. And the priests have been forcing you to do things, but they don't say that they are forcing. They have been conditioning children, hypnotizing whole societies, to do certain things. And once you are hypnotized and conditioned you think YOU are doing it on your own, out of your own freedom. And that is sheer nonsense. A Hindu who has been conditioned for thirty years to be a Hindu cannot do anything out of his own freedom unless he drops all his Hindu nonsense. And the same is the case with the Christian and the Jew and the Jaina and the Mohammedan and the Parsi and the Sikh.

The first step is to drop that which has been forced upon you. It may look almost as if it has not been forced because it has been so long, you have completely forgotten. Thirty years, forty years, fifty years conditioning -- who remembers when it began, how it began? You were so young, three years old or four years old... and then the teaching starts and it goes on conditioning you. It can condition you for anything, any stupid thing. Everybody

else will see the stupidity; only you will not. You will think you are doing something great, something religious, something sacred.

Stalin was giving Mao Zedong instructions in practical communism. "Comrade," he said, "how would you make a cat eat chili pepper?"
"There are two ways," said Mao. "I could force it down him or I could stuff a fish with the pepper and give the fish to the cat."
"Wrong," replied Stalin. "It is not compatible with our ideology. The first method is coercion, the second deception. You know we never coerce or deceive the people."
"Then how would you do it?" asked Mao.
"I would rub the pepper on the cat's tail. When this started to smart, the cat would turn around and lick its tail, thus eating the pepper voluntarily."

This has been done by the priests for centuries. They rub the pepper on your tail, and one day you start licking your tail and you think you are doing it voluntarily.
The first step towards real religion is to drop Christianity, Hinduism, Mohammedanism, Buddhism, Jainism; to drop all ideologies, to unlearn what has been forced upon you -- to be a child again. Then you can start seeing things in their true colors, then you can start seeing things as they are. Children are more aware of the reality than you are. The older you become, the less aware you are because the more you become burdened with experience, knowledge, opinions, ideologies.

DO WHAT YOU HAVE TO DO
RESOLUTELY, WITH ALL YOUR HEART.
THE TRAVELER WHO HESITATES
ONLY RAISES DUST ON THE ROAD.

Buddha says: DO WHAT YOU HAVE TO DO RESOLUTELY.... But by resolution he does not mean will, as it is ordinarily meant in the dictionaries. Buddha is compelled to use your words, but he gives a new meaning to his words. By 'resolution' he means out of a resolved heart -- not out of willpower but out of a resolved heart. And remember, he emphasizes the word 'heart', not the mind. Willpower is part of the mind. A resolved heart is a heart without problems, a heart which is no longer divided, a heart which has come to a state of stillness, silence. That's what he calls a resolved heart.

DO WHAT YOU HAVE TO DO RESOLUTELY, WITH ALL YOUR HEART. Remember the emphasis on the heart. Mind can never be one; by its very nature it is many. And the heart is always one; by its very nature it cannot be many. You cannot have many hearts but you can have many minds. Why? -- because the mind lives in doubt and the heart lives in love. The mind lives in doubt and the heart lives in trust. The heart knows how to trust; it is trust that makes it one. When you trust, suddenly you become centered.

Hence the significance of trust. It does not matter whether your trust is in the right person or not. It does not matter whether your trust will be exploited or not. It does not matter whether you will be deceived because of your trust

or not. There is every possibility you may be deceived -- the world is full of deceivers. What matters is that you trusted. It is out of your trust that you become integrated, which is far more important than anything else. It is not a question that first you have to be certain whether the person is worthy of trust or not. How will you be certain? And who will inquire?

It will be the mind, and the mind knows only how to doubt. It will doubt. It will doubt even a man like Christ or Buddha. It can't help.

Judas doubted Jesus. He could not trust -- even a man like Jesus. And Jesus trusted Judas; he could not doubt even a man like Judas. See the point. Who is the gainer? If you superficially look, then it seems Jesus has lost because he is crucified. If he had not trusted Judas he would have saved his life. But that is only a superficial understanding. In fact the loser is Judas, not Jesus. One has to die some day or other, and one cannot die a better death than Jesus. It is his death that brought a revolution into the consciousness of humanity.

If Buddha had also been crucified we would have been far richer. Dying on a bed would not have been of much help. And what difference does it make to Jesus where he dies? But a man like Jesus uses even his death as a situation, as a device. He used it and he used it very skillfully. Socrates could not use his death so skillfully. Maybe it is because of Socrates' death that Jesus has learned a lesson: how to use death. There are foolish people who cannot use their lives usefully, artistically, gracefully, beautifully, and there are people like Jesus who can even use their death. Their death is also a device.

The real loser is Judas, and he understood immediately. When Jesus was crucified he felt so ashamed that he committed suicide the next day. Now, committing suicide is ugly; being crucified has a beauty. It is a sacrifice, the ultimate sacrifice, the ultimate offering one can make to God. And Jesus made it. His last words were, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done." He surrendered totally: "Let thy kingdom come." He effaced himself totally, he dropped his ego totally: "Thy will be done." He trusted Judas absolutely. He hugged him, he kissed him, he washed his feet. He knew that the man was going to betray him -- and still his trust was total.

So remember, trust does not mean that first you have to inquire, that first you have to make everything certain, guaranteed, and then you trust. That is not trust, that is really doubt: because you have no more possibilities to doubt, hence you trust. If another possibility arises of doubt you will doubt again. Trust is in spite of all the doubts, in spite of what the man is or what the man is going to do. It is of the heart, it is out of love.

When you trust and love with a resolved heart it brings transformation. Then you never hesitate. Hesitation simply keeps you in fragments. Taking a quantum leap, without any hesitation or in spite of all the hesitations, you become integrated. Hesitations disappear; you become one. And to become one is to be liberated -- liberated from your own stupid crowd that exists inside you, liberated from your thoughts and desires and memories, liberated from mind itself.

THE TRAVELER WHO HESITATES ONLY RAISES DUST ON THE ROAD.

IT IS BETTER TO DO NOTHING
THAN TO DO WHAT IS WRONG.
FOR WHATEVER YOU DO, YOU DO TO YOURSELF.

It is better to do nothing... but to do nothing is very difficult. When you think you are not doing anything... that is not what Buddha is saying. To do nothing means to be so still, so silent, that there is no action within or without, no thought even, no desire.

IT IS BETTER TO DO NOTHING -- one will have to be very conscious to do nothing -- THAN TO DO WHAT IS WRONG. The wrong can be done only when you are unconscious. The definition of the wrong and the right according to Buddha is a very different one; it is not moralistic. He will not say, "This is right and that is wrong." He will not give you a list of Ten Commandments; he has not given any commandments. He gives you rather a criterion so that you can judge in your life what is right, what is wrong. He has not decided it. It can't be decided because life goes on changing. What is wrong one day may be right another day; what is wrong this moment may be right another moment. So you cannot label actions as right or wrong. Situations change, you change, people change. So there is no possibility of giving you a list that says, "Do these things and don't do these things."

All other religions have done that; Buddha has not done that. He gives you a criterion, he gives you an insight. He gives you a touchstone so you can see what is gold and what is not gold. Consciousness is his touchstone. If you are conscious and not doing anything, that is far better than

doing something wrong, because doing something wrong means you are unconscious. Doing anything out of unconsciousness is wrong and doing anything, even nothing, out of consciousness, is right.

When the bottle of Scotch broke on the floor, the three little mice lapped it all up. Now they were really blind.
"I'm going to find Muhammad Ali and knock his brains out," said the first one.
The second said, "Just let me at that Idi Amin! I'll give him what's coming to him!"
"You guys do what you want," said the third mouse. "Me, I'm going upstairs and making love to the cat!"

That's what is happening to everybody, because everybody is living in an unconscious state. You are unaware of what you are doing, why you are doing, who you are, why you are, where you are going. Everything seems to be in darkness, and still you go on doing things.
It is better, Buddha says, to do nothing. Be quiet, silent, still, in a state of nondoing, because that is possible only if you bring more and more alertness. And then out of that silence, out of that awareness, out of that nothingness, out of that nondoing, whatsoever arises is good, is virtue.
FOR WHATEVER YOU DO, YOU DO TO YOURSELF.
If you harm people, the harm will come back to you. If you love people, the love will come back to you. The world goes on echoing back, reflecting back. The world gives you only that which you have given in the first place to the world.

LIKE A BORDER TOWN WELL GUARDED,
GUARD YOURSELF WITHIN AND WITHOUT.

That's what he calls awareness: Be on guard.

LET NOT A SINGLE MOMENT PASS
LEST YOU FALL INTO DARKNESS.

Not even a single moment should be left unguarded. Each moment you have to be alert, conscious. Walking, walk consciously. Breathing, breathe consciously. Eating, eat consciously. Do whatsoever you are doing, but bring the quality of consciousness into your work. Sitting, sit consciously. Let consciousness become a constant, running underground stream, so you go on doing your usual things, but there is an undercurrent of consciousness. That will make your life religious -- not going to the church, not going to the temple, not praying to some imaginary God, not repeating scriptures.

FEEL SHAME ONLY WHEN SHAME IS DUE.
FEAR ONLY WHAT IS FEARFUL.
SEE EVIL ONLY IN WHAT IS EVIL.
LEST YOU MISTAKE THE TRUE WAY
AND FALL INTO DARKNESS.

Buddha says: FEEL SHAME ONLY WHEN SHAME IS DUE. Don't be bothered what others say. Unless YOUR consciousness says it is shameful there is no need to be worried. Even if the whole world says that what you are

doing is shameful, let them say it; you need not be worried about it.

This is a very revolutionary message. Ordinarily you have been told to follow others, to follow the collective, to follow the official religion, to follow whatsoever has been told for centuries. Buddha says it is immaterial what others say. What really matters is that if YOUR consciousness says it is shameful, then drop it. In fact, there will be no need to drop it; it will drop on its own accord. Let your consciousness be decisive in every matter.

FEAR ONLY WHAT IS FEARFUL... and don't be afraid of hell and don't be afraid of punishment after death. These are strategies of the priests to exploit people, to exploit their fear. Everybody is afraid because everybody has become an ego and the ego is always afraid. The ego means you think yourself separate from the whole; then fear arises because you are not separate from the whole. And when you think you are separate, the question arises: How long can you remain separate? Death will come; then what will happen to you?

The ego makes you so selfish, so self-centered, that you forget completely that you belong to the eternal universe. There is no need to fear that you are just a wave in the ocean; you will be here, whether as a wave or not as a wave, but you will be here. Nobody can destroy you. Nothing ever dies and nothing is ever born. The wave arises and disappears. Even before it has arisen it was there and when it has disappeared it is still there. That arising and disappearing is just a momentary phenomenon: something that was unmanifest becomes manifest.

But we are very much afraid, and the fear arises because we have believed, we have been told again and again, hypnotized to believe in the ego. This whole social structure up to now, hitherto, has been propounding an egoistic life attitude. Then fear, then greed, then ambition, are natural. And ego is being taught to every child; his ego is strengthened so that you can make him ambitious. Out of ambition arises politics. Ego is created so that you can make him afraid. Out of fear arises religion -- the so-called religion.

Little Sheldon seemed to be enjoying himself at the zoo with his father. As they were looking at the tigers, however, a troubled look came over the boy's face. His father asked him what was the matter.
"I was just wondering, Daddy. In case a tiger breaks loose and eats you, what number bus do I take home?"

Even small children are poisoned with the idea of the self. Buddha says there is no self, no ego. Deep down you are not separate. You are not an island; you are part of the universal continent. So: FEAR ONLY WHAT IS FEARFUL. SEE EVIL ONLY IN WHAT IS EVIL. Don't believe others; believe only your own eyes, your own insight... LEST YOU MISTAKE THE TRUE WAY AND FALL INTO DARKNESS.
Believing in others' ideas you are going to fall into darkness. They are in darkness and following them you will go into darkness. If you want to reach to light you will have to travel alone.

SEE WHAT IS.... Such a simple statement, but it contains the very essence of religion.

SEE WHAT IS.
SEE WHAT IS NOT.
FOLLOW THE TRUE WAY.
RISE.

SEE WHAT IS.... That is meditation. Put your mind aside. Face reality directly. Encounter it, be face-to-face. Put the mind aside. Look into reality silently, without any thought, so that the thought cannot be a hindrance, a barrier, a distortion. That's what meditation is: seeing what is and seeing what is not.
The past is not, but the mind remains in the past. The future is not, but the mind remains in the future. And the present is, but the mind has no contact with the present. And whenever you are in contact with the present, the past is no more there, the future is no more there. When you are absolutely here and now, totally, utterly here and now, your life will have a new quality to it. That is true holiness -- because you will know the whole and you will become the whole.
Buddha calls it the true way, the way of the awakened ones. You can also rise to these heights. Rise! Awake!
Enough for today.
The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 9
Chapter #2
Chapter title: Is there life before death?
12 February 1980 am in Buddha Hall

The first question:
Question 1
BELOVED MASTER,
IS THIS REALLY ALL THERE IS? MY LIFE SEEMS SO MEANINGLESS AND EMPTY. I KEEP THINKING THERE MUST BE SOMETHING MORE. I WANT THERE TO BE SOMETHING MORE.

Prem Barkha, there is infinitely more, but your wanting it is a barrier in reaching to it. Desiring is like a wall that surrounds you; nondesiring becomes a door. This is one of the most paradoxical but very fundamental laws of life: desire and you will miss, don't desire and it is yours.
Jesus says: Seek and ye shall find. Buddha says: Seek ye not; otherwise you will miss. Jesus says: Ask and it shall be given to you. Buddha says: Ask not; otherwise it will never be given to you. Jesus says: Knock and the doors shall be opened. Buddha says: Wait... look... the doors are not closed at all. If you knock, your very knocking shows that you are knocking somewhere else -- on the wall -- because the doors are always open.
Jesus is as much enlightened as Buddha -- because there is no question of being more enlightened or less enlightened. But then why this difference?
The difference comes from the people to whom Jesus is speaking. He is speaking to people who are uninitiated, uninitiated into the mysteries of life. Buddha is speaking to a totally different kind of group, the initiates, the adepts, those who can understand the paradoxical. The paradoxical means the mysterious.

Barkha, you say, "My life seems so meaningless and empty...."

It seems so meaningless and empty because you are constantly hankering for more. Drop that hankering, and then you will go through a radical transformation. The emptiness disappears immediately as you stop asking for the more. The emptiness is a by-product of asking for more. It is a shadow that follows the desire for more. Let the desire disappear and look back: there is no shadow anymore.

Asking for more is what our mind is -- constantly asking for more. It makes no difference how much you have, it will go on asking for more. And because it goes on asking for more you go on feeling you are empty, you are missing so much. See the point: the emptiness is created by asking for more. The emptiness is not there, it is a fallacy, but it will look very real when you are caught in the net of desiring.

See that desire is the cause of your emptiness. Watch your desiring, and in watching it disappears, and with it disappears the emptiness. Then comes a deep deep fulfillment. You feel so full, so overfull that you start overflowing. You have so much that you start sharing, you start giving -- giving for the sheer joy of giving, for no other reason. You become like a cloud full of rainwater: it has to shower somewhere. It will shower even on the rocks where nothing is going to grow; it will shower unconditionally. It will not ask whether this is the right place to shower or not. It will be so burdened with rainwater that it has to shower to unburden itself.

When desiring disappears you are so full of bliss, so full of contentment, so full of fullness that you start sharing. It happens on its own accord. And then there is meaning in life, then there is significance in life. Then there is poetry, beauty, grace. Then there is music, harmony -- your life becomes a dance.

Barkha, this emptiness and meaninglessness is your doing, so you can undo it.

You say, "I keep thinking there must be something more."

That's what is creating the trouble. And I am not saying there is not something more, there is -- much more than you can ever imagine. I have seen it! I have heard it! I have experienced it! There is infinitely much more! But you will never come into contact with it if desiring continues. Desiring is a wall, no-desiring is a bridge. This is the very essence of Buddha's teaching. This is his basic message to the world. Bliss is a state of no-desire, misery is a state of desire.

You say, "I want there to be something more."

The more you will want the more you will miss. You can choose. If you want to remain miserable, want more, more and more, and you will be missing more and more. This is your choice, remember, this is your responsibility. Nobody is forcing you. If you really want to see that which is, don't hanker for the future, for more. Just see to that which is. The other day Buddha was saying: See that which is and see that which is not. That is meditation, and meditation takes you beyond mind. Mind is constantly asking, desiring, demanding and creating frustration because it lives in expectations. The whole world is suffering through meaninglessness, and the reason is that for the first time

man is asking more than he has ever asked. For the first time man is desiring more than he has ever desired. Science has given him so much hope, so much support to desire more.

In the beginning of this century there was great optimism all over the world because science was opening new doors and everybody was thinking, "The golden age has arrived, it is just by the corner. We have reached it. In our very life we will see it -- that paradise has descended on the earth." Naturally everybody started desiring for more and more and more. Paradise has not descended on the earth. Instead, the earth has become a hell.

Science released your desiring, it supported your desires. It supported your hopes that those desires can be fulfilled. And the outcome is that the whole world is living in deep misery. It has never been so before. It is very strange, because for the first time man has more possessions than ever. For the first time man has more safety, more security, more scientific technology, more comfort than ever before. But more meaninglessness is also there. Man has never been in such a despair, in such a desperate effort to get more.

Science gives you desiring; religion gives you an insight into desiring. That insight helps you to drop desire. And then suddenly something that was hidden up to now becomes unhidden, becomes manifest. Something wells up within your being, and everything that you had ever desired is fulfilled... and more. More is available than you could have imagined, than anybody has ever imagined. Unimaginable bliss descends on you. But prepare the

ground. Prepare the right soil. Nondesiring is the name of the right soil.
I have given you the name Prem Barkha. It means "love showering." Yes, exactly that can happen. Love can shower, bliss can shower, God can shower on you. Just be in a receptive mood. You are aggressive, you want more -- that is aggression, subtle aggression. Be receptive, open, available, and then you are entitled to all the miracles possible.

The second question:
Question 2
BELOVED MASTER,
I FEEL LIKE I AM GETTING DETACHED FROM SEX. NOW WHAT IS NEXT?

Sant, that is only a feeling. It happens to almost everybody here. And the simple reason is not that you have become detached, but you have become afraid.
So many women write to me, "Why in your commune are men so afraid of us?"
Man has always been afraid. This is nothing new. But one man was living with one woman; he was afraid but was able to manage somehow. Now here he sees women and women and women. He becomes really afraid. There are biological reasons for the fear.
Women are capable of multiple orgasms, man is not. Sexually man is very poor compared to women. No man is capable of satisfying any woman. If the woman is allowed freedom she will make anybody afraid, because she will make you feel very inferior. She is capable of multiple

orgasms: within seconds she can have many orgasms and you can have only one orgasm. And with one orgasm you are finished! She has not even started and you are finished -- that is very embarrassing. Because of this fear, man has repressed women all over the world. It is not that man is stronger, that is why he has repressed women. No, it is out of fear.

Man has destroyed women's capacity for orgasm. For centuries man has told them that orgasm is possible only to men, not to women. He has taught women to be absolutely unalive in a sexual relationship. He has told women, conditioned them, hypnotized them for centuries that it is more womanlike, ladylike, to be just silent, unmoving. It is for the man to make all the movements, take all the initiative. Hence man makes love, not the woman. The woman is just there, a silent partner. And the reason is great fear because, if she becomes an active partner, she will reduce the man to almost nothingness. If she becomes active the man is very much afraid. How is he going to satisfy her? All his manhood will be at stake. He will no longer be capable of bragging that he is man, something higher, superior. Sexually he is not; sexually he is very inferior. In a muscular way he may be stronger than the woman, but sexually he is not.

There are countries in Africa where operations are even done on small girls. The clitoris is cut when they are very small -- a very painful operation -- just to make sure that they don't have any idea of orgasm. In Sudan you will not find a single woman who knows anything about orgasm because their very mechanism for orgasm is damaged; their vagina is more like a wound than a healthy organ. What

fear! -- to cut the clitoris. Then they will always be inferior. In India I have asked many women, "Have you ever achieved orgasm?", and they say, "What is it?" I have never come across an Indian woman who knows what orgasm is, because that is very un-Indian, for an Indian woman to feel orgasmic, to rejoice in making love.

I have heard that a man was making love to a woman on the seabeach. And then the policeman came and said, "Are you mad or something? She is dead! What are you doing?" He said, "My God! I thought she was Indian!"

The Indian woman has to just be there, not doing anything. She has not to show any signs of joy. If a woman really becomes orgasmic she will wake up the whole neighborhood! She will shout and sing and dance and jump. She will do Dynamic Meditation! And the whole neighborhood will know what is happening.

Afraid of women, man has repressed them in subtle ways -- and sometimes not so subtle, like these Sudanese people. In Africa many Mohammedan countries do it -- the operation, the surgery on the clitoris. Not only that, they sew the vagina of the woman so much that making love to a woman becomes almost impossible. And the childbirth is so painful that once a woman has made love to a man she decides never to do that again, it is so painful! Once she has given birth to a child she decides never to be pregnant again; the whole experience is nightmarish. And this has been done by man, and the priests have been behind it.

Sant, in my commune it is a totally different phenomenon. Centuries-old taboos are broken, centuries-old inhibitions

are thrown to the winds. I am all for freedom, particularly sexual freedom, because all other freedoms are rooted in that. If a man or a woman is not orgasmic he is not alive, she is not alive -- they are dead. They breathe, they eat, they walk, but that is not life. They only vegetate.

A scientist was doing an experiment on a certain species of fish. In that species the female fish, whenever approached by a male fish, starts moving away in a very coquettish way, alluring, enchanting, inviting, but starts escaping -- does not really escape but pretends that she is escaping. That excites the male; he starts running after her. The more he runs after her, the more he becomes excited, his passion is aroused. Then, of course in a very diplomatic way, the female fish allows him to make love.

One scientist, Lorenz, trained a female fish just to do the opposite: that whenever she comes across the male, go, take the initiative, jump upon the male fish. And Lorenz was surprised: whenever this was done, the male fish was so much afraid; the male fish could not believe his own eyes, what is happening! And the male fish was unable to make love -- a sudden impotence! The mechanism works in a certain way: the female has to be seductive but unavailable -- not absolutely unavailable because that will destroy the whole game, just a pretension of unavailability. That excites the male energy. That makes the male more and more interested, obsessed. He is functioning at the optimum, and when he is functioning at the optimum he makes love easily -- because the male mind, whether in men or in mice, is the same. The male mind wants to conquer.

And, Sant, you are in the same situation like the male fish. Now female fish are jumping upon you, making you afraid, and you are trying to hide the fact in a beautiful religious term: detachment. It is nothing! If you feel it is detachment, just go to the Himalayas for one month -- sit in a cave, and you will think only of women and women!

I am just like another Lorenz. This commune is a pond, and I am training female fish to embrace every male fish!

When one is really detached -- out of understanding, out of meditation -- then there is no detachment either; that thing has to be understood. When one is really detached one is neither attached nor detached. The whole thing becomes irrelevant as if there is no question anymore of attraction, of nonattraction. The whole question drops. You are simply yourself. You don't think in terms of women, women don't think in terms of men. Thinking, "I am attached" -- or "detached" -- means you are still thinking in terms of women.

Real detachment -- that which comes out of understanding -- has no reference to the other. You are simply yourself, utterly joyous, happy, so blissful that you don't need the other. The other has been forgotten completely, the other exists no more. A woman will pass and you will not think whether she is a man or a woman. That is transcending your biology, and that is one of the greatest things in life -- to transcend your biology -- because only then, for the first time, you become something superior to the animals. Otherwise there is not much difference, maybe some difference of quantity but not of quality. Unless you transcend biology you remain part of the animal kingdom, another species of animal, that's all.

Sant, now watch your detachment, whether it is fear or understanding. Have you understood the stupidity of the whole game? If you have understood, then you will not ask, "Now what is next?" There is nothing next then. You have transcended biology and you will be really at rest with yourself. You will become orgasmic without the help of the other. And orgasmicness will become so natural, so spontaneous, it will have no reference to sex at all.
A Buddha is orgasmic twenty-four hours a day because he is rejoicing each moment in its totality; there is nothing more. If you have transcended the biology, if sex has disappeared -- through understanding, remember, not through some kind of repression or fear -- then you have entered into God, you have become divine.

The third question:
Question 3
BELOVED MASTER,
WHATEVER I DO, I TRY TOO HARD. PLEASE TELL US ABOUT BUDDHA'S "RIGHT EFFORT."

Anand Nagaro, Gautama the Buddha has taught only one thing, and that is the middle way. Never go to the extreme. All extremes are the same. Be exactly in the middle and you will be freed, you will be liberated.
There are people who are obsessed with sex; that is one extreme. Then there are people who escape from women, and if they are women they escape from men; they escape to the monasteries, to the caves. They are also obsessed -- of course, in the opposite direction. That is the other extreme. There are people who are greedy, too much

greedy; their whole life is nothing but greed. And then there are people who renounce, who become afraid of touching anything.

There are Jaina monks; in Buddha's time they were very influential. Buddha's whole fight was with Jaina monks, because they were extremists. They remain naked because if you wear clothes you may become attached to the clothes. They will not carry anything with them, not even a razor; when their hair is too long, they will pull it out. They will not wear shoes, they will walk barefoot, because shoes are a luxury. Naked, without any possessions, they impress people very much.

Extremists are always very impressive. You are greedy, you are after money, after power, prestige; they have renounced all. Certainly, a great respect arises in your heart for them because you know you cannot do this; it is too cold to be naked. And to live without money.... The Jaina monk cannot touch money; he is not allowed to touch it, he is not even allowed to SEE money. How can you live without money? A great respect arises in you. You live on one extreme and you respect the other extreme. Sooner or later, when you will become fed up with your extreme, you will start moving to the other extreme. But no basic change happens. The man who is afraid of touching money is still in a state of ignorance, unawareness.

Buddha says: Stop in the middle. There is no need to be indulgent, there is no need to renounce either. Just be in the middle, exactly in the middle. He has a great point there: if you remain exactly in the middle, that is the point from where transcendence happens.

It is like the pendulum of a clock. It goes from the right to the left, from the left to the right. Try to understand the pendulum and its process because it is very similar to the process of your mind. When the pendulum is going towards the right, visibly it is going towards the right, but invisibly it is gaining momentum to go to the left. When it is going to the left it is gaining momentum to go to the right.
When you are indulging you are gaining momentum for renouncing the world, and when you are renouncing you will gain momentum to indulge again. And this can go on for lives together. But hold the pendulum in the middle and the clock stops.
That's what Buddha says: hold the pendulum in the middle and the mind stops. The mind is the clock because the mind is time, the mind is desire. It brings past and future -- it IS time. Hold it in the middle. Don't live in the past and don't live in the future. Be in the present, that is the middle. Don't be indulgent and don't be a renunciate; be in the middle. Fulfill the necessities of life. Don't be obsessed by possessing things and don't be obsessed by renouncing them. Both are obsessions and both are pathological states. Avoid both, be in the middle. In the middle is balance.
You ask me, Nagaro, "Whatever I do, I try too hard. Please tell us about Buddha's 'right effort'."
Right effort means don't try too hard. Right effort also means don't stop trying completely. It means, just try in a relaxed way, neither too hard nor too soft, just in a relaxed way, in a very playful way. When you are trying too hard you become tense; when you are not trying at all you become lazy. When you are trying playfully you are neither lazy nor tense. Your life has a beauty, a grace, a balance, a

harmony. Be in the middle, that's exactly the meaning of right effort.
Whenever Buddha uses the word 'right', remember, he means balance. 'Right' is a translation of a word which means balance, because the extreme is wrong, both the extremes are wrong. Buddha's word is SAMYAK; SAM means balance, equilibrium. He uses that word more than any other word; he uses it for everything. If you are making effort for anything, let it be samyak, balanced, exactly in the middle.
If you are meditating, Buddha says, let it be samyak -- right meditation. Don't make too much fuss about it, don't make a tension out of it. Don't create anguish. Don't become mad. Don't be aggressive. And he also says that that does not mean to forget all about it and go on living the way you are living. No, make efforts for meditation, but in a joyous way, a graceful way, always in the middle. Be gentle, be gentlemanly. Buddha is the perfect gentleman; the emphasis is on gentle. He is a rare person in that way. Mahavira seems to be an extremist -- another enlightened person who was Buddha's contemporary, the last prophet of the Jainas. He seems to be very extremist. It is said that for twelve years he was silent, didn't speak a single word. Now, this is going too far. Don't speak too much....

I have heard a story about Morarji Desai:
Whenever he speaks, his wife will send him a note. Everybody around him became curious, naturally, "What is that note?" Always it comes, inevitably.... And on the note they found there is only one word: Kiss.

They told Morarji Desai, "This is rare in this age of unfaithfulness; your wife still loves you so much. You are eighty-four, she must be seventy-five or more. Still such romance that whenever you stand to speak she sends you a note always welcoming you with a kiss."
Morarji looked angry -- as he always looks, that is nothing new! When he smiles, that is rare. Even in his smile there is no smile; still he looks as if he is angry. The smile seems to be painted. But he was really angry. He said, "You don't know what she means. It is a short form; it means, 'Keep it short, stupid.' That is the meaning of 'kiss'."

If you keep it short, that's okay, but there is no need to become dumb for twelve years. Be telegraphic, use only words which are necessary. Don't go on chattering twenty-four hours a day, either with others or with yourself. People are chattering constantly, day in, day out. In the day they are chattering, in the night they are chattering.

Mulla Nasruddin's wife went to the physician and said that "My husband talks in his sleep. Something has to be done. I am very much disturbed about it."
The physician said, "I can understand. Take this medicine and within a week or two he will stop talking in his sleep."
The wife said, "You misunderstand me. I don't want him to stop, I want him to talk clearly so I can hear what he is saying."

People are talking in their sleep, people are talking while they are awake. People are constantly talking; needed, not needed, they go on talking. Talking seems to be a kind of

escape from themselves. So Buddha says it is good for a few hours to be silent, but there is no need to be silent forever.

It is said that Mahavira ate only once in a while. Ten days he would fast -- or twenty days or thirty days -- and then one day he would take food. In those twelve years he took food only three hundred and sixty-five times; that means only one year. In twelve years, if that is the proportion, it comes to once every twelve days.

Buddha says that is unnecessary, that is torture, that is making an extreme effort for no reason. It is perfectly good if you eat only as much as is needed; people are eating too much, people are stuffing themselves with food. That is again another way of keeping yourself away from yourself, keeping yourself engaged.

People feel so empty -- like Prem Barkha -- everybody feels empty. And there is some unconscious desire to fill this emptiness -- through food, through smoking, through drink, through something; through talk, through the television, through the radio. Just remain occupied so you feel full.

Just the other day I was reading that in America they have now invented a new kind of refrigerator. You open the door and the refrigerator immediately says, "Excuse me, be kind to yourself. Please close the door." People are constantly moving towards the fridge; that seems to be their only exercise. Even in the night when they have nothing to do or they are not feeling sleepy they will go to the fridge.

There are people, and their number is big... out of ten, one person is capable of sleepwalking. They walk in their sleep and the direction is always towards the fridge. Even in

sleep they know where the fridge is! They don't stumble anywhere, they go directly like an arrow. Now this is one extreme, and not eating for eleven or twelve days then eating only for one day, that is another extreme.
Buddha says "right food." Be in the middle. Eat as much as is necessary for your health, for your well-being, don't eat too much. And that goes for everything in your life.

A lady went into a shoe store to buy a pair of shoes. The salesman brought her a pair which she tried on. "Ah," she said, "I don't like these shoes. They are too wide. I don't want them too wide, I don't want them too narrow. I just want them in between."

So the salesman gathered up the shoes and returned with another pair which were tried on. This time she frowned and said, "These shoes won't do. The holes in the toes are too big. I don't want them too big and I don't want them too small. I just want them in between."
So the salesman went back to the store room and got her another pair at which she exclaimed, "Ah, I don't like them. The heels are too high. I don't want them too high and I don't want them too low. I just want them in between."
At this point the salesman looked at her and said, "Madam, if you will stand up and bend over I will give you a shoe not too high and not too low -- just in between!"

The salesman seems to be a Buddhist: just in between!
In every action, remain just in between. Through that balance comes transcendence, through that balance mind disappears. The mind is an extremist. It lives only through

extremes; it dies if you stop moving from one extreme to another.

The fourth question:
Question 4
BELOVED MASTER,
IS THERE LIFE AFTER DEATH?

Nijanando, first ask: is there life before death? People ask: Is there life after death? What concern is that for you? You are alive. Ask the significant question, the really relevant question: Is there life before death? Are you really alive?

A woman went to the insurance company and said, "Can I get the money for which my husband has been insured?"
The man in the office said, "But he is still alive. He is not dead. You will get the money only when he is dead."
She said, "I know that he is not dead, but no life is left in him either."

That's the situation: people are not dead and yet not alive either. They are somehow walking, talking, doing things, keeping themselves together, but there is no aliveness, there is no flavor of aliveness.
And you are concerned, Nijanando, with what happens after death. Forget all about it. You are alive -- first live it totally. And remember one thing: whatsoever you do with your life now, that is going to create your future. Your future comes out of your present. If you live miserably now you will live miserably after death -- even more miserably

because your whole life lived in misery will produce more misery for you.
I am not concerned about life after death; my whole concern is life before death. And whatsoever you do with your life now will produce, as a consequence, your future. The tomorrow will be born out of today, the next moment will be born out of this moment. So if this moment is lived rightly, totally, wholly, meditatively, then the next moment is bound to be more total, more holy, more meditative, because life goes on accumulating. If you live blissfully, bliss accumulates. You will take with you when you die whatsoever you have gained in this life.
But down the ages people have remained concerned about the other life. I also talk sometimes about the other life, but just to joke, to laugh at it. It is not really a concern.

In hell, as punishment for his sins, Ayatollah Khomeini and Jimmy Carter had to walk together hand in hand for eternity. As they were strolling along, they came across Morarji Desai arm in arm with Gina Lollobrigida.
Carter asked, "Mr. Desai, how come I am stuck for eternity with this turkey, while you get the gorgeous Lollobrigida?"
Morarji Desai answered, "Jimmy, she is not my punishment -- I am hers!"

Only for jokes I talk about hell and heaven and life after death, but it is not my concern at all; I am not interested. My whole interest is in my present moment. Now is my interest, here is my interest, because God knows only one time -- now -- and God knows only one space -- here. If

you want to be in contact with God you will have to learn how to be now and here.

The fifth question:
Question 5
BELOVED MASTER,
WHY ARE DESIRES A "NO-NO," BUT LONGING FOR THE HEIGHTS OKAY? I GET LOST IN THE SUBTLETIES OF THE WORDS. THE BUDDHA MADE A SUPREME VOW NOT TO RISE FROM MEDITATION UNTIL ATTAINING ENLIGHTENMENT. FOR THREE DAYS AND NIGHTS HE HAD VISIONS AND HALLUCINATIONS, INCLUDING ONES OF HELL, DEMONS, ETCETERA. WHAT KIND OF EFFORT IS THIS?

Jyotirmaya, when Buddha made that vow he was not a buddha; he was as ignorant as you are. In ignorance, whatsoever he has done, please forgive him. Don't take much note of it. In ignorance everybody goes on doing stupid things. That vow is stupid.
Truth is not something that you can force by your willpower. Taking a vow that "I will not rise from meditation until attaining enlightenment" shows violence and ignorance. But Buddha was not Buddha at that time, he was Siddhartha Gautama -- stumbling, groping in the darkness as everybody else is groping. He was not in any way different from you. He had himself yet not learned the art of being in the middle; he was an extremist. This is extremism.

For six years he tried hard and failed. That hard work upon himself did not yield any result; it cannot. That's why when he became a buddha he was very much against hard effort, he was very much against extremes. He had lived through all kinds of extremes: he had lived like an ascetic, tortured himself. For six years he suffered as much as a human being can suffer -- but truth cannot be bought by your suffering. It is not a commodity and it is not possible to attain to it just by sheer force of willpower. You can sit for three days or three lives under a tree, and you won't attain it.

He didn't attain it, remember. What he attained was hallucinations, visions of hell, demons, etcetera. That was his punishment, so beware of it.

How he became enlightened is a totally different story. After three days, when he was tired, utterly tired of his effort, and he saw the frustration, the failure... those six years' continuous torturing himself, and no gain, no success. He had not moved even an inch nearer to truth; he was still where he had started. Only one thing had happened: he had become weaker because he had been fasting. He had become ugly; he had become just bones, all flesh had disappeared. He had become just a skeleton. He looked like he had come out of a grave. No gain, no success... all efforts had failed.

Then one evening he saw the futility of human effort. He saw the futility of human ego -- because all efforts are egoistic: "I will attain." The 'I' is always behind all your achievements, desires of achievement. The 'I' is very ambitious: it wants to be successful in this world, it wants to be successful in the other world. It wants to have money,

it wants to have God too. It wants to have power; it wants to have liberation, moksha, truth, nirvana. It wants to have everything.

Buddha saw it and in that seeing he dropped that mad effort and he dropped the very source of ambition. It was a full-moon night. He laughed at himself, at the whole stupidity of six years. He relaxed, he sat under a tree. For the first time after six years, just sitting not to achieve anything, just sitting, not meditating. Hence in Zen, meditation is called ZAZEN. Zazen means just sitting doing nothing, the spring comes and the grass grows by itself.

That evening he sat there under the tree with no desire, because all desires had failed. The worldly desires had failed, the otherworldly desires had failed.

You will be surprised to know: enlightenment is not a success. Enlightenment happens only when you have totally failed. Enlightenment is born out of total failure -- because if you succeed, the ego remains. When the failure is total, absolute, irrevocable, categorical, when there is no going back, the ego disappears. Ego lives, feeds on success; it cannot live in failure. It leaves you.

That evening the ego disappeared. The full moon rose. He watched the full moon, he enjoyed the full moon. For six years he had not seen the moon at all, he was so much preoccupied with his own spiritual attainment. The night was cool and beautiful. The forest was silent, and just by the side was flowing the river Niranjana. He enjoyed the reflection of the moon in the Niranjana. He enjoyed the silence. Then he fell asleep. He slept without any dreams, because all dreams are by-products of desires.

In the morning when it was dawn and the birds started singing he was awakened by their songs. Lying under the tree, nowhere to go, nothing to do, he watched the sun rise above the horizon; the east becoming red and a beautiful morning and the cool breeze.... And something happened, something clicked. He became enlightened -- not out of six years' effort but only one night's effortlessness. Not out of six years' constant striving of the ego, but only one night's state of no ego, no desire. And in the morning he was enlightened.

Then again he laughed. He laughed because he saw that he was always enlightened but could not see the fact, the truth of it, because he was so much concerned with attaining it. If you are so much concerned with attaining it you will not be able to see that it is already the case.

You are all buddhas. Nobody is born otherwise, everybody is born a buddha. It is not a question of achieving, Jyotirmaya, remember it: buddhahood, enlightenment, is not a question of attainment. It is a question of becoming silent, still, egoless, desireless, so that you can see with unclouded eyes who you are. You are a buddha already, you ARE enlightened.

He laughed in the night because his whole life had failed; it was ridiculous. In the morning he laughed because he was searching for something that was already inside his soul; there was no need to seek and search for it. In fact, seeking and searching was keeping him away from it.

Seek, and ye will not find; seek not and it is yours.

The sixth question:

Question 6

BELOVED MASTER,
IS IT POSSIBLE TO LOVE AN ITALIAN MAN WITHOUT WANTING TO KILL HIM?

Satya Bharti, it is impossible. But remember, the moment you stop thinking of killing him, love will also disappear. To fall in love with an Italian in the first place is very crazy, and then this desire to kill him is natural. Love is a kind of fight -- Italian or not Italian. Love is a kind of fight; it is a struggle. And when you stop fighting, when you stop struggling, love disappears. I am not talking about the love of the buddhas; I am talking about the love Satya is asking about.
And do you know who this Italian is? Sarjano, the most Italian out of all Italians!

After the Ark had pushed off, Noah assembled all the animals in the central cabin and made a short speech. He pointed out that the trip was liable to be a long one, and that quarters were somewhat limited. "Therefore," he said, "I want to emphasize that we can't have any population increases at all until the flood subsides and we can get to land. I am appointing the giraffe, as the tallest of you, to stand guard and make sure my instructions are carried out." Finally the water subsided, the Ark landed and the doors were opened. Out came the animals, two by two, as they had come in -- no more of any species. Then the cats came out -- followed by a litter of little kittens. As they passed the giraffe, one of the cats looked up and winked. "I will bet," he said, "you thought we were fighting."

The seventh question:
Question 7
BELOVED MASTER,
DO YOU BELIEVE IN ASTRONOMY AND ASTROLOGY?

Ismail Nagdum, I don't believe in anything and I don't disbelieve anything. My whole effort here is to help you to destroy all beliefs and all disbeliefs, because only then will you be able to know. Knowing happens only when the inner being is utterly empty of beliefs and disbeliefs, when you are neither a Catholic nor a communist, neither an atheist nor a theist. And that was Buddha's attitude too: he was an agnostic.
A real seeker of truth does not believe in anything, positively or negatively. He does not believe in God, he does not believe in no-God. So what to say about astronomy and astrology? Belief is not his concern; knowing, experiencing, seeing, is his concern, because it is only through seeing that transformation happens.
But people go on believing all kinds of things because belief gives you a false idea of knowledge. It makes you feel good -- it hides your ignorance. Otherwise belief is the most stupid thing that one can do. Belief means you don't know and yet you believe. Remember, belief is irrelevant when you don't know -- and belief is irrelevant when you DO know. When you don't know, your belief is false, rooted in ignorance. When you know, there is no need to believe -- you know already.
Do you believe in the sun, in the moon? Does anybody ask you, "Do you believe in the earth?" Nobody asks such

questions. People ask, "Do you believe in God? Do you believe in astrology? Do you believe in life after death?" These questions seem to be relevant because nobody seems to know.
I don't believe in anything. And remember, if you start believing, then there is no end to it; you can believe in any nonsense. Once you believe, there is no problem.

Harry came home from work earlier than usual one afternoon. "Darling, I'm home," he cried and rushed upstairs to the bedroom, where he found his wife lying on the bed, a surprised look on her face. The curtains were drawn, the sheets and blankets were in disorder. "Is everything alright?" he asked.
"Why, yes... yes, of course, dear," she replied uncertainly.
Taking off his jacket he went to the wardrobe and to his surprise found a man crouching inside.
"Hello, what are you doing here?" said Harry in astonishment.
"Oh... I... I'm the gas man.... I've, er... come to check the gas meter."
"Hmm, I see," said Harry and hung up his jacket.
Then reaching under the bed for his slippers, he found another man lying there.
"Well... and who are you?" he asked.
"Ah, yes... well.... I'm the, er... the electrician... I've come to fix the wiring."
"I see," said Harry. "Alright then."
Then, taking off his tie and shirt, he remarked, "I say, dear, it is a bit dark and stuffy in here, don't you think?" and

drawing back the curtain he saw a man perched outside on the window ledge.
"Hello," said Harry, "and what are you doing here?"
"Well," said the man, "if you believed those other guys -- actually, I'm waiting for a bus."

The eighth question:
Question 8
BELOVED MASTER,
IS IT REALLY BAD LUCK TO HAVE A BLACK CAT CROSS YOUR PATH?

Narendra, it depends on whether you are a man or a mouse!

The last question:
Question 9
BELOVED MASTER,
WHY ARE YOU ALWAYS LAUGHING AT THE KNOWLEDGEABLE PEOPLE?

Govindo, what should I do? Should I cry and weep over spilt milk? If you cannot laugh at knowledgeable people, at whom are you going to laugh? They are the most stupid people in the world, the most ridiculous.

A British couple after a few years of marriage finally had a child. As the child's hair was completely red and both parents' hair was brown, things looked a little suspicious. The bewildered wife, upset at the obvious insinuations, suggested that they both go to see a doctor.

The doctor, after taking note of the unusual phenomenon, looked even more puzzled than the couple. "According to the laws of genetics," he explained, "it is impossible that a man and a woman with brown hair can give birth to a child with red hair." The doctor decided to make inquiries in another direction. "How frequently do you have sexual intercourse?" he asked.
The answer was a British embarrassed silence.
"Once a day?" encouraged the doctor.
"Well, not really," was the embarrassed answer of the couple.
"Well, once a week then?" asked the doctor.
"Ahem, I wouldn't say that," answered the man.
"Once a month?" probed the doctor.
"Well, ahem, we don't -- not that often," was the reply.
"Aha!" cried the doctor. "Now I get it! Nothing to be worried about -- it's only rust!"

Enough for today.
The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 9
Chapter #3
Chapter title: Buddhas only point the way
13 February 1980 am in Buddha Hall

I SHALL ENDURE HARD WORDS
AS THE ELEPHANT ENDURES THE SHAFTS OF BATTLE.
FOR MANY PEOPLE SPEAK WILDLY.

THE TAMED ELEPHANT GOES TO BATTLE.
THE KING RIDES HIM.
THE TAMED MAN IS THE MASTER.
HE CAN ENDURE HARD WORDS IN PEACE.

BETTER THAN A MULE
OR THE FINE HORSES OF SINDH
OR THE MIGHTY ELEPHANTS OF WAR
IS THE MAN WHO HAS MASTERED HIMSELF.

NOT ON THEIR BACKS
CAN HE REACH THE UNTRODDEN COUNTRY,
BUT ONLY ON HIS OWN.

THE MIGHTY ELEPHANT DHANAPALAKA
IS WILD WHEN HE IS IN RUT,
AND WHEN BOUND HE WILL NOT EAT,
REMEMBERING THE ELEPHANT GROVE.

THE FOOL IS IDLE.
HE EATS AND HE ROLLS IN HIS SLEEP
LIKE A HOG IN A STY.
AND HE HAS TO LIVE LIFE OVER AGAIN.

MY OWN MIND USED TO WANDER
WHEREVER PLEASURE OR DESIRE OR LUST LED IT.
BUT NOW I HAVE IT TAMED,
I GUIDE IT,
AS THE KEEPER GUIDES THE WILD ELEPHANT.

AWAKE.
BE THE WITNESS OF YOUR THOUGHTS.
THE ELEPHANT HAULS HIMSELF FROM THE MUD.
IN THE SAME WAY DRAG YOURSELF OUT OF
YOUR SLOTH.

The fundamental problem is not metaphysical, it is not concerned with the ultimate reality. It is concerned with you, your mind, your functioning of the mind, your sleep, your state of a sleepwalker.
Man ordinarily exists only mechanically. He is not aware although he believes he is aware. In fact that belief hinders him from becoming aware. Man is fast asleep not only in the night but in the day too. He is constantly dreaming. You can watch it yourself. Any time close your eyes, relax a little and you will be surprised: dreams start moving. They were already moving like an undercurrent. You were occupied with outside reality, hence you were not looking at them, but they were there all the time. Your back was towards them. Just look a little in and you will find thousands of dreams crowding you: possible, impossible, consistent, inconsistent.
When you see this state, you will understand why humanity has missed always the awakened ones. The awakened one has no more any undercurrent of dreaming in him. He is fully alert, aware. He speaks the language of awareness and you are asleep. There is no possibility of communication between you and the awakened one. He shouts, he makes every effort to reach you, to penetrate you, to penetrate your sleep and unconsciousness, but it is thick, dense and very deep. Rarely do you hear him, very rarely, and even

when you hear him you misinterpret him. Even when you hear him you don't listen to him. You are like a drunk who seems to be hearing, but still goes on interpreting according to his drunken state. The whole humanity needs to be part of an organization like Alcoholics Anonymous. You may not be alcoholic, you may not be taking any intoxicant, you may not be taking or injecting any drug, but the society goes on injecting into your blood, into your being, many poisons.

For example, each child is poisoned by the society through teaching him ambition. Ambition is a poison far more dangerous than any alcohol can ever be, far more dangerous than marijuana or LSD, because ambition destroys your whole life. It keeps you moving in a false direction. It keeps you imagining, desiring, dreaming, it keeps you wasting your life. Ambition means a subtle creation of the ego, and once the ego is created you are in the grip of darkness. And the whole social structure depends on ambition. Be the first! Wherever you are, whatsoever you are doing: be the first! -- as if being the first has something divine about it. By what means you become the first is irrelevant. By right means or wrong means, succeed! As if success in itself has become equivalent to life, synonymous with life.

Life has nothing to do with success. Success keeps you rushing towards the future and that becomes your intoxicant. Hoping, hoping for the tomorrow, wasting that which you have or that which you don't have and will never have.

Rabinowitz walked into Gold's theatrical agency with a puppy under his arm.
"I got here an attraction that will make you a million dollars. I got a little puppy dog that plays an electric piano and sings 'My Yiddish Mama'."
"I don't believe it," said Gold.
Rabinowitz opened up a suitcase, pulled out a tiny piano, put the puppy at it and the dog began playing and singing.
The theatrical agent leaped up and shouted, "My God! We will clean up a fortune!"
Just then the door opened and in walked a big dog, grabbed the puppy by the neck, and ran out with him.
"What the hell was that?" asked the agent.
"That is the puppy's mother," answered Rabinowitz. "She wants him to be a doctor!"

That is being done to every child. Your mother wants you to be a doctor, your father wants you to be an engineer, your uncle wants you to be a scientist and so on, so forth. And nobody asks what you are intrinsically meant to be. They go on imposing their ideas on you. Their ambitions have remained unfulfilled, they project their ambitions through you. They want their ambitions and egos fulfilled through you. And they are going to remain unfulfilled again; hence you will have to do the same damage to your own children. It is from one generation to another generation that the poison is passed on.
For centuries man has lived in this mad situation. Now it has reached to a climax. The whole earth has become almost a madhouse.

If Buddha was not understood twenty-five centuries ago, it will be even more difficult to understand him now, because the unfulfilled ambitions of twenty-five centuries are overwhelmingly there, they are surrounding you. You are flooded with them. All the people who have lived and died have left their ambitions as a heritage for you. Your eyes are blind, your ears are deaf, your hearts only pump the blood, they no more feel....

The vicar was driving home one night when suddenly his car made a terrible noise and ground to a halt.
Taking out his flashlight and a box of tools, he pulled up the bonnet and started to look over the engine.
While he was tinkering away with a spanner in hand, the local drunk staggered by and stopped to ask, "Anything wrong, Vicar?"
"Yes. Piston broke."
"So am I," replied the drunk.

You are not in your senses. Hence buddhas have been misunderstood, and to understand them has become more and more difficult. Keep it in your mind when you meditate on these beautiful words -- simple words, because buddhas have always used simple words, but with tremendous meaning.
The Buddha says:

I SHALL ENDURE HARD WORDS
AS THE ELEPHANT ENDURES THE SHAFTS OF BATTLE.
FOR MANY PEOPLE SPEAK WILDLY.

I SHALL ENDURE HARD WORDS.... Buddha expects that that is going to be his reward. He will shower you with his love and compassion and all that you can do is insult him, throw hard words or stones at him. All that you can do is some kind of harm. You are going to hurt him. Hence he says in the beginning: I SHALL ENDURE HARD WORDS. He expects that, and every buddha has expected that down the ages.

Once a disciple of Buddha was going to preach his word to the masses. He had become enlightened, and Buddha said, "Now you are ready to go, you need not accompany me any longer. Once in a while you can come to see me; otherwise you can help people on your own. Go and help people to become more aware, more meditative."
But he said also, "One thing I would like to ask: What part of the country would you like to go to?" There was a part of Bihar, where Buddha lived, where no sannyasin of Buddha's had ever gone. The name of the part was Suka. This newly enlightened sannyasin said, "I will go to Suka." Buddha said, "Please don't go there. Nobody has gone there yet for a certain reason. The people there are very wild, uncultured, stupid, mischievous, murderous, very violent. Don't go there."
But the disciple said, "If they are in such a bad situation they need us more than anybody else. The physician is needed only where people are ill."
Buddha said, "That I can understand, but before you go, before I bless you to go, I will ask three questions. First: If they insult you, what will be your response?"

The young man said, "I will thank them, I will feel grateful that they are only insulting me. They could have beaten me. They are good people. They are not beating me; they are simply insulting me -- and what can words do? Words are words, they can't hurt me."
Buddha said, "The second question: If they beat you, what will be your response?"
The young man said, "I will thank them, I will feel grateful that they are beating me. They could have killed me. They are only beating me -- they are so compassionate, so kind. It would have been so easy for them to kill me."
Buddha said, "Now, the last question. If they kill you, dying, in the last moments, what will be your response?"
The young man said, "Still I will be grateful and thankful to them because they are taking a life away from me in which I may have done something wrong. If I had lived more I may have committed some crime, some sin; I may have fallen from my peak of awareness. They are simply taking that life which is useless to me. I have attained the treasure, I don't need life anymore. They are taking something useless away from me and I will be grateful because, who knows, if I had lived more, in some situation I may have gone astray."
Buddha said, "Now you can go anywhere you like with my blessings. You have not only become enlightened, you have become capable of being a master."

Remember it, that every enlightened person is not a master, although every master has to be enlightened. Many enlightened people have lived on the earth without ever becoming masters for the simple reason that to be a master

needs certain qualities which are not necessary for being enlightened. Enlightenment is an individual process; it is something inward, subjective, it can happen within you. To be a master means the capacity to communicate, and not only to communicate but to commune with others, others who are almost mad, others who are almost incapable of seeing things.

Keller paid a lot of money for Buck, a golden retriever. One morning Keller went duck hunting with Buck. Within ten minutes he shot a duck that fell into a pond.
Buck ran over the surface of the water, picked up the duck, returned running over the top of the water, and laid it at the feet of his master.
The rest of the morning every bird that fell into the pond when shot was retrieved by Buck running over the top of the water without even wetting his feet.
Around noontime Keller met a fisherman. While they chatted a duck flew by and Keller quickly sent it hurtling down into the middle of the pond.
Once again, Buck ran out over the top of the water, retrieved the duck, and brought it back.
"I just bought this dog yesterday and he cost me a lot of dough," said Keller.
"Well, they pulled a fast one on you," said the fisherman. "The dog can't even swim!"

To communicate, to commune about the unknown, about the invisible, about the mysterious, is one of the greatest of arts. To help people to see that which they have never seen before although it is always around the corner, to help

people to hear that which they have never heard before although it has been always there, to help people to be silent, to be meditative, is one of the most difficult arts because people are mad. They don't know what silence is. To wake them up out of their sleep is almost a miracle.

A deaf man was visiting his friend and the dog of the friend barked at him like mad. Being unable to hear anything, he said to his friend after they had exchanged greetings, "Your dog did not sleep well last night."
"Why do you say that?"
"He looked at me and kept yawning."

A deaf man can't hear, he can't hear the dog barking; he can only see the movement, the gesture, the lips moving, the mouth opening and closing, and he will interpret it according to his own understanding. He says, "He looked at me and kept yawning."
That's how we have listened to the buddhas. We have not listened at all, we have heard their words, certainly. If we had listened to them there would have been no need for us to crucify Jesus or poison Socrates or kill al-Hillaj Mansoor.
Buddha says -- the first thing to remember: I SHALL ENDURE HARD WORDS AS THE ELEPHANT ENDURES THE SHAFTS OF BATTLE. It is a battle between the awakened one and the unawakened crowd. It is really a great battle, it is a war, and the unawakened are many and the awakened is one. And all the unawakened feel a certain humiliation in the presence of the awakened. They feel as if his presence proves to them that they have

not risen to their real heights, that they have wasted their lives. Rather than rising to their heights they would like to remove the presence of the awakened one so that they can feel at ease. You always feel at ease with people who are just like you; their presence does not in any way make you feel inferior. The presence of a Buddha makes you feel inferior and you are bound to take revenge. It is a battle, and a buddha has to be like an elephant who endures the shafts in a battle.

FOR MANY PEOPLE SPEAK WILDLY.... Not only will their words be hard, they will be almost wild, mad. I know it from my own experience.

For twenty years I was traveling around this country. I have encountered all kinds of wild people. It was necessary to invite them, it was necessary to choose my people from the crowds, hence I had to go. But the way they were behaving was really strange. I was not harming them; I was simply telling them to wake up in a thousand and one ways, but they were throwing stones at me, they were disturbing my meetings, they were preventing me from entering their towns. They were preventing me from getting down from the train in their towns. They were doing all kinds of things... they were really wild for no reason at all.

They are still doing it, although I don't go to their towns; although I never move anywhere now, they are still behaving in a wild way. Strange things they go on saying -- and not only saying, but believing. And now it is not only in India that they are saying hard words about me, it is almost all over the world.

Just yesterday I received an article published in London. They say that I brainwash people here and when their

brains are washed away completely, then the men are sent for smuggling jobs and the women are sent for prostitution. That's what I am doing to you, so beware! Once your brain is washed completely these two alternatives are left. And the man who writes it, writes it with great confidence as if he knows.

Just the other day I received a news from Bombay. A sannyasin has come across a few photographs in a studio. The sannyasin could see in the pictures somebody who looks like me. At the first glance he was shocked; when he looked closely then he could see that it was somebody else, but with some similarity. Now, they have bribed this man to be naked among naked women, and they have taken his pictures, and now they are going to publish them all over the world. Great idea! I really loved it. Some imagination. But this is how they have been doing always. And I am not saying that they do it knowingly. No, they may be thinking that they are serving humanity, they are making people aware of the danger that I am. They may have every good intention behind all these things; that makes it more complex. They are simply servants of humanity.

Buddha says: FOR MANY PEOPLE SPEAK WILDLY.

So if you want to live in this world and be awakened you will have to be ready to accept their hard words, their wild actions patiently, silently, with a deep understanding that what can they do? Whatsoever they can do they are doing. It is not their fault, they are simply asleep, and in their sleep they are saying absurd things.

When somebody is drunk and starts saying absurd things you don't take much note of it. You say, "He is a drunkard" -- but that's how people are.

THE TAMED ELEPHANT GOES TO BATTLE.
THE KING RIDES HIM.
THE TAMED MAN IS THE MASTER.
HE CAN ENDURE HARD WORDS IN PEACE.

THE TAMED ELEPHANT GOES TO BATTLE.... By "tamed elephant" Buddha means "the disciplined one." The words 'tamed elephant' are not very accurate; it will be better to say "the disciplined one." There is a great difference between taming and discipline. You can tame through force, coercion, violence, but you cannot discipline through coercion. Discipline comes out of understanding. You can help people to understand their own minds and the functioning of their minds, the state of their sleep, mechanicalness. Out of that understanding a change happens, a radical change happens: they become soft, compassionate, silent, peaceful, more understanding, more available, more open.

THE TAMED ELEPHANT GOES TO BATTLE. THE KING RIDES HIM. THE TAMED MAN IS THE MASTER. HE CAN ENDURE HARD WORDS IN PEACE.

The disciplined man also becomes a master, also becomes a king. He rides on his own discipline, on his own understanding. He lives in the world with wild people, uncultured, uneducated in the real sense of education: they don't know who they are. That should be the first step for a right education. They are not acquainted with their own interiority. What kind of education is this that does not make them aware of their inner kingdom, that goes on

stuffing them with nonsense, useless information? -- geography, history... what are you going to do with Genghis Khan and Tamerlane? What is the point of it all? But we go on stuffing people with unnecessary information. What is the point of knowing where Timbuktu is? Let it be where it is. Even if it is not anywhere, it doesn't matter. And histories of murderers called kings, murderers called great conquerors, Alexander the Great or Napoleon.... And in future people will be reading about Adolf Hitler, Benito Mussolini, Joseph Stalin, Mao Zedong, Ayatollah Khomeiniac. It is all absolutely irrelevant.

The basic education is missing. The first thing to be taught is meditation, the art of going in, because only out of that arises a discipline. The word 'discipline' is beautiful; it means the capacity to learn. A disciplined man is always ready to learn more. He is never closed, he never claims that he knows everything. He knows what he knows, and he also knows what he does not know -- and what he knows is very small, and what he does not know is immense. He cannot brag about his knowledge. In fact the more he knows the more he becomes aware of the uncharted, of the unmapped, of the unknown; and not only of the unknown but the unknowable. The more and more he feels the mystery of existence, the more and more he wonders. That is true knowledge, true education, true culture.

Then a man becomes a master, a king; only then can he make an effort to reach people. Only then can he communicate his love, his understanding, his knowing, his seeing.

BETTER THAN A MULE
OR THE FINE HORSES OF SINDH
OR MIGHTY ELEPHANTS OF WAR
IS THE MAN WHO HAS MASTERED HIMSELF.

Buddha is not concerned with God, Buddha is concerned with you. His religion is man-oriented, not God-oriented. One of the great poets of India, Chandidas, has condensed Buddha's whole teaching into a simple sentence: SABAR UPAR MANUS SATYA -- the truth of man is the highest truth, there is no truth higher than it -- TAHAR UPAR NAHIN; there is nothing higher than that.

Buddha has given man such dignity as nobody else has ever done. All other religions condemn man, they condemn man in order to praise God; and their "God" is nothing but their imagination. Hence there are as many gods as there are religions. There are at least three hundred religions in the world, three thousand sects of those religions, and there must be thirty thousand subsects. And there are as many gods as there are sects in the world. Every sect has its own idea of god, and God does not exist at all.

What exists is a godly existence, a divine existence. God not as a person but as a presence certainly exists. But to understand that presence, you have to understand your own inner presence first, because it is from there that you can take off, it is from there that you can have the first glimpse of what godliness is. If you have not known yourself you will never know God.

You can go on worshipping in the temples, in the mosques, in the churches, but your God is childish. Compared to Buddha's teachings the gods that are worshipped look very

stupid. The worshippers look stupid, and their gods, because they are created by the stupid worshippers, also look silly. Your gods are nothing but your projections; they can't be more than your own state of mind. Just watch. Different gods are created by different people. If horses could think of a religion, then their god must be a supreme horse. It can't be man, that much is certain. No horse can believe that man has any divinity in him. Man seems to be the most barbarious animal. If horses were to imagine, they would imagine the Devil in the shape of man. Man imagines God in his own image; hence Negroes have their god like Negroes. You can see the hair of the Negro gods, they are Negroid; you can see the lips of the Negro gods and they are thick. Hindu gods are Hindu, and Chinese gods are Chinese, the cheek bones showing prominently and the noses of course Chinese.
Every country, every race, every religion thinks of God according to its own idea of how man should be. But those are all our projections. Buddha is not concerned at all with them. Buddha wants YOU to become a god. He wants you to become divine. You are divine; he wants you to recognize the fact. There is nobody higher than you. This declaration is something superb, something unique. Nobody had dared before Buddha to respect man so much.

Father O'Reilly had taken up golf and was practicing on the church lawn while Sister McCarthy looked on. Father O'Reilly raised his club, and swung at the ball.
"Oh, shit! I missed," he shouted.
"Father O'Reilly," admonished Sister McCarthy, "God will be very angry if you use such language."

"Yes, Sister," answered Father O'Reilly. "I shall try to control my tongue." He raised his club for another try and swung at the ball. "Oh, shit! I missed," he shouted.
"Father O'Reilly, I am sure God will punish you severely if you say that again!" said the Sister.
"Yes, I will try especially hard next time, Sister McCarthy," said the priest. He raised his club again and swung at the ball. "Oh, shit! I missed," he shouted.
Just then a bolt of lightning flashed out of the sky and Sister McCarthy disappeared in a holocaust of flames. Then a great voice boomed from the sky. "Oh, shit! I missed."

Our gods can't be very different; they are our gods, they will reflect us. Hence Buddha says: Get rid of all gods. What you are worshipping in the temples is nothing but your own image. It will be better if you keep a mirror and worship your reflection in it. That will be far better, at least far truer, less deceptive.
Buddha's emphasis is on man. It is the only man-oriented religion in the world. And of course it transforms man, it does not make you superstitious, it does not give you any belief. It gives you a key to open the doors of your own being. And when you know who you are, you will know what this whole existence is and its beauty and its grace and its splendor.

NOT ON THEIR BACKS
CAN HE REACH THE UNTRODDEN COUNTRY,
BUT ONLY ON HIS OWN.

Remember, you cannot reach to the untrodden country on anybody else's back. You will have to reach on your own. The last words of Buddha were: Be a light unto yourself -- because there is no other light.
He gives you total freedom, he wants you to be free from all kinds of bondages. He does not want you to be a follower, an imitator; he wants you to be authentically your own self.

THE MIGHTY ELEPHANT DHANAPALAKA
IS WILD WHEN HE IS IN RUT,
AND WHEN BOUND HE WILL NOT EAT,
REMEMBERING THE ELEPHANT GROVE.

Even though it is a mythological elephant, Dhanapalaka is said to be the greatest elephant who has ever been on the earth, the wisest elephant. It is just a beautiful story. But even Dhanapalaka with such might, with such wisdom, goes wild when he is in rut; when he is sexually aroused he is no more in his senses, he becomes mad.
Sex is really an internal process of intoxicating you. It is chemical. You have nothing to do with it. It is your body chemistry, it is your physiology that releases certain chemicals in your body and then in a sexual state you can do something for which you will repent. Later on you will say, "I cannot believe how it happened. It happened in spite of me." And it is not only sex; so many things are happening in you through your physiology. When you are angry, it is not you. Again certain poisons are released in your blood and you are under the impact of those poisons.

Buddha says: If you start watching the processes of sexuality, anger, greed, you will be able to see that it is not out of you that these things are born. You are only a witness. These things are born in your body, in your mind; and body and mind are not two things, they are one. You are psychosomatic. The mind is your inner body, and the body is your outer mind. Hence the body affects the mind and the mind affects the body. You are a third force.

That third force is known only through meditation; there is no other way to know it, because it is through meditation that you become disidentified with the bodymind mechanism. Otherwise you can be very mighty, very knowledgeable, even sometimes in some moments very wise, but all that can go in a second. Your body can possess you, your physiology can become so powerful over you that you become a slave. You lose your mastery. Whenever you are angry, whenever you are in a sexual arousal, you are no more a master, you are simply a slave.

Buddha is not against sex, remember. Buddha is not against anger or greed, he is against slavery. And anything that creates slavery in you, he would like you to transcend it.

Remember the difference. There are people who are against sex -- they are against sex because sex is hedonistic, they say; they are against sex because sex makes you happy. They are against happiness. They can't tolerate any happiness anywhere. They are sadists, they would like the whole world to be in suffering; they enjoy suffering. They not only want others to suffer, they make themselves suffer too. Suffering is their joy. That is a perverted state, a pathological state.

Buddha is not against sex because it gives you pleasure; he is simply trying to make you aware of the fact that these are the things that keep you tethered into a kind of inner slavery. You are a slave of your own chemistry, you are a slave of your own physiology -- and this slavery has to be transcended.

THE MIGHTY ELEPHANT DHANAPALAKA IS WILD
WHEN HE IS IN RUT, AND WHEN BOUND HE WILL
NOT EAT, REMEMBERING THE ELEPHANT GROVE.

When he is under the impact of his sexuality he cannot eat; he thinks only of the elephant grove, he thinks of female elephants. His whole mind is possessed by fantasy -- and that's true about you too. Whenever you are under the impact of any chemical process you are no more yourself, you are distracted from your true being. You are no longer centered. You become eccentric. That's exactly the meaning of the word eccentric: you lose your center, you go off center.

THE FOOL IS IDLE.
HE EATS AND HE ROLLS IN HIS SLEEP
LIKE A HOG IN A STY.
AND HE HAS TO LIVE LIFE OVER AGAIN.

Buddha wants you to be reminded that if you live like a fool -- idle, lazy, without making any effort to transform your being, without making any effort to transcend your slavery, without making any effort to become a master -- if you live like a fool, just eating and rolling in your sleep, LIKE A HOG IN A STY, you will have to live again and again the same stupid life. You will have to repeat it. In fact

you have already repeated it many times, and you have not yet understood why you are repeating it again and again. You have to learn the lesson. The lesson is freedom. If you don't learn it you will be sent back to the same school, to the same grade again and again.

That is one of the greatest contributions of Indian spirituality to the world. India has contributed a few things; this is one of the contributions of great significance. The idea is that existence is an opportunity for understanding, for transcending, for going through a radical change. It is a school. Life is a school. If you learn rightly, if you discipline yourself rightly you will not be coming back again, you will exist in the universal. You will never become again a separate individual; you will never have to be an ego again. You will live an egoless existence, like the wave which has disappeared in the ocean.

That has been the ultimate goal of the mystics: to disappear into the universal, not to be separate; to melt and merge into the universal. Separation brings anxiety, separation brings death, separation brings misery. We are miserable because we are feeling separate from God or the universe. Bliss arises whenever you feel one with the universe; when you are in harmony with the universe bliss arises. There is great joy, rejoicing; you disappear, you die in a way, but you are reborn. You are reborn as the ocean, you die as the dewdrop.

But if you don't learn the lesson you will have to come back again. Unless you learn you will have to repeat the same process.

David, a student of a university, received a telephone call from his brother Blake, back home.
"Hi, David," said Blake. "Your cat is dead."
David fell apart. He began crying uncontrollably. When finally he was able to compose himself, he scolded his brother.
"Damn it, Blake," he told him. "You know how I loved that cat. You did not have to call me and just spill it out, first thing -- 'Your cat is dead.' You should have broken it to me gently. You could have said, 'Dave, the cat got out of the window the other day and crawled up the rainspout and got up on the roof and slipped and fell,' and then you could have said it died."
"I am sorry," apologized Blake.
"Okay, forget it," said David. "How is Mom?"
"Well, Mom got out the window the other day and crawled up the rainspout...."

It is so difficult to learn, we go on repeating the same mistake again and again -- maybe in a new way, in a new fashion, in a new style, but it is the same mistake. You watch your life: you have not done many mistakes, you have been doing the same mistakes again and again. You move in a circle. How are you going to learn? I am not against making mistakes. Make as many mistakes as you can, but please at least don't make the same mistake twice. Then certainly there will come a great understanding to you. One learns through mistakes, so nothing is wrong in mistakes as such. The wrongness is in repeating them again and again. That means you are not learning anything.

Your whole life you have been angry. What have you learned out of it? Your whole life you have been jealous. What have you learned out of it? If you are not learning out of these experiences, you will have to repeat your life again. Learn out of every experience, small or big. Whenever you are jealous you are in a fire, your heart burns -- and you know what you are doing to yourself. You know the wrongness of it, but you know it only because others say so. It is not your own understanding, your own insight. Let it become your own insight, so the next time the situation arises to be jealous you can laugh at it, so the next time the same situation arises you don't behave in the same old pattern; you can get out of the old pattern.

To me this is sannyas: getting always out of the old patterns, becoming always new, remaining always fresh, young, learning. Then your whole life will teach you something of tremendous value and you will be able to die in deep silence, peace, joy. Then there is no coming back. Then you become part of the whole. That is nirvana, that is moksha.

In Western religions there is no word which can translate moksha or nirvana. In Western religions -- Christianity, Islam, are offshoots of one religion, Judaism -- there are two words, hell and heaven. In Indian religions there are three words: hell, heaven and moksha. Hell means nothing but misery; it is a psychological state of misery, a state of negativity, a state of darkness, of utter loneliness. And heaven is joy, happiness, health, light. But there is a third word, moksha. Moksha means freedom, freedom from both heaven and hell, freedom from pain and pleasure -- because pain binds you as much as pleasure binds you. Pain may be

an ugly chain and pleasure may be a beautiful chain, decorated, maybe made of gold, but it chains you. Hell may be a poor place and heaven may be a very rich place but poverty and riches are two aspects of the same coin. One has to be free of both.

When you are free of both, you are free of mind, because mind lives in the duality of heaven and hell, of darkness and light, of misery and happiness, of day and night, of life and death. When you have transcended both and reached to the third which is beyond, which is transcendental, it is moksha. Moksha means nirvana; it is cessation of the ego, and meeting and merging into the universal. That has been the goal of the Eastern mystic.

Just as science has reached its ultimate peaks in the West, religion has reached its ultimate peaks in the East. Whenever East and West will meet there will be a great meeting of science and religion. And that is going to be one of the greatest moments in the history of humanity, because then man can live outwardly a rich life and inwardly a full life. Then there is no need to be as poor as India is or to be as empty inwardly as America is. One can be rich outside, and one can be rich on the inside simultaneously.

THE FOOL IS IDLE. HE EATS AND HE ROLLS IN HIS SLEEP LIKE A HOG IN A STY. AND HE HAS TO LIVE LIFE OVER AGAIN.

An elderly German sat before the fire and in a reflective moment spoke to his dog, "You is only a dog, but I wish I was you. Wen you go your bed in, you shust turn round dree times and lie down; wen I go de bed in, I haf to lock up de place, and wind up de clock, and put out de cat, and

undress myself, and my wife wakes up and scolds, and den de baby wakes and cries and I haf to walk him de house around, and den maybe I get myself to bed in time to get up again.
"Wen you get up, you shust stretch yourself, dig your neck a little, and you was up. I have to light de fire, put on de kiddle, scrap some vit my wife, and get myself breakfast. You be lays round all day and haf blenty of fun. I haf to work all day and haf blenty of drubble. Wen you die, you was dead; wen I die, I haf to go somewhere again."

You need not if you learn; if you learn the lesson you need not go anywhere again. You disappear into the whole, you are everywhere and nowhere then. You are no more an entity, confined into boundaries.

MY OWN MIND USED TO WANDER
WHEREVER PLEASURE OR DESIRE OR LUST LED IT.
BUT NOW I HAVE IT TAMED,
I GUIDE IT,
AS THE KEEPER GUIDES THE WILD ELEPHANT.

This also is something new in Buddha. Christians believe Jesus is special; he is the only begotten Son of God. Hindus believe Krishna is special; he is the perfect incarnation of God. Mohammedans believe Mohammed is special; he is the only prophet of God, the only messenger. Jainas believe Mahavira is special; he is the last, the twenty-fourth TIRTHANKARA, the last prophet of Jainism; there will be no more prophets after Mahavira. Unique they are, these

people, special, not just ordinary human beings like you and me.

Buddha is different again. He says, "I am an ordinary human being." He says, MY OWN MIND USED TO WANDER.

Gospels never say anything like that, no Hindu scriptures will ever say anything like that about Krishna or Rama because that will make them ordinary like you. They are born gods.

Buddha simply says, "I was a human being just like you. I was groping in darkness just like you. I was doing all kinds of things as you are doing; I am in no way special. All that happened to me is happening to you and something more has happened to me which can happen to you if you allow it to happen. I was as ordinary as you are; just only one thing has happened to me which has made all the difference. I have become aware and you are unaware. You are carrying the truth in you as much as I am. I am aware of it; you are not aware of it.

"But remember, whether you know the truth or you don't know, it makes no difference to the truth. The truth remains true. Knowing or not knowing does not make any difference. Truth is truth. It is behind you," Buddha says, "it is in front of me. I have turned in; I have taken the hundred-eighty-degree turn, that's all. It is not much to brag about. You can do it."

This is again very special about Buddha. He never claims that he is unique; hence he is of more help to humanity than anybody else. Because he says: I was just like you.... MY MIND USED TO WANDER WHEREVER PLEASURE OR DESIRE OR LUST LED IT.

He does not deny that there was lust in him from the very beginning. He does not deny that there was desire, he does not say that he was born pure. He simply says, "I was as much after pleasure -- I was as much full of desire as you are, and I was as much full of lust as you are. So nothing is wrong in lust, in desire, in pleasure; if anything is wrong it is in your unawareness. Be aware; and lust disappears, and desire disappears and the constant greed for pleasure disappears."

When you become aware, you are so at ease, so full of bliss, who bothers about pleasure? When you have diamonds who cares about pebbles? When you have inexhaustible sources of inner bliss who goes on begging for small pleasures, ugly pleasures? -- they simply disappear.

Buddha says: BUT NOW I HAVE IT TAMED, I have disciplined my mind, I have meditated, I have gone into the functioning of the mind, I have seen it through and through. Now I have become the master. Seeing it I have become the master. Knowing it I have become the master. Understanding makes you the master. Now I GUIDE IT, AS THE KEEPER GUIDES THE WILD ELEPHANT.

So don't feel guilty -- that is Buddha's message -- don't feel guilty for your greed, don't feel guilty for your anger, don't feel guilty for your lust. All that you need to do is become aware of your greed, become aware of your lust, become aware of your desire, and see the miracle happen. Just as you bring light in the room and darkness disappears, exactly like that, precisely like that, as you bring awareness in all desire, all greed, all anger, all lust simply disappears as if it has never been there. Don't try to escape, don't try to

renounce, because if you renounce you are simply renouncing the opportunity.
A man escapes from his wife, goes to the Himalayas or moves to a monastery.... There are monasteries where no woman has been ever allowed in; there are monasteries where once you go in, you are not allowed to go out again your whole life. Now, this is not a transformation, this is simply escaping from the opportunity.

Dick brought Sally to his bed. "What would you like to do?" he asked.
"I would like to see today's newspaper," she said.
"Sure," said Dick, "I will send my dog for it. He is so smart he will even bring back the change." Dick gave the dog ten dollars and sent him for the paper. In an hour when the dog didn't return, Dick and Sally went out looking for him. They found the dog making it with a French poodle.
"Did he ever do this before?" asked Sally.
"No," said Dick, "this is the first time he ever had any money."

Opportunity.... You can escape from the opportunity, that will not change your being. Outwardly you will become a monk; inwardly you will remain the same person. Outwardly you will become a nun; inwardly you will remain the same person. And the real question is of your inner consciousness, not of your outer circumstances. The mind is not bad if it is used as a mechanism and you are the master. The mind is beautiful as a servant. When it becomes the master then it is ugly. Let consciousness be

the master, the guide, and let the mind be like an elephant tamed, disciplined. How can you do it?
Buddha says:

AWAKE.
BE THE WITNESS OF YOUR THOUGHTS.

In these simple words he has given to the world the greatest meditation: vipassana. More people have become enlightened through vipassana than through any other method. There are thousands of methods but vipassana seems to be the easiest, the most perfect, and very natural. It does not demand any unnaturalness from you.

Reverend Johnson, an old black preacher, was warning his parishioners about sin.
"Sin," he said, "is like a big dog. There is the big dog of pride, and the big dog of envy, and the big dog of gluttony, and finally there is the big dog of sex. Now, folks, you gotta kill those big dogs before you are ever gonna get to heaven. It can be done -- I know -- because I've done it. I killed the big dog of envy, and the big dog of pride, and the big dog of gluttony -- and yes, brethren, I killed the big dog of sex!"
"Brother!" came a voice from the back of the church, "Are you sure that last dog didn't die a natural death?"

You cannot kill these dogs. Either they die a natural death -- but that does not bring any transformation to you -- or you have to become masters. There is no need to kill... Buddha will not suggest you kill anything. Why kill anything? If

you kill anger you will never be compassionate in your life, because it is anger, and the energy involved in anger, which becomes compassion. If you kill sex you will be simply impotent, that's all; you will not attain to love. It is sex transformed that creates love energy. Love energy is confined to sex. When you bring awareness to it, sex disappears but love energy is released. Anger disappears but compassion is released. Greed disappears and sharing comes in its place.

It is not a question of killing; these are energies. Don't be such a fool as to kill anything, because if you kill it you will miss something very essential in your life. Transform. Religion has to be the real alchemy, the science of transformation. It is not murderous.

But the stupid religious people go on murdering, destroying. They are destructive, self-destructive. Hence even if they drop their anger they don't become graceful, they don't attain to creativity, they don't contribute to the world and its beauty. They are burdensome, they are not in any way a help. They are a hindrance in the progress of humanity. Buddha will not suggest to you to kill anything. He says: Just be awake. BE THE WITNESS OF YOUR THOUGHTS.

Anger is a thought, sex is a thought. Just watch, be alert, let them move on the screen -- anger, greed, lust -- and you remain aloof, cool, just a witness. In the beginning it is very difficult, but only in the beginning. If you persist then within three to nine months you will be able to do the impossible.

One day it happens that your witness has become so perfect that the screen remains empty, nothing passes -- no

thought, no desire. That day you have attained to the first state of samadhi, the first satori. And the first satori is the beginning; it triggers many satoris in you, culminating ultimately into samadhi, into nirvana.
When the mind becomes just a pure mechanism... when you want to use it, you use it, when you don't want to use it, it remains silent.

THE ELEPHANT HAULS HIMSELF FROM THE MUD. IN THE SAME WAY DRAG YOURSELF OUT OF YOUR SLOTH.

Buddha insists again: nobody can pull you out of your mud, nobody can help you. So don't believe that Jesus will come and everything will be solved. Jesus has been before and nothing has been solved. Don't believe in salvation through somebody; no messiah can help you. Buddhas only point the way. You have to do everything on your own. Nobody can do it for you. I cannot see for you, I cannot hear for you; you have to do it on your own.
There are a few things which cannot be done by anybody else for you, on your behalf, and those are the most precious things which only you can do. Awareness is one of those most precious things.
Buddha says: THE ELEPHANT HAULS HIMSELF FROM THE MUD. Just like that, IN THE SAME WAY DRAG YOURSELF OUT OF YOUR SLOTH.
By awareness Buddha does not mean presence of mind. Many people misunderstand. Whenever Buddha uses the words 'awake', 'awareness', people think he is talking about presence of mind. Presence of mind is presence of mind;

awareness has nothing to do with the mind. Awareness is something beyond the mind.
Presence of mind is very ordinary. In any danger it comes to you. If somebody is going to shoot you, you will have presence of mind in that moment. If a tiger suddenly jumps in front of you, you will have presence of mind; you will do something which you have never done before.

Frank and Gene were tossing down a few brews at the neighborhood pub.
"Boy, did I have a close call with Angie last night," said Frank.
"What happened?" asked Gene.
"Well, I got home real late, so I took off my shoes, climbed the stairs, opened the door of the bedroom, tiptoed in, and closed the door without making any noise. Just as I am about to get into bed, the wife wakes up and says, 'Is that you, Toto?'"
"What did you do?"
"For once in my life I really used my head," said Frank. "I licked her hand."

This is presence of mind. She is thinking he is the dog, Toto. But presence of mind is not awareness; it is a small phenomenon, a tiny thing. Mind can do it.
Awareness is something beyond the mind. You have to watch the mind, you have to watch the presence of mind as much as absence of mind. You have to watch both, you have to go beyond both. It comes, it certainly comes, and when it comes it takes all that is your misery, your ego, your insensitivity, your cruelty. It takes all mud from you...

and out of that mud arises the lotus, the one-thousand-petaled lotus of samadhi in you.
Enough for today.
The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 9
Chapter #4
Chapter title: Freedom is something inner
14 February 1980 am in Buddha Hall

The first question:
Question 1
BELOVED MASTER,
THIS MORNING WHEN YOU WERE TALKING ABOUT WAKING UP AND RISING FROM SLOTH, I FELT SO STUPID -- AND I THINK I AM GETTING STUPIDER AND STUPIDER! WHAT TO DO... IS IT ENOUGH TO JUST BE HERE WITH YOU? I FEEL VERY HOPELESS. AND IT MAKES ME SAD.

Krishna Gopa, it is a good sign that you feel that you are becoming stupider and stupider. That simply means the borrowed knowledge is disappearing, hence the feeling. You are unlearning whatsoever you had learned up to now. Unlearning is the basic process of becoming innocent again.
But don't call it becoming stupid; don't use that word -- that is condemnatory. And then one starts feeling sad. You are becoming more innocent. You are becoming more and more unburdened from unnecessary knowledge, information. You are becoming more natural, more like a

child, more full of wonder. And if you call it being stupid you will miss the whole point.
Your mind can call it stupid because the mind is losing its ground. The mind is dying, and the mind is bound to make all possible efforts to save itself, to survive. And the first step is to condemn the state of not-knowing that is growing in you. Every meditator comes across it and every meditator finds that mind condemns it. It is against the mind; you are becoming a no-mind. And who wants to die? The mind does not want to die; it wants to keep its possession of you. Hence the condemnation. Beware of it.

Let the knowledge disappear. Don't be worried at all because that knowledge has not given you anything. In the first place, borrowed knowledge creates only bondage, not freedom. It burdens you; it does not give you wings. It does not make you light, it makes you heavy. It makes you hard, it makes you more and more mechanical, because through the thick wall of knowledge you cannot see the mysterious surrounding you. And the moment you don't see the mysterious you are almost dead.
Life is in harmony with the mysterious. Life is in being full of wonder. Life is knowing the art of wondering, of being in awe. The knowledgeable person is a poor person, very poor, utterly impoverished -- and he himself is responsible. He thinks he is very rich because he knows about roses, although he has not seen a single rose. He knows all about love, although he has never loved himself. He knows about God, but to know about God is not to know God. To know about light is not to know light.

A blind man can know all there is to know about light, but he will still remain blind. He will not experience the joy that light brings, that the morning brings, that the sunrise brings. He will not see the colors of the rainbow, of the flowers, of the butterflies. He will remain utterly oblivious of the world of light and color. He is blind! He knows about... but knowing about light is of no use if you are blind. And if you have eyes, whether you know about light or not, it makes no difference at all. Even without knowing light you experience it -- and that is TRUE knowing. Knowledge is not true knowing, it is not wisdom. Knowledge comes through information; wisdom comes through experience.

Gopa, don't condemn your innocent state that is growing in you. Don't call it stupid. That is mind playing a trick upon you; it always plays the trick. In the old scriptures, the same mind is called the Devil; there is no other Devil. It is the mind that tempts you to go wrong because the mind can exist only when you are wrong. The mind is not needed at all when you are moving towards truth, when you are right. When you are on the right track, mind has no utility; it simply loses its power over you. And that's what is happening.

You say, "This morning when you were talking about waking up and rising from sloth, I felt so stupid -- and I think I am getting stupider and stupider!"

You are blessed. Go on becoming more and more stupid -- stupid in the sense of innocent.

Jesus was called a fool. Saint Francis was called a fool; used to call himself "the fool of God." Why have Jesus and Francis and people like these been called fools? Even they

themselves have called themselves fools for the simple reason that there is something which the fool can know and the knowledgeable can never know. The fool is innocent. The fool is not so foolish as the knowledgeable person is. Sometimes he seems to be wiser than your so-called wise people.

It was an ancient custom in almost all the countries of the world that every great king used to have a fool in his court. Why? -- for the simple reason that sometimes the fool says things which the wise -- so-called wise -- cannot say. The fool is so innocent that he simply utters the truth. The so-called wise are cunning; they will not say the truth, they will say that which appeals. It may be a lie -- and lies have great appeal because people live in lies. And particularly in the courts, all kinds of lies remain prevalent. The king is surrounded by all kinds of cheats, all kinds of cunning people; hence a fool was needed, so that he can depend on the fool. The fool will not be cunning and he will say whatsoever is the case. He is so foolish that he will not be bothered about the consequences of it.

This is strange, but something significant to be understood. The fool was a necessary part in every great king's court, and the fools have saved many kings many times. They have saved their kingdoms because their advice came from a state of not-knowing, utterly innocent. They have a clarity that the knowledgeable person cannot afford; he is clouded. Gopa, your knowledge is disappearing. This is really SATSANG; this is what it means to be with a master. He takes away your knowledge and gives you wonder in return. He makes you a child again. And unless you are a child you will not enter into MY kingdom of God.

But because you are calling it stupidity, condemning it, giving it a negative name, you are feeling sad, hopeless. We live through words; we have become so much attached to words that we are deceived by words. Just change the word and you will see the change in your inner climate. Call it innocence and just feel the texture, the taste. Call it stupid and feel the texture and the taste. When you call it stupid you suddenly feel surrounded by darkness; when you call it innocence, as if a flower starts opening within your heart, a fragrance surrounds you.
Beware about words, what words you use, because we have lived so long with words, through words....

I have heard:
A hunter lost his way in the forest. By the evening he reached a private land, but he was afraid to enter because just on the gate there was a big signboard saying: BEWARE OF DANGEROUS DOGS. But the night was descending and the forest was full of wild animals. It was better to encounter the dogs than to be eaten by the wild animals. And he was so tired, so utterly tired; he wanted to rest. And there was some hope: if dogs are there, there may be somebody -- the owner of the dogs, the owner of the land, the man who has put these big signs.
He entered in, a little afraid, shaky, but there was no other way, there was no alternative. Just a few yards he entered in and again there was a board, an even bigger one: BEWARE OF THE DANGEROUS DOGS. His heart started sinking, but there was no way to go back, nowhere to go back, so he had to go in. Again, even a still bigger board.

And then... just a small dog, a very small dog, standing before the cottage of the owner. So small a dog that you could simply take him by the feet and throw him at least a hundred yards!
The hunter was very much puzzled. He asked the owner, "Where are the big, dangerous dogs?"
He said, "There are none. This is my only dog."
The hunter asked, "Can this dog prevent people coming in?"
The man said, "No, but the signboards do. You are the first man in years who has entered. Even if there is no dog, those signboards will do."

People live through words. In a crowded theater, if somebody suddenly shouts, "Fire! Fire!" people will start running. Nobody will bother whether there is any fire. The very word 'fire' and your imagination starts working.
Gopa, don't call it stupid, otherwise you create your own sadness and you are a victim of your mind. Your mind will feel happy because it has made you sad. If you are sad you will start collecting the knowledge that has fallen from you; you will put it back into its old place. You will again start collecting information so that you don't feel stupid. Call it innocence.
Be very careful what words you use. Words have associations, deep associations. They have become almost concrete realities in our life; they are no more words, they are things.
You say, "I feel very hopeless. And it makes me sad."
Hopelessness always comes if you have been hoping too much; it comes in the same proportion. Expect and you will

be frustrated. Hope and sooner or later you will feel hopelessness. Hence my whole effort here is to make you free from hoping. If you become free from hoping you will never be trapped into any hopeless state. Hopelessness is a by-product of hoping. Frustration is a by-product of expectation. But it is natural, in a way.
When you come to me, you come with great hopes; you want to become enlightened, you want to become a buddha. But the problem is, I cannot help you to become a buddha because you are already a buddha! There is no need for you to become a buddha. Becoming is not the question at all -- buddha is your being. And whenever you drop this idea of becoming, suddenly you will recognize the buddha within. What I am doing here is not helping you to become somebody, but just to recognize who you are. All the devices here are just devices to make you remember -- not devices to help you become, but only to remind you.

The family moved from the city to the suburbs and was told to get a watchdog to guard the premises at night. So they bought the largest dog they could find.
Shortly afterwards the house was broken into by burglars who made a good haul -- while the dog slept.
The householder went to the kennel-owner and told him about it. "Well," said the dealer, "what you need is a little dog to wake up the big dog."

That's what you need! Buddha is fast asleep in you. Just a little device, a little dog will do -- to wake up the big dog!

Mrs. Mulla Nasruddin and her neighbor were chatting about their teenagers.
"Is your son hard to get out of bed in the morning?" asks the neighbor.
"No," replied Mrs. Mulla Nasruddin. "I just open the door and throw the cat on his bed."
"How does that wake him?"
"He sleeps with the dog."

My work consists of such things, throwing a cat on your bed.... It is not some great work -- it is sheer fun!

The second question:
Question 2
BELOVED MASTER,
WHAT DO YOU SAY ABOUT MODERN ART?

Asang, the first thing is, it is not art. For the first time something exists in the name of art which is not art at all. It is more a therapy than an art. Look at the modern paintings and you will be convinced of what I am saying. The painters must be insane; they have poured their insanity on the canvas. It helps them because it releases some tensions inside their being. It is a catharsis, but it is not art. It is therapy through art, but not art itself.
If Picasso is prevented from painting, he will go mad. Vincent van Gogh went mad before he committed suicide. And I have been looking into his life deeply and my feeling is he went mad because he could not paint as much as he wanted. He had no money to paint. His brother was giving him money enough just to survive, and he was not eating

for four days per week. He would eat only for three days and four days he will fast to save money to paint. How long can you do that? But painting was more important for him than food -- and it ended in madness. He could not paint as much as he wanted, and when he saw that there was no possibility to paint anymore -- the brother is tired, the family is tired and nobody wants to help him and nobody wants to purchase his paintings -- he committed suicide. The same would be the case with Picasso if he was prevented from painting: he would go mad or he would commit suicide. Suicide is the ultimate in insanity. But his paintings are a great help, a great relaxation.

And it is not only so with painting; it is so with poetry, music, dance. Everything modern is a little crazy because modern man is a little crazy, off the center.

Gurdjieff has divided art into two categories. The modern art he calls subjective art. The ancient art -- the real art -- the people who made the pyramids, the people who made the Taj Mahal, the people who made the caves of Ajanta and Ellora, they were of a totally different kind. He calls that art objective art. Subjective art is like vomiting. You are feeling sick, nauseous; a good vomit helps you to feel good. The poison is thrown out, you feel relieved. It is good for you, but not good for others.

Now, in the name of modern painting, you are hanging vomited, nauseous, sickening things in your rooms. In the name of modern music you are simply getting into crazier spaces within you. It is subjective art.

Objective art means something that helps you to become centered, that helps you to become healthy and whole. Watching the Taj Mahal in the full moon, you will fall into

a very meditative space. Looking at the statue of Buddha, just sitting silently with the statue of the Buddha, something in you will become silent, something in you will become still, something in you will become buddhalike. It is objective art, it has tremendous significance.
But objective art has disappeared from the world because mystics have disappeared from the world. Objective art is possible only when somebody has attained to a higher plane of being; it is created by those who have reached the peak. They can see the peak and they can see the valley both. They can see the height of humanity, the beauty of humanity, and the sickness and the ugliness of humanity too. They can see deep down in the dark valleys where people are crawling and they can see the sunlit peaks. They can manage to create some devices which will help the people who are crawling in the darkness to reach to the sunlit peaks. Their art will be just a device for your inner growth, for maturity.
Modern art is childish -- not childlike, remember, childish; not innocent but stupid, insane, pathological. We have to get rid of this trend. We have to create a new kind of art, a new kind of creativity. We have to bring to the world again what Gurdjieff calls objective art.

The farmer was looking at one of those modern, abstract paintings. "It is a perfect picture of those fellows in New Delhi," he said. "No matter which way you look at it, it does not make sense."

But the farmer is saying something which Picasso himself has said. Picasso has said, "The world today does not make sense, so why should I paint pictures that do?"
If the world today does not make sense, that means more pictures, more music, more poetry is needed that makes sense -- to help humanity to come out of this absurd state. That was the function of objective art: to help you come out of your absurd state. But Picasso says, "The world today does not make sense..." as if it was making sense in the past. It has never made any sense; the world has always been the same. But he finds a rationalization. He is saying, "If the world itself makes no sense, why should I paint pictures that do?"
If you ask me, that should be precisely the reason to make pictures that DO make sense. Otherwise, how is the world going to be helped? It needs music, it needs poetry, it needs dance. It needs paintings which can help it to rise above its misery, its schizophrenia, its neurosis, its psychosis.
But Picasso himself is only a representative of the neurotic mind. Picasso became so famous for the simple reason that he represented us very clearly.

The marriage broker introduced a really ugly girl to a young man. The victim protested that the lady had misplaced eyes, a broken nose and a deformed face.
"Ah," said the marriage broker, "it is apparent that you do not like Picasso."

Looking at Picasso's paintings, have you not felt it? Everything is deformed, misplaced.

I have heard that a very rich lady wanted a portrait of herself done by Picasso. He agreed for a fantastic sum. The lady was ready to pay. Six months he took to make the portrait.
When the portrait was ready, the lady looked at it and said, "Everything is okay; I just don't like the nose. You will have to improve it."
Picasso looked at the lady, then he looked at the painting and he said, "It is impossible."
The lady said, "Why? I am ready to pay. If you want more money, I am ready to pay."
Picasso said, "It is not a question of money. I don't know where the nose is."

His paintings are nightmarish. And it is not only Picasso; Picasso simply symbolizes the whole of contemporary art. He is the most representative modern artist. He is right, in a sense, because the world makes no sense.
The world has never made any sense, but there have been people who created such art that it helped people to find some sense in a senseless world. And that finding of sense helps you tremendously to become centered.

"It is terrible to see men looking like girls, with long hair and all. You can't tell the difference. I was sitting in a restaurant when a girl came in. I turned to the person at the next table and said, 'Isn't it terrible how girls look like boys these days?'"
"That's my son," she said, pointing to the girl.
"Ah, I'm sorry. I didn't know you were the mother."
"I'm not," the neighbor said indignantly. "I'm the father!"

Things are topsy-turvy. Things are becoming more and more topsy-turvy. The world seems to be less a cosmos now and more a chaos.

In the ancient philosophies, cosmology was one of the most important things to be discussed. Now there seems to be no cosmos, no cosmology. The whole world seems to be in a chaos, as if all is accidental. Nothing seems to be essential, intrinsically valuable; everything seems to be just happening as an accident. And this is reflected in everything. It is reflected in art, it is reflected in science, it is reflected even in religion.

We need again a cosmology. I know the world IS a chaos; that is a challenge for human consciousness to create a cosmos out of it. It is a tremendously valuable opportunity to create a cosmos. Just to say that it is a chaos, remain with it as it is, is to fall below human dignity; it is not accepting the challenge. It is really a great challenge to change yourself AND the world. It IS a puzzle, but it is a puzzle only if you have already concluded that there can be no meaning at all; otherwise it is a mystery, not a puzzle. A mystery may not have any meaning, but it has significance. And there is a difference between meaning and significance -- and significance is far more meaningful than meaning itself; significance is far more important. What meaning is there in a roseflower? -- but significance certainly is there. Just think of a world without roses. It will be a poor world; some significance will be lost. What significance is there when you hear the sound of running water? Have you not felt some significance? Yes, meaning you cannot prove.

Meaning seems to be imposed by the mind upon existence; significance seems to be part of existence itself. We have lost contact with the language that can understand significance; we only understand meaning. Meaning is intellectual, significance is existential. There is no meaning in love, but great significance; no meaning in God, but great significance; no meaning in meditation, but great significance, great splendor.

I would like to say to my sannyasins, Asang, that my sannyasins have to be not only meditative, they have also to be creative. And they have to create what Gurdjieff calls objective art. They have to create something which can help a wandering humanity to come to a resting place. Yes, much can be created that can give shelter, that can become a deep, deep experience of communion with nature.

That is the real function of art: helping people to commune with nature, because out of that communion arises religion. Science is an intellectual effort to understand nature, art is an emotional effort to understand nature, and religion is an existential effort to COMMUNE with nature. Art is higher than science, religion is higher than art. Science has to be objective; if science is subjective it will be just fiction -- science fiction. Art has also to be objective; otherwise it will be fiction. And that's what modern art is -- fiction. And religion has also to be objective, really authentic; otherwise it is speculation, philosophy.

The third question:

Question 3

BELOVED MASTER,

I WANT TO GIVE UP SMOKING. WHAT DO YOU SAY ABOUT IT?

Mahendra, why? Why in the first place do you want to give up smoking? What is wrong in smoking? Yes, it is a little stupid, silly -- just poisoning your breath, taking smoke in and out, wasting money, life. But it is not a sin, it is not a crime either. You should not feel guilty about it. Maybe you will live a little less, two or three years less than you would have lived. But what is the point of living three years more? What will you do by living three years more? You will create a little more trouble in the world -- so better you go a little earlier. And the world is too much populated. Nobody had thought about birth control before. Now we are thinking constantly everywhere how to reduce the population, how to prevent new children from being born. Sooner or later we will have to think about the other end: how to help the old people to go faster, because that is absolutely logical, part of it. If we prevent children from coming in just to keep the world a little less populated -- it is already too much populated -- sooner or later we have to think about ways and means how to help old people to go quicker, faster. We will have to make it a birthright.

If somebody decides to die, it should not be a crime. In fact, he should be supported, respected, because he is creating space for new people to come. He is helping the world -- he is a great servant of humanity.

You say, Mahendra, "I want to give up smoking."

Why in the first place? -- because you have been reading that it is bad for your health? But what will you DO with your health?

There is a beautiful story about Jesus, not related in the Christian gospels. My feeling has always been that it has been deleted somewhere down the centuries because it is a dangerous story. But Sufis have kept it intact, recorded. There are a few Jesus stories which Sufis have guarded, and they should be thanked for it because they are the most beautiful stories out of all the stories that the gospels contain. This one is a beauty.

Jesus came to a village. He saw a man lying in the gutter, shouting, talking incoherently, making noise. It was difficult to understand what he wanted to say; he was completely drunk.

Jesus came close just to understand what he wanted to say -- maybe he needed some help. When he came close he recognized the face. He shook the man. The man opened his eyes, and Jesus said, "Don't you recognize me? I recognize you."

The man said, "I also recognize you, but please leave me alone."

Jesus said, "As far as I remember you were ill, very ill, almost on the verge of death, and I cured you. I have done a miracle -- and I don't see any gratitude in your eyes."

The man said, "Gratitude? I was going to die and that would have been a rest from this ugly life. You made me healthy again and now I am suffering again. Who is responsible? Why did you make me healthy again? Who gave you the right?"

Jesus was shocked -- he had never thought about it. Jesus said, "But you are healthy -- you can USE your health."

And the man said, "That's what I am doing. When one is healthy one drinks, eats, enjoys the things of life. What else can I do with my health?"
It is really a very pertinent question: What will you do with your health? Eat, drink, be merry! And the man seems to be almost angry at Jesus.
Jesus walked away very puzzled, and he saw another man who was running after a prostitute. He stopped the man and said, "Young man, I know you perfectly well. You were blind and I gave you eyes."
And the man said, "What else should I do with the eyes? The eyes are meant to look and search for beauty. And that woman -- have you not seen how beautiful she is? Leave me alone! I have no more time for you."
Jesus was very sad because he was thinking he had helped these people. He came out of the village and a man was preparing to kill himself. He asked the man, "Life is so valuable! Why are you killing yourself?"
The man looked at Jesus and he said, "Don't you recognize me? I had died and you are the man who disturbed my death and you brought me back from my death. It is too much! I cannot bear this life any longer. Enough is enough! And please, you have come again... and I have made every preparation to kill myself. Don't do your miracle again -- I don't want any of your miracles!"

This is a strange story, but of great significance. Man is such, so blind, that he will do something wrong if he is healthy, he will do something wrong if he is alive, he will do something wrong if he has eyes -- he will see something

wrong. Unless you are conscious you are going to do wrong.
That's why in the East, Buddha, Mahavira, Lao Tzu and people like them have never done any miracles -- or they have done only one miracle, and that miracle is the transformation of unconsciousness into consciousness -- because unless that happens everything is going to be wrong. It is giving a sword into a child's hand: either he will cut himself or somebody else. You don't give poison to a child to play with; it is dangerous. Man is unconscious, almost in a state of drunkenness.
So what will you gain out of it if you stop smoking?

O'Leary walked into a bar and ordered a beer and a whisky. He drank the beer and poured the whisky into his vest pocket. O'Leary repeated this routine several times, and finally the puzzled bartender asked, "What is the idea?"
"None of your business!" said the Irishman. "And what is more, you are so nosy I have a good mind to punch you in the eye!"
Just then a mouse stuck his head out of O'Leary's vest pocket and said, "And that goes for your damned cat too!"

Man is unconscious. He only APPEARS conscious, he is not conscious at all.
So rather than asking me what I have to say about it, you should watch. The most important thing is not stopping smoking; the most important thing is to watch why you smoke in the first place. If you don't understand the cause of it and if the cause is not removed, you can stop smoking -- then you will start chewing gum, because the basic cause

is there and you will have to do something. If you don't start chewing gum, then you may start talking too much. I don't smoke. If any day I have to stop talking I may have to start smoking! You will do something....

This amorous playboy cornered the girl in the back seat of his sedan and was eagerly trying his hand at her. She kept resisting and pushing him away, but he kept coming with more hands than an octopus.
She finally slapped him away and hollered, "I don't know what has come over you. You have always been so restrained and gentlemanly."
He said, "Yes, I know, but I just can't help it. I am trying to give up smoking."

Smoking is keeping many people from many things which will be far more dangerous. Your hand is engaged, your mouth is engaged, your mind is engaged. And you are not harming anybody in particular, only harming yourself. That is your birthright, that is your freedom. Otherwise you will do something else.
Have you watched? Whenever you feel nervous, tense, you start smoking. It helps you to cool down, to relax a little bit; otherwise life will become too much. When you are not feeling nervous, when you are enjoying, when you are relaxed, you don't remember smoking. Hours may pass and you may not smoke for the simple reason that there is no cause. Otherwise you become afraid you may do something wrong. Better to keep yourself engaged.
Mahendra, my suggestion is: first go deep down into your smoking habit. Meditate over it, why in the first place you

smoke. It may take a few months for you to go into it, and the deeper you go the more you will be freed of it. Don't stop smoking. If it disappears on your understanding, through your understanding, that is totally a different matter. If it disappears because you went to the root cause of it and you saw the point....

For example, it may be that your mother's breast was taken away from you earlier than you wanted and it is just a substitute.

To many people I have suggested -- and it has been of help to smokers -- I say, "If you really want to stop smoking, then start sucking your thumb." They say, "But that will look very stupid!" That is true... smoking looks as if you are doing something great! You are doing the same thing, in fact a little more harmful. Just sucking on your thumb is not harmful at all, but smoking IS harmful. But because everybody is smoking and it is an accepted thing and it seems to be a very grown-up thing....

Small children want to grow up, if not for anything else than just for being allowed to smoke. Seeing grown-up people smoking they feel very inferior -- they are not allowed. They are told, "You are too small -- wait a little. This is something which only grown-up people can do." It symbolizes a grown-up person. And if you are really smoking costly cigarettes, costly cigars, rare, exotic, then it shows your success, it shows that you have arrived. It gives you dignity.

Go deep into it. It may be that your mother's breast was taken away too early. Then my suggestion is: in the night before you go to bed, Mahendra, have a bottle with a rubber nipple fixed to it and suck it. Every night before you

go to sleep become a child again. Go on sucking on it. Fill the bottle with warm milk. That's what the smoking is doing. The warm smoke going in and out symbolizes the milk of the mother. You will have to go deep into the causes.

One of the great things in life is that if you understand the root cause of something you can overcome it without any trouble, without any willpower. If you use willpower to stop it you will find some substitute -- you will have to find some substitute. Maybe you are not allowed to speak; in the office the boss won't allow you, in the home the wife won't allow you. She goes on talking, she gives you no time to talk. And you are also afraid if you talk you get into trouble; whatsoever you say is wrong. And the wife jumps upon it, takes the cue from that and starts nagging you. So in the home you have to hide behind a newspaper. Whether you read the newspaper or not is not the point, but you have to hide behind the newspaper. You have to look engaged, occupied, so you need not talk and you need not hear what the wife goes on saying.

Women all over the world, except for a few countries in the West, don't smoke, for the simple reason that they talk too much. Their lips have so much exercise, there is no need! In a few countries in the West they have started smoking and the reason is the Women's Lib movement. They have to compete with men in everything; whether it is sense or nonsense that doesn't matter. I am very much afraid they may start pissing standing any day, because they are equal to men! Howsoever stupid it is, they will do it.

Go into the cause of it, Mahendra, and if you can find the cause it will simply melt away. But don't stop by force -- let it go on its own accord, through watchfulness, through awareness.
So I will not say to stop smoking or stop anything, but I will suggest always: watch, meditate, be aware, go into the roots. This is a fundamental law of life: if you can understand the root of something it disappears, it evaporates. Unless you understand the root it will continue in one form or another.

The fourth question:

Question 4
BELOVED MASTER,
I AM IN LOVE WITH A BEAUTIFUL GIRL, BUT SHE IS POOR. THERE IS A HAG WITH LOTS OF LOOT IN LOVE WITH ME. SHALL I MARRY THE RICH GIRL OR THE POOR GIRL?

Narayano, marry the rich girl and be good to the poor!

The fifth question:
Question 5
BELOVED MASTER,
I AM IN LOVE. WHAT SHOULD I DO?

Mahesh, the only cure for a man in love is marriage. If that does not cure him, nothing will.

The sixth question:

Question 6
BELOVED MASTER,
FOR FORTY-FIVE YEARS I LIVED IN PRISON, MOSTLY MADE BY MYSELF. NOW I KNOW IT IS POSSIBLE TO BECOME MORE AND MORE FREE. BUT WHAT TO DO, WHEN YOU FEEL YOU NEED A SAFE PLACE, A GOOD CLIMATE TO GROW? ANOTHER PRISON? HOW TO BE FREE ANYWHERE, ANY TIME? I FEEL SORROW AND REBELLION IN ME ABOUT THAT.

Yvonne, freedom has nothing to do with the outside; one can be free even in an actual prison. Freedom is something inner; it is of the consciousness. You can be free anywhere -- chained, in a jail, you can be free -- and you can be unfree outside the jail, in your own home, visibly absolutely free, but you will be a prisoner if your consciousness is not free.

You are confusing outer freedom with inner freedom. As far as the outside is concerned you can never be absolutely free -- let it be clear once and forever. As far as outside is concerned you are not alone, so how can you be absolutely free? There are millions of people around you. On the outside, life has to be a compromise. If you were alone on the earth you would have been absolutely free, but you are not alone.

On the road you have to keep to the left. And Yvonne will feel this is a great bondage: "Why? Why should I be forced to be on the left? I am a free man. If I want to walk on the right I will walk on the right. If I want to walk in the middle of the road I will walk in the middle of the road." In

India you can do it -- India is a free country, remember! It is the greatest democracy in the world, so right, left, middle, anywhere you can walk!

But one man's freedom becomes so many people's problem. You are free to be yourself, but you should not be an interference in other people's lives.

A man of understanding will respect his freedom as much as he will respect others' freedom, because if nobody respects your freedom, your freedom will be destroyed. It is a mutual understanding: "I respect your freedom, you respect my freedom, then we both can be free." But it is a compromise. I have not to interfere with your being, I am not free to trespass on you.

You want to sing loudly in the middle of the night. Of course you are a free person, and if you cannot sing loudly in your own house, what kind of freedom is this? But the neighbors have to sleep too; then there has to be a compromise.

On the outside we are interdependent. Nobody can be absolutely independent. Life is an interdependence. Not only with people are you interdependent, you are interdependent with everything. If you cut all the trees you will die because they are constantly supplying you with oxygen. You are dependent on them -- and they are dependent on you because you are constantly giving them carbon dioxide. We take oxygen in and exhale carbon dioxide; the trees do just the opposite, they exhale oxygen and inhale carbon dioxide.

So when people like Mahendra are smoking, trees must be feeling tremendously happy because more carbon dioxide is being created for them! Listening to me these trees will

be feeling very sad that I am telling you to go to the root cause of it and then smoking will disappear. That means trees won't get as much carbon dioxide as they were getting before!

We are interdependent, not only with the trees -- with the sun, with the moon, with the stars. Everything is an interdependence.

Just tomorrow there is going to be a solar eclipse, a total eclipse. It will have tremendous effects on the life on earth. If you look at the sun directly you can go blind forever. Avoid looking at the sun -- in fact, don't come out. There will be every temptation to come out because in the middle of the day, nearabout four-thirty in the afternoon, you can see stars in the sky; just as in the night you have always seen them, in the middle of the day you can see stars. There will be great temptation to come out and see, but avoid it, don't come out. It is dangerous to the eyes, it is dangerous to your nervous system, it is dangerous to your mind mechanism. Many people will go berserk, many people will go blind. Women who are pregnant should avoid coming out absolutely because the child in the womb is very very vulnerable. He has no safeguards yet; he is soft, so soft he can be affected by anything. And in the solar eclipse, when it is total, dangerous rays enter into the atmosphere.

So when the eclipse happens I would like all my sannyasins to go inside their rooms, close the doors, sit in deep meditation. It will last only a few minutes. Avoid the temptation of coming out, and don't try to find out devices through which you can see it without being harmed. No device is absolutely foolproof; it is better to avoid it.

Now life is so interdependent... the sun is so far away. It takes ten minutes for the rays of the sun to reach to the earth, and rays move with tremendous speed -- one hundred eighty-six thousand miles per second. But we are related to other suns and other solar systems too. Everything in existence is interdependent, so you cannot be absolutely free on the outside -- and there is no need either.
Enjoy this interdependence. Don't call it bondage. It is not dependence, it is INTERdependence. You are dependent on others, others are dependent on you. It is a brotherhood, it is relatedness. Even the smallest grass leaf is related to the greatest star.

But in the inner world, in the inner kingdom, you can be absolutely free. So the whole question is of the inner. And then, Yvonne, you will not feel sad and rebellious; there is no need. Understand that the outer interdependence is a must, it is inevitable; nothing can be done about it. It is part of how things are. Accept it. When nothing can be done about it, acceptance is the only way. And accept it JOYOUSLY, not as a resignation. Accept it! This is our universe; we are part of it. We are not islands, we are part of the whole continent. We are not egos.
Yvonne, your idea of freedom is rooted somewhere in the idea of the ego. We are not egos. The ego is a false entity -- because we are not separate, how can we have egos? It is good as far as language is concerned; it is utilitarian to use the word 'I', but it has no substance in it. It is pure shadow, utterly empty. A useful word, utilitarian, but not real.

But inner freedom IS possible. It happens as you go deeper and deeper into awareness. Watch your body, watch your thought processes.
Just the other day Buddha was saying: Watch, witness the whole process of your thoughts. And slowly slowly, you will see you are neither anger nor greed, neither Hindu nor Mohammedan nor Christian, neither Catholic nor communist. Slowly slowly, you will be aware that you are not any thought -- you are not mind at all. You are a pure witness. The experience of pure witnessing is the experience of total freedom, but it is an inward phenomenon. And a man who is inwardly totally free has no hankering to be outwardly free. He is capable of accepting nature as it is.
Yvonne, create inner freedom through witnessing. Sannyas is only for the inner freedom. And live out of inner freedom and then you will be able to see the interdependence on the outside. It is beautiful and it is a blessing. There is no need to rebel against it. Relax into it, surrender to it. And remember: only a person who is really free can surrender.

The last question:
Question 7
BELOVED MASTER,
I ALSO THINK THAT A MAN OF KNOWLEDGE IS BETTER THAN AN IGNORANT MAN. AM I ABSOLUTELY WRONG?

Sanatan, a man of knowledge is a totally different phenomenon. I was saying that the man of knowledge and the knowledgeable man are not the same. The man of

knowledge is what a buddha is: one who knows. But the knowledgeable man is not a buddha; he does not know. He has accumulated great information, but that information is borrowed. It is from the scriptures, from the books, from others. He has not experienced it; it is about and about. He can talk, he can write, he can sermonize, but he knows nothing. He talks ABOUT God; he has no idea what God is. He has no glimpse even -- what to say about experience. The priests all over the world of all the religions are knowledgeable people. Jesus knows, but the pope is not a man of knowledge. He is a knowledgeable man, he has great information. He can quote scriptures.

One of the great thinkers of the West was Ingersoll. Whenever he would deliver discourses -- and he was a great orator too -- he would make a mysterious sign in the air with his finger before he would start speaking. And when he would end, after that again he would make something with his fingers -- some very mysterious thing in the air. He was asked again and again, but he would laugh and he would not answer.

When he was dying somebody asked, "Now please tell us, otherwise we will be always curious and wondering -- what were you doing your whole life? Is there some magic in it? Why do you make some mysterious signs before you speak and then again when you end?"

He said, "There is no magic in it, but I could not tell it before. Now I can tell it. Before I started my speech I was making the sign of inverted commas, and after I ended I had to close the inverted commas. I was saying to myself and to you too that it is all just quotation, it is not my

experience. The whole thing is borrowed -- it is within inverted commas."

That is a knowledgeable man. But Ingersoll is sincere, at least honest. The knowledgeable man is not better than the ignorant man, remember, Sanatan. The man of knowledge is certainly better than the ignorant man, of course, obviously, but the same is not true about the knowledgeable man. The knowledgeable man is even worse than the ignorant man. The ignorant man at least knows that he is ignorant; he has no pretensions, he has no facade. The knowledgeable man has a beautiful facade, a mask.
And the problem is: if you go on deceiving others, slowly slowly you become autohypnotized. You start thinking that you know. But there is no difference. The knowledgeable person is only on the surface painted with great knowledge and the ignorant person is not painted; he is raw. The knowledgeable person is a little polished. But deep down they are the same person. Both will be greedy, both will be full of lust, both will be full of anger, both will be full of ego. Their lives will be nothing but ego trips. Their lives will be nothing but sexuality, violence, greed, jealousy, possessiveness. There will be no difference at all.
Sanatan, remember, you have to become a knower on your own. If you quote me, that is knowledgeability; if you know it on your own, that is knowing. And knowing brings freedom, knowing brings truth. Knowledgeability is respectable; you become an expert. The more you know, the more people think you are great, but deep down you go on living the same animal kind of life, no difference at all --

or maybe only one difference: you are a bigger hypocrite than the ignorant man.

Norman Bush had a terrible stutter. His wife Rose suggested that he go and see a specialist. Reluctantly he was persuaded to visit the best man in Harley Street who told him, "Well, Mr. Bush, there is only one thing we can do about this stutter of yours. You see, the problem is your balls are too big. However, we should be able to transplant a smaller pair. That would undoubtedly cure your ailment." Norman was given a week to think it over and reluctantly accepted to undergo surgery. When he came out, his speech fully restored, his wife was delighted. Then came those long nights when Rose was eager and Norman showed no interest. As the weeks went by she grew more anxious and frustrated.
Then one night she said to him, "You know, I think I preferred you the way you were before, with your big balls and your stutter. I would go and see that doctor again and have the operation reversed."
Reluctantly, Norman was dragged off again to the specialist. "You know, Doctor," said Norman, "my wife says she liked me better the way I was before with my stutter and all, and, um, well, ah, do you think I could have my old balls back again?"
"Not f-f-f-fucking likely!" said the doctor.

Enough for today.
The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 9
Chapter #5
Chapter title: The risk is worth taking

15 February 1980 am in Buddha Hall

IF THE TRAVELER CAN FIND
A VIRTUOUS AND WISE COMPANION,
LET HIM GO WITH HIM JOYFULLY
AND OVERCOME THE DANGERS OF THE WAY.

BUT IF YOU CANNOT FIND
FRIEND OR MASTER TO GO WITH YOU,
TRAVEL ON ALONE --
LIKE A KING WHO HAS GIVEN AWAY HIS KINGDOM,
LIKE AN ELEPHANT IN THE FOREST.

TRAVEL ON ALONE,
RATHER THAN WITH A FOOL FOR COMPANY.

DO NOT CARRY WITH YOU YOUR MISTAKES.
DO NOT CARRY YOUR CARES.

TRAVEL ON ALONE
LIKE AN ELEPHANT IN THE FOREST.

Nirupa says that this is my serious day. The fault is not mine; the whole fault is Gautama the Buddha's. That old guy is absolutely serious.
It is said of Jesus that he never laughed. That can't be true because Jesus is very much a man of the earth, very earthly. It is impossible that he never laughed. He loved people, he loved mixing with people, with ordinary people -- farmers,

carpenters, fishermen, gamblers, drunkards, prostitutes. Seeing his company, it seems absolutely improbable that he never laughed. He enjoyed eating, drinking; he enjoyed company. He must have gossiped, joked, laughed.
But it is possible that Buddha never laughed. He is utterly serious. He is very much Indian. He is pure water... I mix as much wine as I can!
So Nirupa, forgive me, because if I mix more wine, then that old guy will be really angry! As it is, he already thinks I am corrupting him, but he can't do anything -- I am alive and he is dead! I am not an Indian at all.

Once an American lady was asking me, "What 'nese' are you? -- Japanese, Chinese, Javanese?"
I told her, "I am no one." And then I asked her, "Who are you? -- monkey, donkey or yankee?"

I belong to no country, to no tradition, to no race, to no religion. I am just a white cloud floating all over the world. I don't have any roots anywhere; hence I am free. Buddha has roots in the Indian soil, in the Indian mind.
Buddha would have remained the same, unavailable, unapproachable. It is through the Chinese and the Japanese that he became a little more human. Otherwise he would have remained a god above the clouds, almost unreachable. When Buddhism was introduced into China they brought it down to the earth. Chinese are very down-to-earth people. They have never given birth to any men like Buddha. They had their own awakened people -- Lao Tzu, Chuang Tzu, Lieh Tzu -- but they are full of laughter, full of joy, full of

gratitude. They belong to this existence; they are not in any way escaping from it. They are living it in its totality.
And the Japanese are even more earthly. When Buddhism reached Japan via China, its very color, texture, its very fragrance changed. It became tremendously multidimensional, creative, more life-affirmative. Laughter came in. The Japanese masters transformed the very seriousness of Buddha into its opposite.
But in India the effort has never been made. In India Buddha has remained old, for twenty-five centuries.
My effort here is to make him alive again. And to make him alive means to make him a contemporary, to help him to speak to you the way you would like to be spoken to, the way you will be able to understand him. He has to be brought from his heights. The earth has its own beauty and any height has to be based on this very earth.
So, Nirupa, forgive me, because speaking on Buddha something of him is bound to come in; that is unavoidable. I try my best to give new colors to his colorless way of expression, to give him more liveliness, but still, I cannot go too far from his sutra. Although I take enough rope, I go as far as it is possible -- nobody has gone so far as I have been trying to go -- but still the point of reference remains his sutras.
I love the man -- he has a beauty of his own -- but there is no need to be so serious. But it was the way in India in those days, and it is the way even today, to be serious. Religion is thought to be a very serious phenomenon.
I may be the first person in the whole history of India who is mixing religion with jokes. Let us start with a few jokes.

The first:
Pierre, a Frenchman, Tonio, an Italian, and Stash, a Pole, were traveling through the country when their car broke down.
They found lodging at a farm, and in the course of the night the Frenchman decided to sneak into the farmer's daughter's room.
The farmer heard him walking up the stairs and said, "Who is it?"
Thinking quickly, Pierre whispered, "Meow, meow...."
Twenty minutes later, Tonio made the same attempt. As he neared the farmer's daughter's room, the girl's father shouted, "Who is there?"
The Italian also imitated the feline sound, "Meow, meow...."
Stash decided that he, too, should make an attempt. Just as he got to the girl's room, the farmer shouted, "Alright, who is it?"
The Polack replied, "It is me, the cat."

The second:
Benson and his dog were sitting at a bar. He ordered two martinis. Benson handed one to the dog, who promptly drank it, then ate the glass until only the base and the stem remained. Then he left.
"That's the craziest thing I have ever seen," said the bartender.
"Yeah, he's a dumb dog," said Benson. "The stem is the best part."

Third:

Mr. Benchley was quietly drinking his martini in a corner when a lady approached him and said, "Don't you know that stuff you are drinking is slow poison?"
"That's alright," he answered. "I'm in no hurry."

Fourth:
The car hit her and a hundred yards away he stopped and looked back.
"Watch out!" he shouted.
The woman raised herself on her elbow and screamed, "Why -- are you coming back?"

The fifth and the last:
Roxanne, a beautiful, well-built blonde, applied at a circus for the job of a lion tamer. Ralph was another candidate.
"I will give you both a chance," said the manager. "The girl can go first."
Roxanne, wearing a full-length mink coat, entered the cage. A huge lion was let in with her and immediately the animal started to charge.
Suddenly, Roxanne opened her fur coat and stood there, completely naked. The lion stopped dead in his tracks and began licking her feet, then her hands, then he went meekly back to the corner.
The manager was amazed. He turned towards the young man. "Well, pal, do you think you can top that?"
"I sure can," said Ralph. "You just get that stupid lion out of there and I will show you."

Now, the sutras:

These stories are about the state of humanity. They are different aspects of man's unconsciousness, his mechanicalness, different aspects of man's unawareness. Man goes on living like a robot. All his behavior comes out of a dark space within him. Hence the misery of the world. Unless that inner space is lit, becomes full of light, there is no hope for humanity.

In the past we would survive because the weapons to kill man were not yet perfect. Now they are. Now we have perfect atom bombs, hydrogen bombs, laser rays, death rays and what-not. Now we have become so efficient in destroying humanity and the earth that if within this last part of the century we don't bring a light within millions of people's hearts, humanity is doomed. Then there is no future. We may be living the last years of human existence on the earth.

But this critical state can become also a great blessing in disguise. It may make us more aware, more responsible. It may provoke us to DO something so that humanity takes a surge towards the higher plane of consciousness.

Buddha's whole message is concerned with consciousness: how to raise consciousness in humanity, how to make him more alert, more capable of seeing things as they are, how to make him capable of becoming more spontaneous and functioning out of awareness and not out of unawareness. We function out of unconsciousness.

All these sutras are just to prepare the ground, a right ground from where you can take off.

IF THE TRAVELER CAN FIND
A VIRTUOUS AND WISE COMPANION,

LET HIM GO WITH HIM JOYFULLY
AND OVERCOME THE DANGERS OF THE WAY.

Each single word has to be meditated upon. The first word is 'if'; it is a big 'if'. Buddha says: If THE TRAVELER CAN FIND....
It is very difficult to find an awakened master for the simple reason that very few people ever try to get out of the routine of unconsciousness. The routine of remaining unconscious is comfortable, cozy, because it keeps you confined to the world of the familiar and it keeps you with the crowd. It is risky to go away from the crowd because the crowd never forgives a person who goes away from it. The crowd wants to possess you all in all, body and soul. The crowd wants to dominate you. The crowd lives through domination.
This effort to dominate is what politics is all about. Politics means the crowd is trying to dominate the individual, to destroy the individual, to destroy freedom, to destroy spontaneity, to destroy any idea of going on one's own, of living one's own life according to one's own light. The crowd wants you to follow the mass, the collective mind. The crowd does not want you to have your own way. The crowd has already made a superhighway; you can simply follow it. And in a way it is more comfortable, it is cozy. You are surrounded with people, it is warm.
When you move alone into the dense and deep and dark forest of the unknown, it is cold, and there are thousands of fears arising. You don't know, in the first place, how to cope with the unknown. You are efficient in coping with the known; your system of education makes you capable of

coping with the known. Your education is very much against the unknown.
You will be surprised to know that your education is against intelligence. Society needs imitators. It wants you to be good in memorizing, not in becoming intelligent. It wants you to become good machines, not beautiful people; efficient machines, but machines all the same. It needs you to function well, but it does not want you to be more conscious. Then you would start saying no to many things; you will not be so obedient.
The society wants yea-sayers. It wants blind people. It does not want you to see because if you see you are bound to be affected by your seeing, you are bound to change your ways. The society wants blind followers.
Hence it is very rare that a person becomes awakened because -- the first thing -- to become awakened, to be a buddha, means to go away from the collective mind; to become so much an individual, integrated, that even if the whole world is against you you don't care. You have decided that you will live according to your inner voice. That is the first step, but a great step, a quantum leap. It is moving into danger, it is risky. You will be creating enemies. And you will be going into a world which is uncharted, a territory of which you know nothing. No maps exist; no maps can exist, in the very nature of things.
Hence it is very rare to find the awakened master. In hundreds of years it happens only once that there is a man like Jesus or Buddha or Lao Tzu. There are thousands of pretenders and they are easily available and they are very cheap. In fact, even if you don't find them, they will find you. They are constantly searching for followers. Their

whole business depends on how many followers they have. Each religion is concerned in having more followers because more followers mean more power.

Just a few days before, the Protestant church of Germany has released a report against me -- a big report, eighteen pages! To all the churches the report has been sent. They have been alerted that, "This man is dangerous. And the danger is more so," says the report, "because this man quotes Jesus. And sometimes he explains Jesus in such a beautiful way that Christians may get hooked by him."

I am sitting here. I have never been to Germany and I will never be there. What is the fear?

A small commission was made to study all of my books to prepare the report. The commission seems to be a little bit confused. It seems a few people of the commission have become interested... because if you have a little bit of intelligence, even just a little bit of intelligence, how can you avoid seeing that there is something? So they say, "There is something, there seems to be something. And it happens to be very much like Jesus' teaching. But beware. Jesus has said, 'False prophets will be coming who will speak like me.' But Jesus is the only begotten Son of God."

There is a great fear that if a few people go away from the crowd, the crowd feels reduced, its power lost. So no crowd wants anybody to leave its fold. It will create all kinds of hindrances. And if you want to become enlightened you have to pass all those hurdles created by the society, by the church, by the state, by everybody around you, by your own family.

Remember Jesus. He has said: Unless you hate your mother and your father and your family you cannot come with me.

It looks a little harsh and hard on Jesus' part. It looks as if these words can't be his -- but they ARE his. And the man was so loving and so compassionate; why should he be so hard on his family? -- because they were creating all kinds of hindrances for him.

And every family is going to create hindrances because when you go in search of truth you are going away from the power of the family. And everybody is power-hungry. The father is power-hungry, the mother is power-hungry, the husband, the wife. Even the children are power-hungry. Even the children don't want you to go out of the fold.

To become an enlightened person is almost like going the whole way AGAINST the current. Hence it is very rare. That's why Buddha starts the sutra: If THE TRAVELER CAN FIND....

And it is a pilgrimage, the greatest, the most adventurous, of coming to oneself. It is a strange journey. You have gone so far away from yourself that you have to come back. You have forgotten the way how to come back home. You need a guide, but only somebody who has come home can guide you. And there are thousands of pretenders. It is very easy to pretend. Anybody can talk, advise, say beautiful things; it costs nothing. Anybody can read the scriptures, anybody can quote the scriptures -- and that's what is happening all around the world. And religion is a good business. You can exploit people very easily; "for their own good" you can exploit them.

Buddha says: IF THE TRAVELER CAN FIND A VIRTUOUS AND WISE COMPANION.... Remember: the real master from HIS side is only a companion, a friend. From YOUR side he is a master; from HIS side he is only a

friend. From your side he is a master because you are unawakened and he is awakened. From his side he is only a friend because he knows there is no essential difference between him and you. You are just asleep; that is not much of a difference -- no difference in quality.
You can be awakened.
Your buddhahood can become manifest.
You are just a bud and he has become a flower, but any bud can become a flower any moment. He was also a bud before; now he has opened his petals, he has become a flower. He has released his fragrance. Everybody is capable of doing it. From the master's side, the disciple is a friend, a companion.
The pseudo master will always pretend that he is higher than you, holier than you, superior to you. He will talk always in such a way that you cannot understand; that is his way of hiding himself. He will talk in spiritual jargon, he will talk in esoteric ways. And there are foolish people who become victims, because people have some idea that if you cannot understand something, there must be something in it. If you cannot understand, it must be very deep, very profound.
Even here... I am with you, but there are a few people who pretend they are my mediums. And they tell people that, whatsoever they are saying, I am speaking through them. I am fully alive -- I can speak on my own! Wait a little. Let me die, then you can do your business. You will do it, but not now.
But I can forgive these people because they earn a little money and they exploit a few people. I cannot understand the people who become victims of these persons. They

can't see the point. I am here: what is the need of somebody to function as a medium, to tell them what I want to tell them? I will tell you myself. Am I not telling you enough? Do you want more? Year in and year out I go on speaking to you every day.

But there are a few people... they don't come to listen, they don't come here. They avoid the commune, but they go on sitting in the Blue Diamond,* and a few foolish people go on meeting them there. And they roll up their eyes and they pretend to go in a trance, and then they start talking nonsense. The more nonsense it is, the more philosophical it seems, the more metaphysical it seems. And they always get a few people to listen to them, to follow them. It is a strange phenomenon, but somehow the pseudo has an appeal.

One thing about the pseudo master is that he manages a facade, he wears a mask. He wears a mask that you would like him to wear. He fulfills your expectations. The true master never fulfills anybody's expectations.

Jesus proved that he was a true master because at the last moment he frustrated everybody, even his closest disciples. They were hoping that he would do some miracle: "If he can raise people from death, if he can cure blind people, if he can cure crippled persons, he is going to do something when he will be crucified. Some great miracle is going to happen...." And nothing happened, nothing at all! That proves his authenticity. He was not there to fulfill your expectations.

But the pseudo master always tries to fulfill your expectations. Sometimes he manages beautifully. Sometimes he will do miracles.

I know one man. He told his story to me himself because he fell in love with me. He was worshipped by many as enlightened. By and by he became tired of playing the role. It is tiring. When you are not enlightened and you have to pretend to be enlightened and you have even to manage a few miracles, it is tiring.

He came to see me. He cried and wept and he said, "Save me from my followers! I am utterly tired and bored, and I have to do things just to keep them satisfied." He said to me, "Once I had to do a miracle because my followers were expecting something big so that many more people can come."

Followers are also interested that if many more people come to THEIR master, they feel that they are with the right person. If they are alone with the master, then they start feeling a little doubtful. Nobody believes in his own being, nobody trusts in his own intelligence. When you see thousands of people you say, "It must be right. So many people can't be wrong." Remember, the reality is just the opposite: so many people can't be right!

The man said to me, "I had to manage a miracle. I stopped a train for seven minutes."

I said, "How did you manage it?"

He said, "Simple! I had to bribe three persons. One was the ticket collector. I had managed it that I would be traveling without the ticket and he would come and ask for the ticket. And I would get angry and I would say, 'There is no need for any ticket for me. We are saints and we are allowed every freedom.' So I became very angry. When I became angry, he became angry -- he was bribed and he was told to

become very angry." He pushed the man outside the railway compartment.
This man was traveling with a big group of his followers; almost half of the train was full of his followers. They all got down, and the man said, "Okay, then try to take your train. I will not allow it to move a single inch" -- and he stood there with rolled-up eyes. And the driver tried, and the guard was showing the flag and the stationmaster was showing the flag, and nothing was happening. The train was stuck because the driver was bribed, the guard was bribed. Three persons were bribed.
Finally they rushed to him, fell at his feet, asked to be forgiven, asked him to come in again and told him, "Nobody will ever again ask you for the ticket. We are stupid people -- forgive us!"
He entered the train and immediately it moved. That created a great sensation. Thousands of people became his followers because he managed to do this miracle.

All miracles are done in this way. If you want to do miracles, you can come in private to me and I will teach you -- because these tricks cannot be taught publicly! Once you know, everybody knows; then they lose their whole mystery. All these tricks are done in this way. But people's expectations are fulfilled.
The pseudo masters speak the language of your desires. They say, "If you meditate, you will become rich, you will become successful." That is absolute nonsense.
Maharishi Mahesh Yogi says to people, "If you meditate you will become healthy, you will become rich, you will

become successful, you will become famous. In whatsoever line you are working you will be at the top."
That's what you want, so you say, "Okay, then it is not much of a problem to meditate. Fifteen minutes in the morning, fifteen minutes in the evening..." just half an hour lost and all success is yours. This is the most successful formula for success -- and you want to succeed. You want a thousand and one desires to be fulfilled.
Now, there are masters who say, "Whatsoever you want, you will get it through meditation. Money will pour in. Just ask in deep meditation and it is going to happen."
This is speaking the language of your desire. The truth is just the opposite. If you ask me, if you really meditate you will be a failure in life, an utter failure. If you are succeeding, even that success will disappear because meditation will make you so relaxed, so nonviolent, so loving, so noncompetitive, so nonegoistic, that who cares for success? Meditation will make you so joyous that who wants to bother about the tomorrow? Who wants to stake today for the tomorrow?
Meditation will make you inwardly rich, certainly. Inwardly you will become ecstatic, but outwardly it can't be guaranteed that you will become rich, that you will become successful, that you will become very healthy, that no disease will ever happen to you. That is all sheer bullshit! Maharshi Raman died of cancer, Ramakrishna Paramahansa died of cancer. Can you find greater meditators? J. Krishnamurti suffers from many illnesses; he has been suffering from severe headache for almost twenty years. The headache is so severe that sometimes he wants to hit his head against the wall. Can you find a greater

meditator? Can you find a greater buddha alive? If J. Krishnamurti suffers from a headache, if Raman Maharshi dies of cancer, if Ramakrishna dies of cancer, do you think meditation is going to give you health? Yes, in a way it will make you more healthy and more whole, but only in a very inner way. Deep down you will be whole, deep down there will be an inner spiritual health.
Raman is dying with cancer, but his eyes are full of joy. He dies laughing. This is real health. In deep agony is his body, but he is just a witness. This is meditation.
Buddha says:

IF THE TRAVELER CAN FIND
A VIRTUOUS AND WISE COMPANION,
LET HIM GO WITH HIM JOYFULLY
AND OVERCOME THE DANGERS OF THE WAY.

If you can find a man who is awakened, who is really virtuous and wise, whose virtue is not only a cultivated facade but a spontaneous fragrance, whose wisdom is no longer knowledge, whose wisdom is his own authentic experience... if you can find such a person, then go with him joyfully, wholeheartedly, totally. Then don't hold back, because this is a rare opportunity.
How will you recognize the real awakened person? How will you recognize that he is authentic, true, that what he is saying he knows? How will you recognize him? That is one of the most important questions that has been asked for centuries, and it has not been answered adequately because it can't be answered adequately. Only a few hints can be given.

You cannot recognize a true master through the head. To your head he may look very illogical. Let that be one of the hints -- because the pseudo master tries to be very logical. He has to convince you, and you can be convinced only if he is logical. He tries even to give logic about God. He creates theology, which is the most stupid thing in the world -- logic about God! There is no way to prove God logically, but the pseudo master tries to prove everything logically because you can understand only logic.

The true master speaks paradoxically. He is a living paradox. He contradicts himself, because truth is the meeting of the opposites. And in the true master the truth has happened, the opposites have met. The polar opposites have disappeared in him; they have become one, they have melted into one unity. He is as paradoxical as existence itself. That should be the first hint.

The head can only give you this much, so if your head feels somewhere that something is illogical, don't escape from the place. That illogicality simply means something mysterious is there. Now move to the heart. When your head says something is illogical, the head is saying, "It is beyond me -- drop it. I can't understand it. It is incomprehensible." Rather than dropping it, drop the head! Then you will be able to see the true master.

The true master can only be felt. It is a question of a loving openness on your part. The disciple has to open the heart. The true master comes through the heart, not through the head. He is felt as love, not as logic. He is felt as a song, not as syllogism. He is felt as poetry, not as prose. He is a dance; you can know him only through participation.

Be with a true master. Just being with him, sitting by his side in deep silence, with no prejudice, with no idea what is happening, something transpires. Something jumps from the master into your heart. You can feel it. It is energy, it is an energy phenomenon. It is not a question of a theory, of any hypothesis, of philosophy. It is a jump of energy, a quantum leap. Something invisible radiates from the true master and penetrates to the true disciple. And who is the true disciple? -- the one whose heart is open.

And once you have felt the presence of the true master, Buddha says: GO WITH HIM JOYFULLY... not reluctantly, not with doubts -- joyfully, dancing, celebrating. You have found the master. There can be no greater blessing than that, because on the way you will find many problems without the master. The first step will not be possible; only the master can push you. And you can allow him to push you only if you trust.

It is just like a new bird who has come out of the egg and sits on the edge of the nest, looks at his mother, father, parents, other birds flying in the sky. A great longing arises in his heart too. He flutters his wings, but he cannot gather courage; he is afraid he may fall down. He has never flown before. He does not know what it is all about, how these people are managing. They may be different, they may have certain qualities. Who knows that he has wings also? He can have a certain feeling that there are wings; he can see a certain similarity. But the fear of falling, of killing oneself or crippling oneself, is also there.

The mother goes and calls from the tree far away, gives him a call. He wants to go, but the fear.... The mother goes around the nest, flies, to show him that "What I am doing

YOU can do." Slowly slowly, he gathers courage, and one day the mother simply pushes him. He has to be pushed. In spite of his fear, when he is pushed he can see that he opens his wings; he is able to balance himself. Of course, in the beginning it is a little awkward, but soon he becomes efficient.

Without the master the first step is difficult, the most difficult thing. How to move into the unknown if there is nobody to push you? But the master can push you only if you trust him, if you love him. It is just like the bird loves the mother and he knows that whatsoever she is doing she will not do any harm. Out of that trust he allows her to push him; in fact, deep down he wants to be pushed. He knows, "I cannot do it on my own." But if the mother is doing it she must be doing it right.

When the disciple feels such a love affair with the master, then things become possible. And then there are many dangers on the way. The first step is the most difficult; then as you move deeper and deeper many more things have to be dropped. Who is going to tell you what to drop and what not to drop? It is all unknown to you. Somebody needs to constantly watch you.

And then comes the last step, when the ego dies. That is also very difficult -- it seems as if YOU are dying. The master has to help you die because only through death you will be reborn. The master has to help you understand that this is not death. The seed disappearing in the soil is not dying; it is really being born as a tree. And the river disappearing in the ocean is not dying, it is simply becoming the ocean. It is not losing anything, it is gaining much more. It is losing nothing and gaining all.

BUT IF YOU CANNOT FIND.... Buddha says: It is not easy to find an awakened master, so:

... IF YOU CANNOT FIND
FRIEND OR MASTER TO GO WITH YOU,
TRAVEL ON ALONE....

Travel you must. If you can find a master, a companion, a friend, you are blessed, you are fortunate. If you cannot find, just don't make it an excuse that what can you do? -- there is nobody like Buddha, Jesus, Lao Tzu available. "What can I do? I have to live the ordinary life. I cannot go into the unknown on my own." No, you CAN go. It will be a little bit difficult, hazardous, risky, but the risk is worth taking.

TRAVEL ON ALONE --
LIKE A KING WHO HAS GIVEN AWAY HIS KINGDOM,
LIKE AN ELEPHANT IN THE FOREST.

Don't be worried that you are alone. Slowly slowly, you will become able to balance yourself. Slowly slowly, in slow steps, you will be able to go beyond the known. Slowly slowly you will be able to die as an ego and be born as an egoless presence. It may take a little longer time. It may take you sometimes astray because you are alone and there is nobody to call you back again and again to the right path, but still it is better to travel alone than not to travel at all.

The greatest fault, the greatest misery is that people are not traveling at all towards truth. They are simply going in circles in their mundane affairs: the business, the wife, the husband, the children, the office and the home. And they go on in circles. Their whole life is just pointless; it makes no sense. It has no meaning, no significance. Still, somehow they go on, afraid of risking.

Don't be afraid of risking. If you can risk, the whole universe is going to help you because this universe is not in any way aloof and unconcerned about you.

Buddha has said, "When I became enlightened, the whole universe rejoiced. That moment I felt that the whole universe was helping me, waiting for me to become enlightened."

The story is beautiful. Don't take it literally. It is symbolic, it is a metaphor. When Buddha became enlightened, trees bloomed out of season. Trees cannot bloom out of season, but we have to express somehow the joy that was felt in existence itself.

Whenever there is a man like Buddha, the whole humanity takes an upward surge; it soars higher. Just take two dozen names from human history -- Jesus, Krishna, Buddha, Lao Tzu, Mohammed, Bahauddin, Kabir -- just two dozen names. Take them out of human history and you will not be human at all; you will lose all your humanity. It is through these few people that great consciousness has been released. And even though you have not done anything you have been blessed by it. It has showered on you without your becoming aware of it.

So if you have to travel alone, travel, but travel you must, in spite of all the dangers and risks. The greatest risk is

NOT to travel, because then you are stuck, you don't grow, you are like a stone, you will never flower. In traveling maybe you will go astray, you will commit a few mistakes. So what? One learns through mistakes, one learns through going astray. And if one keeps alert one can't go very far away; that alertness brings one back.

TRAVEL ON ALONE,
RATHER THAN WITH A FOOL FOR COMPANY.

Buddha says: Just for the company's sake, don't move with a fool. Beware of that.

I have been observing thousands of saints and mahatmas -- Jaina, Hindu, Mohammedan -- and I was surprised to find one thing: ninety-nine percent of them look foolish, stupid. Something dull and dead seems to be inside them. There seems to be no flash of insight; no intelligence radiates around them. They look like walking graves. They have already died. They are worshipped because people worship death, and because people worship them they think they have arrived. They have not moved a single inch! They have even fallen below the ordinary humanity.

This is my experience: that your so-called saints are far below the ordinary humanity as far as intelligence is concerned, awareness is concerned. They are not meditators, they don't know what meditation is. In the name of meditation they go on doing something else. They are utter fools!

When Buddha uses the word 'fool' he means somebody who is living an unconscious life. Somebody is accumulating money in an unconscious way, not knowing

why, not knowing for what, not knowing that death will come and everything will be taken away. Somebody else has renounced money, but he is as unconscious as the one who is greedy for money. Somebody goes on stuffing himself with food and somebody else goes on long fasts. Both are torturing their bodies in different ways, but both are self-destructive. The man who eats too much tortures his body, remember it -- he is also ascetic in his own way -- and the man who fasts also tortures his body. Both are self-destructive.

And by self-destruction you cannot attain to liberation, to God, to nirvana. It is only through a tremendous creativity, sensitivity, awareness, that one comes home.

So Buddha says: Beware of the company of the fool. It is better to be alone rather than to be with a foolish person, because the foolish person is bound to affect you. You will be with him and he will certainly infect you with his foolishness.

Intelligence is also contagious. If you live with an intelligent person you start becoming intelligent, because we are not so separate, we vibrate together. If we live with somebody for a long time we start synchronizing with the person.

That's the whole secret of SATSANG -- the communion with the master. If he is awakened, his disciples slowly slowly start moving towards a subtle awakening. It is bound to happen. If the disciple can simply be in the presence of the master, surrendered, relaxed, in a state of let-go, he may not have to do anything at all. The presence of the master will start flooding him, will start changing his being. We are joined together.

Have you not watched it? If four persons are laughing and you are in a sad mood and you go to these people, you forget your sadness; you start laughing. Later on when you remember that you were sad, it looks very strange. How did you forget your sadness? How did you start laughing? What happened? The energy there, the space there, was totally different from you: it was more powerful than you. Those four persons were creating a certain vibe. Hence the significance of a buddhafield. The master creates a field around himself; through his disciples he creates an energy field. To be in that energy field is a transformation in itself. But the same happens if you move with the foolish people. Just to keep company, people would like to be with anybody. They are so afraid of being alone.

Buddha wants you to beware of that. It is better to be with trees and the clouds and the river and the mountains and the ocean, because they will not make you more foolish than you are; they may even help you to become a little more intelligent, because the whole existence is nothing but intelligence. If you can be in deep communion with nature you will become more intelligent. There is all around you tremendous intelligence available, but only intelligent people can feel it. The foolish person remains closed.

The fool lives in his own world; that's why he is called the idiot. The word 'idiot' means one who lives in his own world, one who has his own idiom, one who has his own private reality. He is closed to the real; he has his own fantasy. He lives in his dreams.

Pat went to see the doctor about his eyes. The doctor suggested he bathe them every morning in brandy.

The next time Pat came to see the doctor, the doctor asked him how his eyes were.
"Did you follow my advice?" he asked.
"I tried to -- but I can't raise the glass higher than my mouth!"

The fool is not only the person who is ignorant. The fool can be very knowledgeable; often he is. He can be a pundit, he can be a priest, he can be a professor. And then he is more dangerous because he appears to talk sense, and deep down he is as ignorant as anybody else, as foolish as anybody else.

A famous professor walked into a travel agency to buy a steamship ticket.
"To where?" the agent asked.
"Have you got a globe of the world?"
The travel agent handed him a globe. The professor turned the globe around and around looking at all the countries and continents. After thirty minutes he said, "Pardon me, haven't you got anything else?"

Your professors, your pundits, your scholars, are not very much different.
And remember, the foolish person may have a certain character. It is easy for the fool to create a certain character because he is stubborn. Stupidity is always stubborn. If some idea gets into his head he may be able to practice it more consistently than the intelligent person because he is stubborn, he cannot be flexible. He is not dynamic, he is stagnant.

That helps many foolish people to become respectable -- because they can do stupid things nobody else will be able to do, but they do them with such perseverance, with such patience, with such strength, that they succeed in doing them. They can create great characters, they can be great moralists, they can be very pious, and they can impress you.

Remember, character is not of much value. What is valuable is consciousness -- not conscience but consciousness. Conscience is created by the society. The more foolish you are, the more the society is able to create a conscience in you. It gives you an idea how to live your life. It manipulates you in a very subtle way. It hypnotizes you and conditions you. And the conditioning is so long that you forget completely that these are not your ideas. For example, if you are born in a vegetarian family you will be a vegetarian, thinking that you have renounced all meat-eating, etcetera, that you are great -- you are a vegetarian. But if you were born in a nonvegetarian family you would have been a nonvegetarian. It depends on the conditioning; you are not doing it consciously. You are allowing other people to dominate you, to decide for you.

The intelligent person is rebellious. He does not allow others to decide for him; he keeps the right to himself. Hence, stupid people become saints very easily because they allow the society to condition them. At least in that particular society they will be very much respected. To others they will look very stupid, to others they will look insane, but to that particular society which has conditioned them they will be great saints.

Just a few days before in Bombay, a naked Jaina saint has come -- Acharya Vidyananda. He lives naked. To the Jainas he seems to be a great saint; to others he seems to be a little bit crazy, eccentric. And if you look at his face he looks stupid, although he talks on great scriptures. But his face shows simply stupidity, no radiance. His body seems ugly. If there is going to be a competition, a world competition in ugliness for Mr. Universe, then he may succeed. But to his set, to his followers he looks so great -- that he has transcended his body. And all that he is doing is unnecessarily torturing his body.

If you torture the body it becomes ugly. It is a gift of God -- make it beautiful. It is your home, you have to live in it -- make it beautiful.

But once you are in a certain conditioning, that is your whole universe. You think in terms which others have told you. Unless by some accident you come across a new idea....

Old maid Sarah possessed several million dollars, a pedigree female cat, and some very Victorian ideas on the subject of sex. In fact, her feelings about sex were such that for five years she had never allowed her cat to go out of the house for fear of "contamination."

Deciding to take a vacation in Hawaii, Sarah instructed her housekeeper, "Now be sure you don't let the cat out. I repeat, do not, under any circumstances, let the cat out."

After Sarah had been gone about a week, the housekeeper received a telegram, "Having a wonderful time. Met the nicest young man. Let the cat out!"

People are living in small ponds of their own ideology and it is very rare that they will come across something new that will go through their thick layer of conditioning and will make them aware what they are doing to themselves. These are the people you worship, you respect, whom for centuries you have worshipped and respected. And because of this worship and respect the whole humanity has remained tethered to the lowest possibility of intelligence. You could have reached to the Everest of intelligence, but we have not allowed our intelligence to soar high, higher than the collective mind wants it to.

DO NOT CARRY WITH YOU YOUR MISTAKES.
DO NOT CARRY YOUR CARES.

Buddha says: Go alone, just remember two things. Don't carry your mistakes -- that means, don't carry your past. There is no need even to repent about the past. Your religious people go on teaching you, "Repent!" because it is through repentance that they make you feel guilty, and when you are guilty you can be exploited.
A real master always makes you feel good about yourself, not guilty; respectful towards yourself, not guilty. But the priests live on creating guilt in you. They would not like you to forget your mistakes; they want to remind you again and again. They have not even forgotten the sin that was committed by Adam and Eve; they go on reminding you about the original sin. You have not committed it, but you are born into the chain in which the first man and woman committed it and you are carrying the load of it. You have to feel guilty even for that, what to say about your own

mistakes? The priests have lived in great power for the simple reason that they have reduced you into guilty sinners.

The elderly priest listened in while the young curate took his first confession.
"You did well," he told the young priest, "but I suggest that when you hear the confessions of these pretty young ladies it would be more appropriate if you went, 'Tsk, tsk, tsk,' and not 'Wow!'"

DO NOT CARRY WITH YOU YOUR MISTAKES. Don't repent, don't feel guilty. Drop the past; it is no more.
And: DO NOT CARRY YOUR CARES. That is: don't think about the future, don't be worried about it. Live in the present. That is what meditation is all about: living in the present. Mind lives in the past and in the future; and if you can be in the present, mind disappears, and silence prevails -- profound silence, virgin silence.
See it as a fact... right now, here. If there is no past and no future, then this moment has such beauty, such grace. Then the birds singing and the traffic noise and this beautiful silence... and something will transpire between me and you. It can transpire only in the present.

TRAVEL ON ALONE
LIKE AN ELEPHANT IN THE FOREST.

Be in the present and travel on alone -- if you cannot find a master. But if you can find a master, let him go with you;

go with him joyfully.... AND OVERCOME THE DANGERS OF THE WAY.
Enough for today.
The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 9
Chapter #6
Chapter title: Truth cannot be lost
16 February 1980 am in Buddha Hall

The first question:
Question 1
BELOVED MASTER,
I AM REJECTING MY MIND AND CLINGING TO AWARENESS.

Prem Shahido, mind has not to be rejected at all; if you reject it, it will remain. Rejection means repression. Anything rejected never leaves you; it simply moves from the conscious to the unconscious, from the lighted part of your being to the dark layers where you cannot face it. You become oblivious of it, but it is there, more alive than ever. It is better to face the enemy than to keep the enemy at your back; that is far more dangerous.
And I have not told you to reject the mind. Mind is a beautiful mechanism, one of the miracles of existence. We have not been able yet to make anything comparable to human mind. Even the most sophisticated computers are nothing compared to it. A single human mind can contain all the libraries of the world; its capacities are almost unbounded. But it is a machine, it is not you. To get identified with it is wrong, to make it your master is wrong,

to be guided by it is wrong. But to be the master and the guide is perfectly right. The mind as a servant is of tremendous value, so don't reject it. To reject it will impoverish you, it will not enrich you.

I am not AGAINST the mind; I am in favor of transcending it. And if you reject you cannot transcend. Use it as a stepping-stone. It all depends on you: you can make it a hindrance if you start thinking that the mind has to be rejected, denied, destroyed; or you can make it a stepping-stone if you accept it, if you try to understand it. In the very effort of understanding it, transcendence happens. You go beyond it, you become a witness.

And, Shahido, a second thing....

You say, "I am clinging to awareness."

That is bound to happen. If you reject mind you will start clinging to awareness. And clinging is nothing but mind functioning from the back door. Clinging is a process of mind. But that is bound to happen to people who reject, repress.

The question is of transformation. The mind has to be used rightly; then there will be no clinging to awareness. Otherwise, afraid of the mind, that it may come back, you will cling to awareness -- and in clinging it has already come back, it is already there. Clinging is mind; nonclinging is intrinsic to awareness. You cannot cling to awareness; if you cling, it is just a mind phenomenon. Your awareness too is just a pseudo thing created by the mind because you were asking too much for it. It is false, utterly false; if you have to cling to it, it is false.

Real awareness remains with you; you need not cling to it. Who will cling to it? You ARE awareness. Who will cling

to whom? In awareness there are not two -- the clinger and the object of clinging; in awareness you are one. There is only awareness and nothing else. One cannot cling to awareness. But it is bound to happen if you reject the mind; the very first step has gone wrong. Don't reject it -- understand it.

And in fact, the word 'understand' is very significant. When you understand something it stands under you. You become transcendental, you go beyond it; it is below you. It has its utility; great utility. There will be no science without mind and there will be no technology without mind. All human comforts will disappear without human mind. Man will fall back into the world of the animals or even far below without the mind. Mind has given much.

The problem is not the mind; the problem is your identification with it. You think you are it, that is the problem. Disidentify. Watch the mind, and you BE the watcher and let the mind be there watched, witnessed, observed. And a great radical change happens through observation. Mind functions far more efficiently when you observe it because all that is rubbish drops and mind need not carry unnecessary weight; it becomes light. And when you become a watcher, mind can have some rest too. Otherwise your whole life mind is working, working, day in, day out, year in, year out; it stops only when you die. It creates a deep fatigue, mental fatigue.

Now scientists say even metals become tired -- metal fatigue. So what to say about the mind which is very subtle, which is very delicate? Handle it carefully. But YOU remain aloof, unconcerned, uninvolved. When you are writing you don't become the fountain pen, although you

cannot write without it. A good fountain pen is very essential for good writing. If you start writing with your fingers nobody will be able to read what you have written, not even you, and it will be very primitive. But you are not the fountain pen, and the fountain pen is not the writer but only a writing instrument.

The mind is not the master but only an instrument in the hands of the master.

Shahido, be more alert, aware, but don't cling to it. Clinging will destroy the whole beauty of it. Why cling? What is the fear? We cling only out of fear. You ARE awareness, you cannot lose it. Even now, when you are unaware of the fact that you are awareness, you have not lost it.

Truth cannot be lost. Whether you know it or you know not, it makes no difference. The truth remains the truth, known or unknown. Your innermost being is still pure awareness. You live on the circumference, hence you are not able to see your own center.

Sannyas means exploring your interiority, moving towards the center. That's what meditation is all about. When you become centered, suddenly there is great freedom because you know you are not the mind and you are not the body. That does not mean that you start rejecting the body or the mind. You respect the body, you respect the mind. You love the body more so, more than ever. It is a beautiful house. It is your home and you have to live in it seventy, eighty, ninety years. And it is serving you so beautifully; its service is of great value. You respect it, you befriend it, you take care of it. But still you know: "I am neither the body nor the mind. I am consciousness."

And then there is no question of clinging. Knowing that "I am consciousness," you become part of God. Then there is no birth for you, no death for you. Then you ARE part of eternity, and to be part of eternity is to be blissful. When you know you cannot die, all fear disappears and the energy involved in fear is released as love. When you know you are part of the whole there is no anxiety left, no anguish possible, and the energy involved in anxiety, in anguish, is released. You become compassion, love, joy; it starts overflowing you. You are not only a blessing to yourself, you become a blessing to everybody else; you become a blessing to existence itself.

The second question:
Question 2
BELOVED MASTER,
IS IT NECESSARY TO GO THROUGH DREAM ANALYSIS FOR ATTAINING ENLIGHTENMENT?

Gautami, dream analysis cannot help you to become enlightened, but dream witnessing can certainly help you. That is the difference between psychology and religion: psychology analyzes dreams; religion watches them, helps you to become aware of them. And the moment you become aware of your dreams they disappear; they can't exist for a single moment longer. They can exist only when you are utterly unaware; for their existence that is an absolute condition.
A buddha never dreams, he cannot dream. Even if he wants to dream he cannot. Dreaming simply disappears from his being because even in the night while he is asleep, deep

down in his innermost core he is awake. A flame of awareness continues and he knows what is happening. He knows that his body is asleep. Witnessing becomes so ingrained that not only in the day but in the night also it continues. And then dreaming disappears. You dream because you desire; your dreams reflect your desires. Now, you can go on dissecting your desires for lives, and you will not attain to anything. You can go on analyzing your dreams....

There are many systems of analysis. If you go to the Freudians they will analyze your dreams in one way: they will interpret everything as sexuality. Imaginable things, unimaginable things, everything has to be reduced to sexuality. If you go to the Adlerians with the same dreams, they will interpret them according to their ideology. Then every dream is reduced to Adler's idea: will to power. Then everything is nothing but will to power; each dream has to fit with his philosophy. And so is the case with the Jungians and others.

And one thing has been observed again and again -- a very strange phenomenon happens. If you go into psychoanalysis of any kind -- Freudian, Jungian, Adlerian -- you start dreaming in the way your psychoanalyst expects you to dream. If you go to the Freudian, sooner or later you start dreaming according to his idea. People are very obliging; they feel sorry for the poor analyst. And he is making such hard effort to analyze your dreams. First he starts giving you interpretations and then you start dreaming according to his interpretations. Soon you fit with each other -- you are as if made for each other. Then he is happy and you are happy. He is happy because his theories

are confirmed and you are happy that you are a good boy, dreaming according to the great expert. And when you see your psychoanalyst happy, YOU feel happy. Seeing you feel happy, he feels happy. It is such a mutual arrangement! And nobody is really helped... dreaming continues.

I have never come across a fully psychoanalyzed person, because according to Freud, a fully psychoanalyzed person is one whose dreaming has disappeared. And that was not true even about Sigmund Freud himself; he continued to dream to his very last. And he was very afraid of psychoanalysis, you will be surprised to know, because he knew his disciples would only prove that all his dreams were sexual.

Once Jung wanted to psychoanalyze Freud. Jung was his most beloved disciple in those days, just as once Judas was one of the most beloved disciples of Jesus. And what Judas did to Jesus, Jung did to Freud. People whose names start with 'J' are dangerous!

Freud and Jung were traveling and they started talking. Jung said, "This idea occurs to me again and again: that I would like to psychoanalyze you. You have not been psychoanalyzed. In fact, nobody who has not been psychoanalyzed should be authorized to psychoanalyze other people. And you are the founder -- you should be psychoanalyzed."

Freud actually started trembling and he said, "No, no, never! That will destroy my prestige."

Jung said, "If that is so, then it has already destroyed your prestige, at least for me. If you are so much afraid to talk about your dreams, that simply shows what kind of dreams you must be having."

There is not a single person in the world who is totally psychoanalyzed. And unless dreams disappear, your mind will remain in a turmoil. Dreams simply say you don't know how to put your mind off; you don't know where the switch exists so that you can put it on and off according to your needs. When you are going to sleep you can't put if off; it goes on chattering. Even if you say to it, "Shut up!" it does not listen to you at all; it does not care. And you know perfectly well it won't listen. You feel so impotent as far as your own mind is concerned that you have to move according to it, it does not move according to you. If it wants to chatter it will chatter; when you fall asleep, still it goes on chattering.

The art of meditation makes you aware where the switch is: it is in witnessing. Witnessing is the switch that can put your mind on or off. You become the master, so when you want to use it you use it and when you don't want to use it you simply put it off and it gives rest to the mind.

Hence the mind of a meditator is far more brilliant, far more intelligent, far more alive, sensitive, than the mind of a nonmeditator, because the mind of a meditator has a few periods of deep deep rest that rejuvenates it. If you see a meditator and he is not intelligent, that simply means he is not a meditator at all. A meditator cannot be stupid, a meditator cannot be mediocre; that is impossible. If he is a meditator, then he will radiate sharpness, intelligence, brilliance. He will be a genius, he will be creative.

In fact, if we can create more and more meditators in the world, in every dimension of life there will be more creativity, more intelligence, less stupidity, less lethargy. But it has not happened down the ages. Just the opposite

has happened because in the name of meditation, something else has continued. In the name of meditation people either have been concentrating or contemplating. Both are not meditation.

Concentration is just the opposite of meditation and so is contemplation, in a different way. Concentration means closing your mind, focusing your mind, on a certain point, on a certain object. You are so focused on a certain object that you become unaware of everything else; that is concentration. It excludes everything else; it includes only one thing: the object of your concentration, whatsoever it is.

And meditation means absolute openness. It includes all, it excludes nothing. Hence it is not concentration at all. It is a state of vulnerability, openness, availability.

The person who is trying to concentrate can be distracted. He can be easily distracted by anything. Just a dog in the neighborhood starts barking and he is distracted, a child starts giggling and he is distracted, a bird starts singing and he is distracted. Anything will do, as if he is just waiting for anything to distract him; he is tired of focusing his mind. It is a tension, it is a strain.

Meditation is not a tension, it is not a strain. One is never tired of meditation. It is relaxation -- how you can be tired of it? It is deep rest, it is utter restfulness. One is available to everything; nothing can distract you.

You can listen to me either as concentration or as meditation. If you listen to me as concentration, then anything can distract. A car passes by... the cuckoo starts calling from the distance -- the chattering of the birds. Anything can distract you, any small thing. Not that the

birds are interested in distracting you; they are not concerned with you at all. But you will feel anger arising in you.

That's why so-called religious people become more angry than anybody else. They live almost in rage. If a single person in your house becomes religious, he is enough to create trouble for everybody, because each small thing distracts him and then he takes revenge.

You can listen to me in meditation. Then you are not concentrating on me; you are simply sitting available, open. The birds go on chattering; that too comes to you, but because you are not concentrating it is not a distraction -- it enriches. What I am saying to you is enriched. The singing of the birds becomes a background to it. And you never feel angry and you never feel tense.

Contemplation is also not meditation. Contemplation means thinking. Thinking can be of two types. One is zigzag, in jumps from one object to another, a little crazy; that is ordinary thinking. Anything leads to anything. A dog starts barking and you start thinking about your girlfriend. There seems to be no relationship, but maybe your girl had said once, "I go on barking at you and you don't listen!" Suddenly the dog reminds you. Or maybe she also has a dog who barks at you whenever you go to see her. And then from one thing to another... you will not stay with anything long. The girlfriend reminds you of her mother, and so on, so forth. Nobody knows where you are going to end. When you will look retrospectively you will be surprised: just the dog barking in the neighborhood started the whole process of thought.

Contemplation means remaining concerned with one object, thinking about it and only about it. Thinking has a consistency. If you are thinking about love, then you are thinking about love and all its aspects. You don't jump from one thing to another. Yes, you have a little rope just so that you can move around the subject of love, but you keep moving around it, around and around. You forget the whole world -- love becomes your world for the moment.
Meditation is not contemplation either because it is not thinking at all -- consistent, inconsistent, crazy, sane. It is not thinking at all; it is witnessing. It is just sitting silently deep within yourself, looking at whatsoever is happening inside and outside both. Outside there is traffic noise, inside there is also traffic noise -- the traffic in the head. So many thoughts -- trucks and buses of thoughts and trains and airplanes of thoughts, rushing in every direction. But you are simply sitting aloof, unconcerned, watching everything with no evaluation.
You ask me, Gautami, "Is it necessary to go through dream analysis for attaining enlightenment?"
No, not at all. Have you ever heard anybody becoming enlightened through psychoanalysis? Yes, people have become mad, but nobody has become enlightened. Psychoanalysis depends on analysis of the mind, and they don't see anything else in you. The body is taken care of by the physiologists; then all that remains is a constant traffic in the mind either of thoughts or of dreams, memories, imagination, desires. The psychoanalyst has nothing else to do: he looks into your dreaming process. And why does he choose dreams? -- because if he asks you what you think when you are awake you are never authentic, you are never

sincere. You are so deceptive, so dishonest, that whatever you say about your thinking is bound to be managed; it is not going to be true. You will say only that which is worth saying and you will delete many things. You will edit your thoughts. You will not allow the psychoanalyst to look into your thoughts without any censor, without any editing. You will not allow him the raw material of your thoughts because that will look like you are insane.

You can try it. Sit in your room, close all the doors so nobody can come in, and start writing whatsoever is happening in the mind -- whatsoever it is. Just go on writing for fifteen minutes, then read it -- and you will be shocked. This is your mind? All these thoughts are going on in your mind? Are you mad or something? You can't show it to anybody.

It is good that people don't have windows in their heads; otherwise the wife will look through the window in the head of the husband and she will find everything. She finds everything anyway, window or no window!

The psychoanalyst has to depend on your dreams because in dreams it is very difficult for you to deceive him. You don't know yourself what your dreams mean so you have to say them as they are, and he can find a few clues about you. But this is not going to make you enlightened. This may help you a little bit to become more normal, but what is normality? Even the people who are normal are not normal -- they are normally abnormal, that's all. So you will be normally abnormal.

There are two kinds of abnormal people in the world: normally abnormal, abnormally abnormal. The work of the psychoanalyst is to bring abnormally abnormal people to

the first category: normally abnormal. He helps you to adjust with the society, with people, with yourself, but he can't help you to become enlightened.
You can go on and on analyzing your dreams and you will never come to your witnessing soul through that analysis. How can you come to the witness by analyzing the dreams? One dream will lead you into another dream. Maybe you will become a very skillful dreamer, very artful. Maybe you will start dreaming in a better way, in a more scientific way, but dreams are dreams. They cannot take you to the witness of the dreams which is your reality.

Al: "I had a great dream -- I dreamed I broke the bank at Monte Carlo."
Charles: "I had a great dream too -- I dreamed I was in a room with Sophia Loren and Brigitte Bardot."
Al: "Wow! Bardot and Sophia! Why didn't you call me?"
Charles: "I did, but your maid said you were in Monte Carlo!"

You can analyze this dream. What will be the gain? Neither the bank in Monte Carlo nor Sophia Loren or Bardot -- nothing is going to be your gain. But the psychoanalyst will analyze it. If you go to the Adlerian, his emphasis will be on the bank in Monte Carlo: will to power, money, prestige. He will forget all about Sophia Loren and Bardot; he is not interested -- that is nothing. If you go to the Freudian he will not think about Monte Carlo and the bank at all; that is nonessential, accidental. The real thing is Sophia Loren and Bardot.

And if you go to a Jungian, then nobody knows what he will do with your dream. He is so confused! But he will make much fuss about it, that much is certain. He will create much dust -- esoteric dust. He may start looking into your dream and finding things which you would have never suspected -- some ancient mysteries, maybe Egyptian. Or he may go even farther back -- Atlantis. He is really a grave digger. And he goes on finding things which are not there.

You must have heard the definition of a philosopher. The philosopher is a man who is blind looking in the dark night, in a dark room, for a black cat which is not there. But Jung FINDS it there! That's the beauty of Jung -- he finds the black cat which is not there; he finds it still. And he creates so much smoke and dust that you cannot deny him. He creates great argument. And he himself is very much afraid of going towards the witness.

He has been in India, and there was a man -- a man the like of whom happens only once in a while. Maharshi Raman was alive. And wherever Jung went in India, almost everywhere people suggested to him, "Why are you wasting your time here and there, going to Varanasi and Bombay? Why don't you go to Maharshi Raman?" People knew that he is a great psychoanalyst, world-famous. "You should go to Maharshi Raman, who has gone beyond the mind. Sitting by his side you may have a few glimpses. You may come away a totally changed person."

But Jung avoided him, he did not go there. On the contrary, back home he started writing against Eastern mysticism. He could not write against mysticism as such because he was himself creating great mysteries -- superficial because he

was not an initiate in any mystery school. He was gathering things from superficial sources. He had never been in contact with a living master. He had come so close to a buddha -- Maharshi Raman -- yet he missed. And in self-defense he started writing back home that Eastern mysticism is not meant for the Western mind -- as if there are Eastern souls and Western souls too. Yes, there is a difference in the skin of the Eastern people and the Western people; it is not much of a difference, just a little color pigment -- four annas' worth. And remember, the black person has it more than the white. He is more valuable -- four annas more valuable -- because he has a certain pigment that makes him black which the white skin is missing.

And yes, there is a certain difference in the mind, because the Eastern mind is conditioned in a different way and the Western mind is conditioned in a different way. Conditionings are different, but the witness is the same. Jesus and Buddha, Mohammed and Mahavira, are not different. Saint Francis and Ramakrishna, Eckhart and Krishnamurti, are not different. One who has known the witness is neither Eastern nor Western. He is no more the body and no more the mind -- how can he be Eastern or Western?

And Jung started talking this nonsense in self-defense. He said, "That's why I avoided Maharshi Raman, because Eastern methods are not suitable to us. The West needs its own yoga, the West needs its own meditations." What difference can there be in being aware? Whether you are in the East or in the West, awareness will be the same -- and that is the essential core of meditation.

They are great interpreters of dreams... the whole world of the psychoanalyst is the world of dreams. And as far as the enlightened person is concerned, for him the whole world is nothing but a dream. For the psychoanalyst, dreams are his whole world, and for the enlightened person the whole world is nothing but a dream.

The analyst was annoyed with her patient who said she did not dream the night before.
"Look," he warned her, "if you don't do your homework, I can't help you."

Dreaming is a necessity; that is your homework. Do it at home and then come to the psychoanalyst, and he is there with his whole expertise to analyze it.
Gautami, enlightenment means going beyond desires and dreams. There is no need to waste your time in analyzing. Just go beyond, put your whole energy in going beyond. And when you go beyond, all dreams disappear on their own accord.

The third question:
Question 3
BELOVED MASTER,
WHY DO I KEEP LOSING EVERYTHING BUT MY EGO?

Sughanda.... Odum, an elderly black called before the justice of the peace, was charged with keeping a vicious dog.

"That dog bit my girl Bobbie Jo three times," complained the mother.
"Did your dog bite little Bobbie Jo?" asked the judge.
"No, sir," said Odum. "My dog, he never bit any little girl."
"Well," said the judge to the mother, "this man says that the dog did not bite your little girl."
"I will go home and bring Bobbie Jo here and show you," said the woman.
"Hold on," said the black man. "In the first place, the dog is so old he ain't got no teeth and he can't bite. In the second place, the dog is blind and could not see Bobbie Jo anyhow. In the third place, the dog is deaf and can't hear a thing. And in the fourth place, he ain't my dog in the first place."

Sughanda, you cannot lose your ego because in the first place it does not exist at all. You can lose everything else because those things really exist, but how can you lose something which does not exist? You cannot lose your shadow; it does not exist. And the ego is far more false than your shadow; it is not even a shadow. It is not substance, it is not even a shadow. It is just an idea planted by society within you. It has no reality, so how can you lose it?
The only way to lose it is to LOOK for it -- and you will not find it. And when you don't find it you have lost it. Go within and look for it, search for it.
That's what the meditators have been doing for centuries. They close their eyes and they go in and they search for the ego, where it is -- and they can't find it. When you can't find it and you have looked in all the nooks and all the corners of your being and it is not found anywhere, then

you know you have lost it. In the first place, really it was never there; it was only your belief.

It is like you see a rope in the dark and you believe it is a snake. Then you are trembling and perspiring and running and trying to save yourself from the snake -- which does not exist at all. All your running and your perspiration and all your shouting is just futile, but it can be dangerous to you. Even a false snake can kill you -- you may have a heart attack! That's the trouble with false things; you cannot lose them -- they are not there -- but they can do real things to you.

You may have experienced it sometimes in your dream, when you are having a nightmare. You are running, and a tiger is chasing you, and the tiger is coming closer and closer, and you are running faster and faster and you know that only few moments are left. You can almost feel the hot breath of the tiger on your back.

And then suddenly you come to a cul-de-sac; the road ends. You can't go back -- the tiger is there; you can't go ahead. If you jump into the valley you will be dead before you reach the bottom.

In that state you wake up. The nightmare is too much; it wakes you up. Your heart is palpitating, your breath is disturbed, you are perspiring on a cold winter night. And there is no tiger -- just your wife putting her hand on your back, breathing so close.... You are awake, the nightmare has disappeared. You know there is no tiger -- "It is only my poor wife" -- but still, for a few minutes the perspiration will continue, the heart will go on beating faster, you will start up. Still, knowing perfectly well that all was false, you are trembling.

Exactly is the case with the ego: it is a false entity. When you wake up you can't find it. So the question is not of dropping it. How can you drop something which is not? The question is seeing into it, looking for it, searching for it.
I don't say to you, "Seek and search for God." That is nonsense. How can you seek and search for God, and where? You don't know the address. And even if you meet the gentleman you won't recognize him. Even if he says hello, you won't understand his language. He does not speak German, he does not speak French, he does not speak Italian -- not even Italian!
But every nation believes that "He speaks our language." The Indians think that he speaks Sanskrit, that he himself has written the Vedas. And the Mohammedan thinks he speaks Arabic -- he himself has spoken in Arabic through Mohammed, the only messenger. And of course, the Jews think they are the chosen people of God -- he speaks Hebrew.

After the second world war one German general was talking to an English general. He said, "I can't believe how it happened, how we failed. We had better armies than you, more advanced technology, we were better equipped in every way. How did we fail and you succeeded?"
The English general smiled and he said, "The reason is we used to pray before starting to fight every day."
The German said, "But we also did. We also used to pray before we started to fight."

The Englishman said, "That we know, but we used to pray in English and you in German -- and he does not understand German at all."

Every country believes its language is divine, God's language. But God knows only the language of silence -- and you don't know silence. So when he will say hello it will be a very silent hello. It will not be uttered, it will not be said; it will be only a gesture. And it is almost impossible for you to hear it because it cannot be heard. You cannot recognize his face because it does not resemble Jesus', it does not resemble Krishna's, it does not resemble Buddha's. All faces are his and still he has no face. The Zen people call that face "the original face"; it resembles nobody. Christians will not recognize him because they will be looking for Christ's face and Hindus will not recognize him because they will be looking for Krishna's face. Yes, in Krishna's face also he was and in Christ's face also, but they are just waves -- Krishna, Christ, Buddha, Mahavira -- and he is the ocean. You can't recognize the ocean if you only know about a single wave; the ocean is not a wave although all waves belong to the ocean.
You cannot search for God, and you are so asleep that all your search is going to be wrong. The first thing is to search for your ego; that is the right direction for the seeker. And when you don't find the ego -- when the ego is not found at all, it simply disappears -- then is the possibility of recognizing God's face, because he is egolessness. And when you have the taste of egolessness, a little taste, you will understand him. When the ego disappears you will know what silence is, what space is,

what emptiness is. You are so full of nonexistential ego; when it is gone you will know great spaciousness within you. And he is space, pure space. Something of him will be known by you; then you can recognize him, you are bridged to him.
Sughanda, you say, "Why do I keep losing everything but my ego?"
Because everything else has a concrete reality and the ego has no reality at all. If you want to lose your ego you will have to go in. Maybe that's why people don't go in -- afraid that they may lose themselves. And their fear is right. Beware! If you are ready to lose yourself, then only decide to go in.
But that moment is the greatest moment in life -- when you lose your ego -- because that very moment, immediately, God is found. The moment you are not, God is. The moment you evaporate, God descends in you.

The fourth question:
Question 4
BELOVED MASTER,
I ALWAYS FEEL THAT ANIMALS ARE VERY FRIENDLY WITH ME. WHY?

Roberto, you are an Italian! I will tell you one Italian story. "It is wonderful the power I have got over dumb animals," boasted Rizzoli to his wife. "You notice wherever we go, dogs -- big ones, small ones -- no matta how mean, they all-a come up and lick-a my hand."

"Maybe," said Mrs. Rizzoli, "if you would eat-a with a knife and fork-a once in a while, they would not be so friendly!"

Just be a little less Italian, Roberto, so that even human beings can be friendly to you.

The fifth question:
Question 5
BELOVED MASTER,
WHAT IS THE RIGHT WAY TO HANDLE A WOMAN?

Somesh, there is only one way to handle a woman. The trouble is, nobody knows what it is.

The sixth question:
Question 6
BELOVED MASTER,
I DID NOT LIKE YOUR TELLING TO US NOT TO LOOK AT THE SUN TODAY WHILE IT IS IN TOTAL ECLIPSE. I THOUGHT YOU BELIEVED IN ABSOLUTE FREEDOM.

Sunderam, you are not the only one to ask this question. At least twenty other fools have also asked the same. Please forgive me that I told you not to look at the sun directly -- do it! Please do me a favor! I was utterly wrong to say it so -- your freedom is destroyed. Enjoy your freedom; at least today, don't forget to enjoy it. Look as much as you can at the sun and don't use any device -- because that will hinder

your freedom. With the naked eyes -- natural eyes -- look at the sun. Enjoy it to your heart's content.

I was not going to say it to you. The whole blame goes to Vivek! She nagged me and nagged me to tell you; otherwise I was not going to tell you anything.

A few of these twenty fools have said, "We had never thought that you are superstitious." This is not superstition -- these are scientific facts. There are millions of superstitions also. For example, in India, after the eclipse is over then take a bath and if you can take the bath in a holy river like the Ganges it is thought to be very religious, holy -- because Indians believe that the sun has been in deep difficulty and it is out of the difficulty. That is superstition. The sun is not going into any difficulty at all. The eclipse is not happening on the sun; the sun has nothing to do with the eclipse. It is just the moon coming between you and the sun; it is not happening on the moon either. It is only happening for us.

Indians give donations after the eclipse is over, rejoicing that the sun god is out of trouble. Those are superstitions. But looking at the sun is dangerous -- scientifically dangerous; it is not a question of superstition. You can try it. A few of the others have written, "How can we believe in what you say when your date was wrong, your day was wrong?" That is true. Even if my date is wrong and my day is wrong, the sun in eclipse will have the same effect. About days and dates I am not so sure. In fact, I have no idea of time. I have to go on looking at the clock again and again, otherwise I will go on talking and talking.

Just last month it happened: the clock stopped... at eight twenty it stopped. I looked at it again and again... it was ten to ten. And I am so superstitious that I still believed the clock! I was still thinking it was eight twenty. Finally I started seeing some restlessness around me. I thought, "What is the matter? Something somewhere is wrong." I looked at the clock -- again eight twenty. I said, "There is no problem; there is still time enough."

Yes, on the fourteenth I said, "Tomorrow." Naturally, my date was wrong, but that does not mean that what I said is wrong. Fifteenth or sixteenth, that doesn't matter; dates are arbitrary. They are just our creation -- days are arbitrary. But just because of that, if you ask me how you can believe....

I am not telling you to believe anything. You can go and check with the scientists -- it is dangerous to the eyes, and sometimes so dangerous that the blindness that will be caused by it will be incurable.

But this is not a commandment. I am not saying that looking at the sun in eclipse is a sin or a crime. I am not saying that it is something immoral, irreligious, unspiritual. It is simply stupid!

The last question:

Question 7

BELOVED MASTER,
IS IT TRUE THAT MONEY CANNOT BUY HAPPINESS?

Anando, yes, it is true. Money cannot buy happiness -- but it makes misery more comfortable. That's why I am not

against money, I am all for it. It is better to be comfortably miserable than uncomfortably miserable. I have lived in poverty and I have lived in richness, and believe me: richness is far better than poverty.
Enough for today.
The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 9
Chapter #7
Chapter title: How sweet it is
17 February 1980 am in Buddha Hall

TO HAVE FRIENDS IN NEED IS SWEET
AND TO SHARE HAPPINESS.
AND TO HAVE DONE SOMETHING GOOD
BEFORE LEAVING THIS LIFE IS SWEET,
AND TO LET GO OF SORROW.

TO BE A MOTHER IS SWEET,
AND A FATHER.
IT IS SWEET TO LIVE ARDUOUSLY,
AND TO MASTER YOURSELF.

OH HOW SWEET IT IS TO ENJOY LIFE,
LIVING IN HONESTY AND STRENGTH!

AND WISDOM IS SWEET,
AND FREEDOM.

Gautama the Buddha does not talk about God, but he talks about love, freedom, truth, authenticity. He talks about the essential religion. He does not waste his breath on heaven

and hell, the theory of reincarnation. He is absolutely unconcerned about the so-called great metaphysical problems. He is nonmetaphysical -- in a sense, very down to earth. He means business. He wants to give you a science which can transform your life. He is interested in creating an alchemy of inner revolution so the baser metal can be changed into gold. His religion is unique, in a way. There are three types of religions in the world. Jainism is the only religion which is emphatically atheistic. It denies God and raises man to his ultimate peak. It declares that man is God and there is no other God. Except Jainism, all other religions -- Hinduism, Judaism, Islam, Christianity -- are theistic. They are rooted in the idea of God; without God they will be at a loss what to do. They ARE at a loss because since Nietzsche declared "God is dead," humanity, by and by, has agreed with Nietzsche. His statement became very prophetic; it represents the twentieth-century mind. And the religions which have depended on the idea of God for centuries feel uprooted. They are dying, withering away.

Buddha is unique. He is neither atheistic like Jainism, nor theistic like other religions. He is a superb agnostic. He says there is no need to worry about unnecessary things. Think of the essential, think of the intrinsic, and don't be bothered about the accidentals.

If you are authentic, if you are compassionate, if you are meditative, then if there is a God he will come to you; you need not go in search for him. And if there is a paradise it will descend in your heart. There is no need to be bothered about such abstract ideas; they simply waste your time. And if you are not authentic, not meditative, not

compassionate, not wise enough, even if you come across God what are you going to do? You will feel a little embarrassed and God will feel a little embarrassed facing you. You both will be unnecessarily in a strange situation -- what to say, what to do, what not to say, what not to do. You would like to escape and he would like to escape. Just think: if suddenly you come across God, what will you do? You will run away from him as fast as you can!

Rabindranath has a beautiful parable. In one of his poems he sings: I searched for God for many lives. I saw him sometimes far away on a star, but by the time I reached there he had left the star long before; he was somewhere else. He was always somewhere else and I was chasing him. The very adventure was beautiful; I was enjoying the thrill of it.

And then one day I happened to reach his home. For a moment I was ecstatic that I had arrived, but the next moment I became very sad. Standing at his door I was just going to ring the bell, but my hand became frozen. I thought for a while, "If I ring the bell and he comes out, then what? Then what am I going to do? And after that whom am I going to search? All is finished! My whole past has been nothing but a search for God; it was meaningful because of the search. If the search disappears, all meaning will disappear."

So Rabindranath says, "I descended back from his steps. I took my shoes in my hand so that he would not hear that somebody had come. Otherwise, who knows? He may simply open the door and he will say, 'Come in!' And then I ran away from the place as fast as I could.

"And again I am searching for God, and now I know where he is so I avoid that space only and I search everywhere else, knowing perfectly well that I am not going to meet him there and my search can continue. I can go on hoping and desiring and deep down I know the whole ridiculousness of it -- because he is just by the corner; I can reach his home any moment."

This is a true parable about man: you also know where he is. If he is anywhere at all he is within YOU, not even by the corner. If he is anywhere, he is in your consciousness, in your heart of hearts. He is your life. There you don't look at all, afraid you may find him. And you go on searching in Kaaba, in Kailash, in Kashi, and you go on and on searching knowing perfectly well that you will not find him. And the search can continue and the thrill can continue and you can go on hoping and desiring.
Buddha simply cuts all your hoping and desiring. He does not say there is no God, he does not say there is. He simply says it is irrelevant. It does not matter whether he is or he is not; it is absolutely beside the point. What matters is your inner transformation, and the inner transformation cannot be postponed for tomorrow; it can happen right now.
That's the trouble with Buddha: if you go with him you have to drop your hopes, you have to drop your desires. You have to be in the present, utterly silent. And then life has a new color, a new joy, a new music. Then life has a new beauty.
Right now, in the first place, you cannot meet God because you don't have eyes to see him and you don't have ears to hear him and you don't have the right heart to feel him. You

are not loving enough. Your eyes are not clear; they are so full of dust -- dust of knowledge, memories, experiences. Your ears only appear to hear, but they don't listen.
But by chance even if you meet him, what are you going to ask? A new wife, a new husband, another place to live, a little longer life, youth...? What are you going to ask? -- money, power, prestige? Whatsoever you ask will be stupid.

A black man worshipped God, praying every day for six years. He was always asking for this or that problem to be resolved.
God became very fed up with him and decided to pay him a visit. So one day while the man was praying, God came to his side in living flesh and said, "Hey man, here I am! What do you want to know? Ask!"
The man could not believe his eyes, but he finally asked, "Ah my God, why is my skin so black?"
God answered, "Because the sun in your country is very hot and you must survive."
"And why is my hair so short and kinky?"
"Because in the jungle you have many trees and your hair would get caught."
"And why am I so thin and fast?"
"So that you can fight with lions and other animals in the jungle."
"Then, God, what the fuck am I doing in New York?"

That's going exactly to be the case with you. What are you going to ask God? All your questions will come out of your unconscious. In fact, all questions will be absurd. That's not

the way to encounter reality. One has to be silent, utterly silent.
Hence Buddha says, don't be bothered about God. Be concerned with your own preparation, be prepared. The emphasis is totally different. All the religions emphasize God, the object of search; Buddha emphasizes YOU, the subject. All other religions emphasize the sought; Buddha emphasizes the seeker. And it is certainly more significant to change yourself and prepare yourself for the ultimate encounter with reality -- call it God, existence, truth, liberation, or whatsoever you would like to call it. The real thing, the essential thing, is to be prepared for that encounter.
And if you are ready, if your heart is flowing with love and your head is no longer crazy, no longer full of rubbish, and your eyes have clarity and your ears are ready to listen, then the whole reality turns into God; then everything is divine. Buddha does not say anything about it; he goes on emphasizing your inner change.
These sutras are simple but immensely beautiful. Truth is always simple; it is untruth which is complicated. The untruth has to be complicated so that you don't find that it is untrue, so that you can't find it. Truth is simple, utterly simple and naked.
Buddha says:

TO HAVE FRIENDS IN NEED IS SWEET
AND TO SHARE HAPPINESS.

He emphasized friendship very much. To translate his word for friendship -- MAITRI -- is a little difficult because it

has the quality of friendliness more than friendship. Friendship becomes a relationship, fixed; friendliness is more flowing, more fluid. Friendship is a relationship, friendliness is a state of your being. You are simply friendly; to whom, that is not the point. If you are standing by the side of a tree you are friendly to the tree, or if you are sitting on the rock, you are friendly to the rock. To human beings, to animals, to birds, you are simply friendly. It is not something static; it is a flow, changing moment to moment.

He says: TO HAVE FRIENDS IN NEED IS SWEET.

Friendliness is one of the most significant qualities for the seeker to develop; it is really sweet. It makes your whole life full of sweet music, full of sweet harmony. In Buddha's vision it is higher than so-called love. Your so-called love is tethered to your biology; friendliness is freedom from biology. The ordinary so-called love is the same in human beings as it is in animals, as it is in the trees. It is sex-oriented. It is only a sugarcoating around the bitter pill of sex. In fact, if love is taken away from your sex, sex will look very ridiculous. It is because of the sugarcoating that you can swallow the pill.

Watch animals having sexual intercourse and one thing you are bound to observe; it is impossible not to observe it, it is so emphatically there: they don't seem to be joyous. They seem to be in a hurry and their faces look sad, as if they are being forced by some unknown energy into certain acts in which they are not interested. Hence animals have their sexual seasons when their biology takes a grip on them, forces them to do something which they are not really interested in at all. They have to do it almost like slaves.

And once they are finished with their sexual intercourse they move away from each other -- not even a thank-you! They don't look at each other.

Scientists say love has grown in man for the simple reason that man is the only animal in the world who makes sexual intercourse face-to-face. You have to say something, you have to smile, you have to say goodbye, you have to say so long. Otherwise it will look so awkward to finish suddenly and escape! Because you are facing each other you have to be a little polite, a little cultured, a little polished. You have to behave in a certain manner; you can't be rude.

Animals are not facing each other while making love so they don't encounter, they don't look into each other's eyes. It is a simple biological process and they are almost forced by their biology, by their hormones, to go through it. They go through it, they are dragged through it like slaves. And the same is the situation with you; only the sugarcoating is different.

Friendship is a higher phenomenon. It is pure love; it has nothing to do with your biology. Love -- ordinary love -- can be explained through biology, but friendship cannot be explained. It is a mystery. Friendship is like fragrance; love is gross, because of its sexuality, because of its origins. It is a little heavy. It functions under the law of gravitation: it goes on falling downwards, it has no wings. Friendship has wings. It is nonbiological; it makes you really human, it helps you to transcend your animality.

Buddha praises friendship, friendliness, very highly. He has even chosen that when he comes back again his name will be Maitreya -- the friend. He must have loved the word very much. I don't think he will come again or anybody

ever comes again. God never makes the same mistake again, remember! Once is more than enough, twice will be too much. But he must have loved the word so much that he says, "Next time, if I am at all going to come, my name is going to be Maitreya -- the friend." The word contains his whole philosophy.
He says: TO HAVE FRIENDS... IS SWEET.
Why is it sweet? -- because with friends your relationship is not physiological, it is not even psychological; it is a spiritual communion. With friends you can sit in silence. When you are with your lover you can't sit in silence; silence looks awkward. The woman will think, "Why are you silent? Are you angry or something?" And if she is silent you will think something is wrong -- she is sulking. Why is she so silent? Silence becomes heavy, a burden; it has to be removed.
So people go on talking, whether it is needed or not. They go on talking about anything.

Mulla Nasruddin was coming from his village to see me in his bullock cart, with his dog. It was too hot, a summer afternoon, and suddenly he was surprised that the dog said, "It is too hot."
He looked around; there was nobody, just his dog. He said to the oxen, "Have you heard? Have you heard what has happened?"
And the oxen said, "Yes, he is just like anybody else -- always talking about the weather and doing nothing."

If people have nothing else to talk about they talk about the weather. Anything will do, just go on talking. It keeps you,

in a way, connected. In fact, it keeps you DISconnected. It is not a bridge; rarely it is a bridge. It is a bridge only between a master and a disciple; otherwise it is not a bridge. When the master speaks out of his silence and the disciple listens out of his silence, it is a bridge. Otherwise it is a wall, a China Wall.

Lovers are facing each other. They have to say something; otherwise silence becomes awkward, embarrassing. Friends don't face each other in that way. They face something else -- maybe the sunset, a bird on the wing, a beautiful white cloud. Holding hands, sitting together, they face something else. They both are facing something else. They are in a sort of deep communion, they are one. Their hearts are beating in harmony. Real friends sitting together will find that their hearts start beating in the same way. They even start breathing in harmony; when one exhales, the other exhales. This happens on its own accord; it is a synchronicity. When you are feeling in communion, this happens.

This happens here every day. When you are in communion with me it happens.

Many sannyasins write to me, "Beloved Master, how does it happen? Just before you are going to say something we know you are going to say this. It is so clear and then you say it." It happens because of a deep communion. As it arises in MY being it starts arising in YOUR being.

Hence the ultimate between the master and the disciple is silence, sitting together. There is no need to say anything. Whatsoever happens in the master's being also starts happening in the disciple's being. The disciple starts reflecting the master like a mirror.

On a smaller scale the same happens with friends. But by friends Buddha does not mean acquaintances. By friends he means a love which has gone beyond sexuality, a love which has gone beyond biology, a love which has transcended ordinary nature, transcended gravitation and has become part of the higher law of grace.

TO HAVE FRIENDS IS SWEET AND TO SHARE HAPPINESS....

You can share your happiness only with the friends. Sharing is possible only when two hearts are open to each other; only in deep trust can you be open to the other. In fear you are closed, in doubt you are closed. You are on guard. You are afraid the other may be some danger to you, the other may do some harm. You are not vulnerable when you are in fear. Only with friends you can be vulnerable, open, available. Then sharing is possible. And sharing is one of the greatest spiritual qualities.

The miracle is that the more you share your bliss the more you have it. The more you share, the more it comes to you. The more you share, the more you become aware of an inexhaustible source within yourself.

Happiness is great in itself, but to share it makes it immensely rich, multidimensionally rich. If one is a miser about one's happiness he will kill it. To hoard your happiness is to destroy it; to spread it far and wide is to help it grow more and more. Miserliness is very dangerous as far as bliss is concerned.

But with whom you will share if you don't have friends, if you don't know the art of being friendly? If you know the art of being friendly you can share with as many people as possible, with as many animals as possible, with as many

trees as possible. You can go on sharing every moment of your life because you are always with someone. You can share it with the sun, with the moon, with the stars. No distance prevents. You can share your bliss with a friend who is far far away, thousands of miles away from you. In that moment of sharing spaces disappear, time disappears. There is no time gap, no space gap. You are suddenly together. You can even share with friends who are no longer alive. In deep communion they become available to you, nonphysically.

AND TO HAVE DONE SOMETHING GOOD
BEFORE LEAVING THIS LIFE IS SWEET,
AND TO LET GO OF SORROW.

Friendship is good, it is virtue. Sharing your joy is good, it is great virtue. In fact, all other virtues are by-products of sharing your bliss. Sharing is the very foundation, the source. Share your truth, share your meditation, share your love. Share whatsoever inner beauty arises in you, whatsoever inner glow arises in you. Share your inner flame and never be a miser, and you will become richer and richer, and there is no end to that richness.

In the ordinary world sharing will make you poor. If you share your money you will become poor. You have to be a hoarder, you have to be miserly. In the inner world just the opposite is the case: hoard, and you will lose; share, and you will have it.

In the inner world a totally different kind of law exists. There you can have your cake and eat it too. And it would

be better if you don't eat it alone, if you invite your friends to eat with you.

AND TO HAVE DONE SOMETHING GOOD.... What does Buddha mean by "something good"? Buddha always emphasizes that unconscious acts are bad and conscious acts are good. You can do something apparently good, but if you are unconscious it can't be good. Your intention is good, but the action and its consequences are going to be bad.

For example, just the other day somebody had asked, "I want to stop smoking. What should I do? What do you say about it?" Now, he is asking a simple question. You can ask the same question to any of your so-called saints -- Hindu, Mohammedan, Christian, Jaina, Buddhist -- and they will all say, "Stop it immediately! Smoking is bad." But I can't say it that way. I can say to you, "Become more conscious. If your consciousness changes something in you and smoking disappears, good; otherwise, please continue to smoke." Why?

Adolf Hitler never smoked, but I can't call him a virtuous man. He was always getting up before the sunrise -- BRAHMAMUHURT. In India this is a must for a saint. Brahmamuhurt means God's moment -- as if all other moments are the Devil's and just the few moments before the sunrise are God's! Getting up early in the morning before sunrise is thought to be very religious. And if you are sleeping late and getting up at nine or ten, certainly you are a sinner.

Adolf Hitler was a very religious man, if this is what religion is -- getting up early. And he was going to bed also very early. He was not a smoker, he was not a drinker.

In that sense, Jesus is less religious than Adolf Hitler. He loved drinking, he loved good wine. He loved it so much that once he transformed the whole sea into wine, you know! Now, what kind of religious man is this Jesus? He loved eating with friends, inviting friends. He was always in a festive mood.

Adolf Hitler used to eat alone. He was a perfect dog! Dogs eat alone. Even if you are just looking they will keep their backs towards you, afraid you may snatch away their food or something. Some other dog may come and start barking and fighting may start. They can't invite anybody. Dogs don't believe in parties! They are loners, very meditative! They eat alone. And of course they eat very silently, no conversation. And they eat quick and fast; they don't waste time. Adolf Hitler did the same. He was also afraid of people, just like dogs.

It is said that he had not a single friend in the whole of Germany. And Buddha says: Be friendly. It is sweet to have friends. He had no friend because he was so afraid of people, so suspicious, that he could not afford friendship. To be friendly means to be intimate. To be friendly means to be available to the other. To be friendly means to trust the other.

He never got married in his whole life. He got married only at the very end, just three hours before he committed suicide. When it was absolutely decided that he was going to commit suicide he called a priest and got married, so that at least in death he can have a companion. The woman had to commit suicide with him also. A strange marriage! Why did he avoid marriage his whole life? -- for the simple reason that he was not sure whether to allow a woman in

the same room in the night when he was asleep. Who knows? -- she may cut your throat, kill you, poison you. You may start uttering some secret in your sleep; she may hear it. She may open your letters. Women are known to do such things, well known, really. In fact, it is very difficult to get your letter without it being read by your woman; she is bound to read it.

Mulla Nasruddin's wife was fighting with him. "Something has to be done -- you have to write to your mother. She has been very cruel and crude towards me."
Nasruddin said, "But she is a thousand miles away. How can she be suddenly cruel and crude towards you?"
The wife said, "Yes, she has been. Look at this letter!"
In the letter there was a postscript. The letter was written to Nasruddin and the postscript to Nasruddin's wife, "Please, after you have read it, give the letter to my son!"

Women know each other!
Adolf Hitler was very afraid to get married. He remained a bachelor, a BRAHMACHARI, a celibate. Now, what more religious qualities do you need in a saint? -- no smoking, no drinking, no wife, no friends. He lived the life of a monk! But my feeling is, if he had smoked a little, if he had got drunk once in a while, had fallen into the hands of some woman, had loved somebody, had some friends, played chess or gambled a little bit, he would have been a far more human being and the world would have been saved from the second world war. But he became almost stonelike. You can do good things, but if you are not conscious your good things are bound to result into something disastrous.

In Manhattan, a policeman strolling his early morning beat stopped in front of an East Eighties brownstone. Sitting on the stoop was Millarney, completely snookered.
"Why don't you go home?" suggested the cop.
"I live here," said Millarney.
"Why don't you go inside then?"
"I lost my key," answered the drunk.
"Why don't you ring the bell?"
"I did, an hour ago."
"Why don't you ring it again?" asked the officer.
"To hell with them!" snorted Millarney. "Let them wait!"

The ordinary humanity is really in a state of stupor. People are asleep. There is no need to be a drunkard, people are already drunk. Naturally we are not born conscious, we are born unconscious, and then we go on becoming more and more unconscious in life -- because we are unconscious, we want to be more unconscious. It seems to be natural, it fits with us. To be conscious seems to be a very uphill task. Hence the immense attraction for alcohol or for other drugs. From the times of the Vedas up to now it has been the same. The Vedas praise SOMARAS very highly. Somaras seems to be something like marijuana, LSD, psilocybin, something like that. It has not yet been discovered exactly what it was, but whatsoever it was, it was one of the most perfect of drugs.
Aldous Huxley, one of the most intellectual, philosophic persons, a great scholar, has called the perfect LSD "soma." He says that in the twenty-first century we will be reaching to that perfection. From the Vedas to Aldous Huxley, drugs

have been an obsession with humanity, for the simple reason that we are born unconscious and the problems of life, anxieties of life, dangers of life, make us sometimes conscious. They wake up our deep, deep slumber, they disturb it. So we need more drugs, more and more drugs, to remain undisturbed in our unconsciousness. And out of that unconsciousness we act, we live our lives.

Ferguson and Malone decided to go hunting one morning.
"Listen," said Ferguson, "I will bring all the guns and such and you bring all the provisions."
"Fine," said Malone.
The next morning when they met, Ferguson was loaded down with guns and ammunition. Malone was carrying a loaf of bread and six bottles of whisky.
Ferguson blew his stack. "Look what happens when I leave the provisions to you!" he shouted. "A loaf of bread and six bottles of whisky! What the hell are we gonna do with all that bread?"

When Buddha says, AND TO HAVE DONE SOMETHING GOOD, he means when you do something consciously. You cannot do anything bad consciously; that is an impossibility. It is as much impossible to do anything bad consciously as it is impossible to do good unconsciously.
Before leaving this life be conscious, act out of your consciousness, so that you can beautify this existence a little bit, so that you can sing a little song, so you can dance a little dance, so the world is enriched, so that you can be a little more creative, so that the world is a little more divine

than it was before you came into it. Contribute something to it. Don't be just a wastage.
AND TO LET GO OF SORROW. People think sorrow is clinging to you; that is utter nonsense. YOU are clinging to sorrow, because you have invested so much in sorrow. Your greatest investment is your ego. When you are sad, when you are miserable, your ego can feed on these illnesses, diseases. The ego can keep alive only through these pathologies; the ego lives on them.
When you are blissful, really blissed out, ego disappears. You are, but there is no ego, no idea of I, no idea of separation. In bliss there is a merger with the whole; in misery you are alone and separate. Misery makes you an island and bliss takes all your boundaries away from you. In bliss, the river disappears in the ocean. And we are very afraid to disappear as an ego. We want to keep our identity intact.

Mulla Nasruddin came across a small boy sitting in the gutter crying loudly.
"My boy, don't cry like that," said the Mulla.
Said the little boy, "Listen, mate, you cry your way and I will cry mine."

Sorrow has something very personal about it; bliss is impersonal. Your misery is YOUR misery; it defines you. It is nobody else's misery, it is especially yours; it gives you a certain uniqueness. But bliss? Bliss is universal. Hence Buddha, Jesus, Krishna, Lao Tzu, these people have disappeared into bliss. They don't have any personality. They are no-persons, they are nonentities. They are

tremendously alive, but they are not separate from the whole. They have allowed the whole to live through them.
Buddha says: AND TO LET GO OF SORROW.
Please watch how you are clinging to your sorrow, your misery. Drop it, let go of it! And your life will have a great sweetness.

TO BE A MOTHER IS SWEET,
AND A FATHER.
IT IS SWEET TO LIVE ARDUOUSLY,
AND TO MASTER YOURSELF.

TO BE A MOTHER IS SWEET.... Why? Just giving birth to a child is not to be a mother, remember. Otherwise there are millions of mothers on the earth -- and there seems to be no sweetness. In fact, if you ask the psychologists they will say just the opposite. They will say the only problem to be solved is the mother. The only pathology that millions of people are suffering from is the mother. And what they are saying they are saying after fifty, sixty years of constant analysis of thousands of people. Everybody's illness basically comes to one point: that it has been given to you, transmitted to you by your mother.
There are people who are afraid of women; and if you are afraid of women you can't love them. How can love arise out of fear? And why are you afraid of women? -- because your childhood was lived in fear of your mother. She was constantly after you, she was constantly hammering you. She was constantly telling you to do this and not to do that -- of course, for your own good. She has crippled you, she has destroyed many things in you. She has made you phony

because she has told you what is right to do. Whether you like it or not, whether it is spontaneously arising in you or not, you have to follow the order. And you were so helpless... your survival depended on the mother so you had to listen to her. She conditioned you. And it is because of the fear of your mother that you are afraid of women. Millions of husbands are henpecked for the simple reason that their mothers were too strong. It has nothing to do with the wife; they are simply projecting the mother on the wife. The wife is only a new edition of the mother. They are expecting everything from the wife that they expected from the mother. On the one hand it cripples them; on the other hand they start expecting things which are not possible from the wife's side -- because she is not your mother. So you feel frustrated. And how can you make love to your wife?

A boy who has really been dominated by the mother, who has been reduced into absolute obedience, will not be able to make love to a woman, because as he will come close to the woman psychologically he will go impotent. How can you make love to your mother? It is impossible.

Hence many people become impotent with their wives, but only with their wives. With the prostitutes they are not impotent. It is strange: why are they not impotent with the prostitute? -- for the simple reason that they can't think of their mother as a prostitute; that is impossible. Their mother, and a prostitute? The prostitute is a world apart. But they can think of their wife as a mother, they can project the mother. The wife becomes simply a screen. They want the wife to take care of them like a small child, and if she is not taking care they feel offended.

Thousands of neurotic people and psychotic people are there in the world because of the mother. And Buddha says: TO BE A MOTHER IS SWEET. He must mean something else. He can't mean a Jewish mother! He means not just giving birth to a child; that does not make one a mother. To be motherly is a totally different phenomenon. It is something absolutely human; it transcends animality. It has nothing to do with biology. It is love, pure love, unconditional love.

When a mother loves unconditionally -- and only a mother can love unconditionally -- the child learns the joy of unconditional love. The child becomes capable of loving unconditionally. And to be able to love unconditionally is to be religious.

And it is the easiest thing for a woman to do. It is easy for her because naturally she is ready for it. She is just on the verge of transcending biology through being a mother. You can be motherly without giving birth to a child. You can be motherly to anybody. You can be motherly to an animal, to a tree. You can be motherly to anything. It is something inside you.

Being motherly means being capable of unconditional love, loving the person for the sheer joy of loving, helping the person to grow for the sheer joy of seeing somebody grow. A real therapist is a mother. If he is not, he is not a real therapist. He is only a professional exploiting people, exploiting them because of their misery. But a real therapist is a mother. He becomes a womb for the patient. He gives the patient a new birth. He starts the life of the patient again from ABC. He gives him a clean sheet to write his life again.

That's what I mean when I say "the psychology of the buddhas"; that is real therapy. A master is a real therapist; his very presence is therapeutic. He surrounds you like a mother. He is a cloud who surrounds you from everywhere, from all the sides, in all the dimensions, like a mother.

TO BE A MOTHER IS SWEET, AND A FATHER. To be a father is a little more difficult. To be a mother is easier because each woman is born intrinsically to be a mother. But fatherhood is an institution invented by man; hence it is very difficult to come across a real father. But when you come across a real father it is a miracle. A real father is also a mother. He is called a father because he is a man, but his whole approach is of unconditional love.

In ordinary life lovers are exploiting each other; it is a mutual exploitation. Unconditional love means no exploitation. The other is not being used as a means but is respected as an end unto himself or herself.

Give your children your love, but don't give your ideologies. Don't make them Catholics and communists; that is poisoning them. Don't make them Hindus and Jainas and Buddhists; that is very destructive. Give your love, give your loving nourishment, and give them strength enough to inquire who they are, what this reality is all about. Give them every support so they can go on in life with an adventurous spirit. Then you are helping them; then you are really educating them. Ordinarily, whatsoever exists in the name of education is nothing but mis-education.

Real education is helping the person to be himself. It is possible only if you love the person for his own sake, for no other motive. If there is a motive, your love is

contaminated. Then you are not a real father or a real mother.

IT IS SWEET TO LIVE ARDUOUSLY, AND TO MASTER YOURSELF.

Life is basically insecure. Only death is secure. Life insurance is a contradiction in terms; there can be only death insurance. Life is an adventure, unpredictable. Hence one has to live it arduously. Life is dangerous; only death is safe. So the people who want to live safely die before their death, and the people who want to live without any danger don't live at all.

Life means danger, life means risk. Life means going always from the known to the unknown, from one peak to another peak, always climbing peaks which have not been climbed before, always moving into the uncharted sea with no maps, with no guidelines. Only then you live ecstatically, and only then you know what life is. Through living dangerously one becomes integrated. Through living a life of insecurity one passes through fire and becomes pure gold.

The only way to become a master of oneself is to go into the unknown, unafraid or in spite of all the fears. Buddha invites you for an arduous life. That's what sannyas is all about.

"Hello, hello, police. Please come quickly. There is a big black cat coming to get me. Hurry up! I am afraid."

The policeman replied in a tired voice, "Now, come on! What kind of man are you, afraid of a black cat?"

"I am not a man. I am a peacock."

It is very rare to find a real man. Even to find a peacock is very rare. There are only rats, white and black and all colors of rats! It is not an accident that psychologists go on studying rats to understand man. Strange, trying to understand rats so as to understand man! But not really, not really so strange as it appears, because the majority of men live like rats.

The psychology of Pavlov is based on the study of dogs, and the psychology of Skinner is based on the study of rats. And both are perfectly true as far as the majority of humanity is concerned. Only once in a while they may not be right. If they try to apply their psychology on a buddha they may not be right, but as far as the ordinary humanity is concerned they are perfectly right. What has happened to man? He has lost all meaning and significance for the simple reason that he has become a very cowardly being. He lives in such cowardly ways, he is so afraid of anything new.

I know people who have been listening to me for years -- ten years, twelve years, fifteen years -- and they go on saying to me, "We want to become sannyasins, but we are still thinking." And they go on finding excuses, sometimes one excuse, sometimes another excuse. They love me, but they are not courageous enough to declare it. They hide the fact. They are not courageous to move into this unknown dimension of sannyas. They love me so they listen to me, and they love me so sometimes they think that one day they are going to become sannyasins, but they go on finding excuses to postpone it.

It is because of this cowardliness that man has lost all meaning and significance. All joy, all bliss, all ecstasy, has

disappeared. Man looks very sad. Even if he laughs, his laughter looks phony, mechanical, false -- something cultivated, managed, not coming from the depths. It has no profundity, it does not sound like it is coming from the center. It is only a painted smile on the circumference.
Do you know how the word 'phony' came into existence? It came because of the telephone. When the telephone was invented and people started listening to others thousands of miles away on the telephone, the voice sounded strange. It is bound to be so. It is mechanical; it has not that authenticity. And there was nobody behind it; it was coming out of nowhere. Hence the word 'phony'. You smile, but you don't seem to be behind it; you may not be there at all.
And now even a new thing has come into existence. At least in the old days you could imagine that on the other side there must be somebody. Now there may be just a tape recorder saying, "Hello. How are you?"

I have heard:
One psychologist became very tired with a patient, tired because he was saying the same things again and again. And he was so rich that there was no hope of getting rid of him! So the psychologist said, "You do one thing. I will leave my tape recorder and you go on talking to the tape recorder. And whenever I have time I will listen to it."
The man said, "That's perfectly right" -- because psychologists sit behind a screen, particularly Freudian psychologists. The patient lies down on the couch and the psychologist sits behind a screen. It is a good device... so that the psychologist can go to sleep, can read a newspaper,

or may even leave. And the patient goes on talking, believing that he is there. Only once in a while he has to say, "Hmm. Yes. Go on," but this can be done by a tape recorder.
Next time, next session, and the psychologist said, "You did perfectly well last time. Now my tape recorder is here again. You go on talking to it. I am going to see a matinee show. When I am back I will listen."
When he was outside he saw the patient walking out. He said, "Where are you going?"
The patient said, "To the matinee show."
He said, "What happened? Aren't you going to talk to the tape recorder?"
He said, "I have put my tape recorder there. I have told everything to my tape recorder, and my tape recorder is talking to your tape recorder, so what's the need of me being there? I'm also coming to the matinee show!"

Life has become phony because of us, because we are living in a very cowardly way. We are not living arduously. We are not trying to climb new mountains, new peaks. We are not trying to explore. We have become more concerned with comfort, with security, safety.
Buddha says: IT IS SWEET TO LIVE ARDUOUSLY.
Have you ever enjoyed climbing to the peak of a mountain? It is hard. You perspire, breathing becomes difficult, you become tired. And then you reach to the sunlit peak and then you lie down on the grass, and what relaxation and what joy arises in your being! The silence of the peak and the arduous climb, and you have reached, and the joy of reaching! You could have been dropped by a helicopter, but

then there would have been no joy. It would have been comfortable.

Edmund Hillary could have reached to the peak of Everest by a helicopter -- it was easier -- but he tried the hard way. And he writes, "I have never known such bliss. When I reached to the peak I was all alone, the first man on Everest." Nobody had seen the sky from that point, nobody had seen the world from that point. It was sheer ecstasy. He danced.

Sooner or later buses will be going there and hotels will be there and cinema houses, and it will become very comfortable. But don't hope that you will have the same ecstasy as Edmund Hillary had, although you will be standing on the same spot. You will look a little silly and stupid, that's all. And you will not believe why this Hillary danced; you don't see any point. All around there are hotels and tourist centers and guides and everything is available; the whole world is there. You don't see why he laughed, why he enjoyed, why he danced, because you don't feel any dance.

Life is joy only when you live it raw, when you live it in all its wildness, when you live it naturally, spontaneously. Yes, there are bound to be difficulties, there are bound to be dangers, but they are part of life, and without them life will not be life at all. And this is the only way to master yourself.

OH HOW SWEET IT IS TO ENJOY LIFE,
LIVING IN HONESTY AND STRENGTH!

Strange words from the mouth of Buddha. They would be perfectly right from the mouth of Zorba the Greek, but from the mouth of Buddha? OH HOW SWEET IT IS TO ENJOY LIFE, LIVING IN HONESTY AND STRENGTH!
Just the other day I received a very angry letter from someone who was here for a few days. He is the librarian in Dharamsala of the Dalai Lama's library -- must be a scholar!
He writes to me, "You are saying things which are not Buddhist at all. In Mahayana sutras," he quotes, "Mahayana scriptures, it is perfectly and clearly stated that one has to live life ascetically. And you are changing the whole color of Buddha -- you are making him look as if he is a hedonist!"
I don't care about the Mahayana sutras and the scriptures, but I know Buddha, I know his heart. I know that space from my own experience. I am not a scholar; in fact I have never read these sutras before! Every day I have to look at them and start talking to you. I am not concerned much with what Buddha said, but I know what Buddha WOULD have said. I cannot believe that he was a pessimist. He believes, of course, in a totally different kind of life. He does not believe in the ordinary, unconscious life -- dishonest, unauthentic, unloving, unmeditative. He calls that life misery, but only a certain kind of life he calls misery. True life cannot be misery, true life is bliss.
OH HOW SWEET IT IS TO ENJOY LIFE, LIVING IN HONESTY AND STRENGTH!
We have forgotten all honesty. Out of fear we have become dishonest, out of fear we have become false. Out of fear we follow the crowd and become phony. Out of fear we wear

masks so that we look like everybody else -- and we are not like everybody else. Everybody is unique; nobody is like anybody else. We have fallen below the animals as far as honesty is concerned.

Kaflin was planning a vacation and did not know what to do with his collie. He wrote to the resort hotel and asked if dogs were allowed.
He received this answer from the manager: "Dear sir, I have been in the hotel business for over thirty years. Never yet have I had to call in the police to eject a disorderly dog in the small hours of the morning. No dog has ever attempted to pass off a bad cheque on me. Never has a dog set the bedclothes afire through smoking. I have never found a hotel towel in a dog's suitcase. Certainly, your dog is welcome. P.S. If he will vouch for you, you can come too."

Of course, a dishonest life cannot be a life of bliss. You think you are deceiving others; you are simply destroying yourself and destroying all possibilities of growth, because growth comes through sincerity, honesty, authenticity. Growth comes through accepting your truth in its total nudity. And then life is certainly a joy, then life is certainly a bliss.
But you cannot expect anything else from a scholar. A scholar is bound to be stupid, otherwise why should he be a scholar in the first place? An intelligent person will seek and search for truth. He will not bother about Mahayana sutras and scriptures. I have no respect for scholarship.

And this man became very much disturbed, so much so that he has left already. If he had been here I would have hammered him a little more, but I received his letter just the other day when he had left. I hope that sometime again he will come, because to me the space of Buddha is a totally different space from what Buddhist scholars think it is.
He said, "Whatsoever you are saying is illogical and against the scriptures." So far so good! If it is against the scriptures it must have some truth in it. If it is illogical then it must be closer to truth, because truth IS illogical. Life is illogical. Those who think that life is logical are simply befooling themselves. Life is absolutely illogical because life contains contradictions and logic cannot contain contradictions. Logic is stupid.

A cyclist was stopped on the road by a policeman. He was no ordinary man -- he was a professor of logic.
"Ah so! No light, that is twenty marks. No brakes, that is fifty marks. No bell, that is ten marks."
The cyclist turned round and looked at the row of traffic lined up behind him. He pointed at the man behind him and said, "Alright, that is eighty marks. But the poor man behind me, what will he have to pay? He has no bicycle even!"

Logically, that's true. If no bells, ten marks, no brakes, fifty marks, no light, twenty marks -- no bicycle, how much will he have to pay?

A male scorpion was walking along the bank of a river. At a certain point he saw on the other bank a most beautiful

female scorpion dancing erotically to attract him. He desired very much to cross the river, but he could not swim. Suddenly he saw a big red frog and called to him, but the frog, being afraid of the scorpion's poison, started to hop away.
The scorpion, however, was a philosopher, and he said to the frog, "Come on, don't be afraid. Look at it logically. I am not interested in you, I am interested in her. I just want you to get me across the river. Everything will be okay. I am obviously not going to sting you because if I do, not only will YOU die, but I will die too because I can't swim. So come on, be logical and help me get across."
The red frog reluctantly agreed. The scorpion jumped on his shoulders and they began to cross the river. The frog swam very carefully, always looking towards the approaching shore.
Suddenly the frog felt a shooting pain in his ass and shortly after he felt the coolness of death slowly overtaking him. He turned to the scorpion and said, "Shit! This is not logic at all!"
"Yes," the scorpion agreed. "It is not logic, it is my nature."

Logic is one thing, life is totally another. My concern here is not logic but life. My statements may not be logical -- they cannot be -- but they are alive; they have the flavor of life.
Buddha says: OH HOW SWEET IT IS TO ENJOY LIFE, LIVING IN HONESTY AND STRENGTH!

AND WISDOM IS SWEET,
AND FREEDOM.

Buddha says: Meditation brings two things. It brings wisdom, it brings freedom. These two flowers grow out of meditation. When you become silent, utterly silent, beyond the mind, two flowers bloom in you. One is of wisdom: you know what is and what is not. And the other is of freedom: you know now there are no more any limitations on you, either of time or of space. You become liberated. Meditation is the key to liberation, to freedom, to wisdom. Enough for today.

The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 9

Chapter #8

Chapter title: The nature of things

18 February 1980 am in Buddha Hall

The first question:

Question 1

BELOVED MASTER,

I UNDERSTAND YOU TO SAY THAT THE INTELLECT IS A BARRIER TO SELF-REALIZATION. PLEASE EXPLAIN FURTHER WHAT YOU MEAN BY THIS. I HAVE BEEN VERY INTERESTED TO LISTEN TO YOUR LECTURES DURING THE PAST FEW DAYS. FAR FROM BEING UNINTELLECTUAL, THEY COULD BE DESCRIBED AS AN INTELLECTUAL TOUR DE FORCE. FURTHERMORE, A SCIENTIST CANNOT DISCARD HIS SHARE OF KNOWLEDGE ON WHICH HE BASES HIS JUDGMENTS: SURELY HIS JUDGMENTS MUST BE OBJECTIVE. I FEEL THAT I MUST HAVE MISUNDERSTOOD YOU.

Richard, I have been saying nothing against intelligence, intellect, but against intellectuality -- and that's a totally different phenomenon. When somebody becomes identified with his intellect, intellectuality is born; when somebody remains the master, unidentified with his intellect, intelligence is born. Intellect is the same. The whole thing depends whether you get identified with it or you remain transcendental to it. If you become identified, it is intellectuality; if you remain unidentified, it is intelligence. Intelligence is of tremendous importance; intellectuality is a barrier. Intellectuality is a barrier even in the world of science. Intellectuality can, at the most, give you scholars, wordy people who go on and on spinning, weaving systems of thought with no substance at all.

In the scientific endeavor, intelligence has to be focused on the objective world; in the religious exploration, intelligence has to move inwards. It is the same intelligence, only the direction changes. In science, the object, the outer object, is the goal of inquiry; in religion, your subjectivity, your interiority, is your adventure. The intelligence is the same.

If you become an intellectual then you will not be a scientist; you will only write histories of science or philosophies of science, but you will not be a scientist, an explorer, an inventor, a discoverer, on your own. You will be simply accumulating information. Yes, that too has a certain use; as far as the outside world is concerned, even information has a certain limited utility, but in the inner world it has no utility at all. It is a barrier; it has a negative effect on the inner experience.

You say, "I understand you to say that the intellect is a barrier to self-realization."

The intellect is neither a barrier nor a bridge; intellect is neutral. Get identified with it, it becomes a barrier; remain unidentified with it, it is a bridge. And without meditation you cannot know your transcendental nature.

In science, concentration is enough; at the most, contemplation is needed. In religion, meditation is the only way. Concentration is not needed, is not a help; it is a positive hindrance. Contemplation also is not a help; it is a compensation for not being meditative, it is a poor substitute for it. Meditation -- only meditation -- can bring the inner revolution.

Meditation means getting out of the mind, looking at the mind from the outside. That's exactly the meaning of the word 'ecstasy': to stand out. To stand out of the mind makes you ecstatic, brings bliss to you. And great intelligence is released. When you are identified with the mind you cannot be very intelligent because you become identified with an instrument, you become confined by the instrument and its limitations. And you are unlimited -- you are consciousness.

Use the mind, but don't become it. Use it as you use other machines. Mind is a beautiful machine. If you can use it, it will serve you; if you cannot use it and it starts using you, it is destructive, it is dangerous. It is bound to take you into some trouble, into some calamity, into some suffering and misery, because a machine is a blind thing. It has no eyes, it has no insight. Mind cannot see; it can only go on repeating that which has been fed into it. It is like a computer; first

you have to feed it.

That's what your so-called education is, you go on feeding it. Then it becomes a great memory in you, so whenever you need to remember anything it can supply. But you should remain the master so that you can use it; otherwise it starts directing you.
Don't be guided by your car; remain a driver. You have to decide the direction, you have to decide the goal. You have to decide about the speed, when to start and when to stop. When you lose control and when the car takes over and it starts going on its own you are doomed.
But I am not absolutely against information. Information is good if it is stored in the memory and whenever you need it you can find it easily. It is dangerous only when you don't need it and it goes on hammering itself on you; when it forces you to do something, when you are just a victim, then it is dangerous. Otherwise it is beautiful. It is a beautiful means, but it is not the end.

At school the teacher was asking his class questions. He turned to Jenkins, "Who knocked down the walls of Jericho?"
"Please, sir," replied Jenkins. "It was not me, sir."
The teacher was very angry. He went straight to the headmaster and said, "I have just asked Jenkins who knocked down the walls of Jericho and he said it was not him. What do you think about that?"
The headmaster said, "I have known the Jenkins family for years, and if he said it wasn't him, it WASN'T him."

The teacher was even more angry. He phoned the Minister of Education and said, "I asked a boy in class who knocked down the walls of Jericho and he said it wasn't him. I then went to the headmaster to complain. He said he had known the family for years and if the boy said it wasn't him, it WASN'T him. What do you think about that?"
The minister was silent for a second, then said, "Listen, I am fed up with complaints from your school. Get the walls repaired and if there are more complaints, I am going to shut that school down!"

Information is not bad in itself -- you have to know who knocked down the walls of Jericho! But if information becomes so powerful in your mind that it goes on and on and you cannot put it off, you cannot put the mind in a state of relaxation, then the mind becomes wearied, tired, bored, exhausted. In that state, how can you be intelligent? Your energies are dissipated. Intelligence needs overflowing energies. Intelligence needs health, wholeness.
A meditator will be more intelligent than anybody else and a meditator will be able to use his mind objectively and subjectively both. He will be able to move outside as easily as he will be able to move inside. He will be more flexible. He is the master. He can take the car forward, he can take the car backward.
When Ford had made his first car there was no reverse gear in it. It was a difficult problem to come back home. You had to go round, you had to take the long route, just to come back home. Even if you had gone a few yards past your garage you could not come back to the garage -- there was no reverse gear in it. Later on it was added.

Meditation gives you the reverse gear. Ordinarily you don't have it and you have to go round the world again and again, and still you cannot find where your home is; you cannot come back. You cannot go in; you know only how to go out. You cannot back in. A meditator becomes more fluid, more flexible. He becomes more enriched.

I am not in favor of those people who in the past, in the name of religion, became fixated into their introversion; that is another extreme. A few people are fixated as extroverts; as a reaction, a few other people become fixated as introverts. Both become dead. Life belongs to the flexible one who can move from extroversion to introversion and from introversion to extroversion as easily as you move outside your house and inside your house. When it is too cold inside you come out in the sun; when it becomes too hot you come inside under the shelter, in the coolness of the house -- and there is no problem. It is as simple as that.

Meditation does not mean going against the outside world. It has been so in the past. That's why religion has failed, it could not succeed; it could not have succeeded in any way. Life belongs to the fluid, to the flowing. Whenever you become fixated you become a thing. Your monks were introverts; they closed their eyes to the outside world. That's why in the East we could not develop science, although the first steps were taken in the East. Mathematics was developed in India. The first steps towards technology were taken in China. But there it stopped for the simple reason that the greatest people in the East became fixated introverts; they lost interest in the objective world, they

closed themselves totally to the objective. This is being only half of your total potential.

Now the West is doing just the opposite: it has become utterly extrovert, it does not know how to go in. It does not believe that there is any "in," it does not believe in any soul. It believes in man's behavior, not in man's inner existence. It studies the behavior and it says there is nobody inside it -- it is all mechanical.

Man has become a robot. If you don't know the soul, man becomes a robot. He is understood to be just a beautiful mechanism developed over millions of years -- the long long journey of evolution -- but he is only a sophisticated machine.

It was not difficult for Adolf Hitler to kill so many people so easily for the simple reason that if man is a machine, what is the harm in killing people? If you destroy your wristwatch you don't feel guilty; howsoever sophisticated it was, it was only a wristwatch. If you decided to destroy it, it is for you to decide; nobody can object to it. You cannot be dragged into a court as a murderer.

Stalin could kill millions of people easily without any prick in his conscience for the simple reason that Marxism believes that there is no soul. Man is nothing but matter; consciousness is only a by-product of matter. This is one extreme.

Science has developed in the West, but religion has disappeared. In the East, religion developed but science disappeared. In both the ways man remains poor and half. My effort here is to create the whole man who will be able to be scientific and religious together.

A big, mangy dog was threatening a mother cat and her kittens. He had backed them into the corner of a barn, when suddenly the cat reared back on her hind legs and started barking and growling loudly. Startled and confused, the dog turned and ran from the barn, its tail tucked between its legs.
Turning to her kittens, the mother cat lifted a paw and told them, "Now do you see the advantage of being bilingual?"

I want man to be bilingual. He should know science as much, as deeply as he should know meditation. He should know mind as much as he should know meditation. He should know the language of the objective world -- that is science -- and he should know also the language of the subjective world -- that is religion.
Only a man who is able to bridge the objective and the subjective, a man who is able to bridge the East and the West, a man who is able to bridge the materialist and the spiritualist, can be a whole man. The world is waiting for the whole man. If the whole man does not arrive soon, then there is no future for humanity. And the whole man can come only through deep, profound intelligence.
I am not against intellect, I am not against intelligence; I am against intellectuality. Don't get identified with your mind. Always remain a watcher on the hills; a witness to the body, to the mind, a witness to the outer and to the inner, so that you can transcend both the outer and the inner and you can know that you are neither -- you are beyond both. That beyond is God.
God is neither an object nor a subject. God is neither the outside nor the inside. He is both and he is neither.

Richard, you say, "I have been very interested to listen to your lectures during the past few days. Far from being unintellectual, they could be described as an intellectual tour de force."

When I am talking to you, even if I am talking about something supra-intellectual, I talk in intellectual ways because otherwise you will not be able to understand what I am saying. Intellect is the only possible communication right now. Unless YOU learn the language of total silence I have to go on talking in YOUR language. You understand logic, I use logic -- for very strange purposes: to help you go beyond logic. I use every possible way to help you transcend duality.

I am not unintellectual or anti-intellectual, but my effort here is to help you to go beyond intellect and anti-intellect both, to go beyond logic and illogic both. It is possible. When you are in absolute silence you are neither logical nor illogical, but that silence cannot be expressed directly; that silence has to be translated into your language. That's what I am doing here. It is an arduous effort because much splendor and grandeur is lost in translating it. That experience of silence is so vast it cannot be put into words, but it has to be put into words. Only then will you be able to hear it. Even then very few people hear it, because people are not present; they are absent, they are asleep.

I have to start with your language, and slowly slowly, you will start learning my language. I am bilingual and I will make you also bilingual. There are two languages: the language of words and the language of silence. Right now I have to use the language of words to translate the poetry of silence, the music of silence. Later on, when you have

developed a little meditativeness, you will be able to understand the poetry of silence, the music of silence directly -- just by sitting near me. There will be no need for me to say anything at all.
I am waiting for that day and I am really in a hurry for that day, because talking is becoming more and more difficult for me. To you it may seem that I can go on talking forever; as far as I am concerned it is becoming more and more difficult because I can see the impossibility of putting the unknowable into words. It seems murderous -- the whole beauty is lost. Only something reaches you and that too depends on you: if you are available to me it reaches to you; otherwise it will not reach you. You will go on listening to that which you want to listen to and you will go on seeing that which you are capable of seeing.

For a holiday, Donnelly decided to go to Switzerland to fulfill a lifelong dream by climbing the Matterhorn. He hired a guide and went up. Just as they neared the top, the men were caught in a snow slide.
Three hours later, a Saint Bernard plowed through to them, a keg of brandy tied under his chin.
"Hurray!" shouted the guide. "Here comes man's best friend!"
"Yeah," said Donnelly. "And look at the size of the dog that is bringing it!"

You hear that which you can hear, you see that which you can see. It is a tug of war between me and you to bring you to a point from where you can see something that I am seeing.

Once I have accomplished the right number to create the buddhafield I will go into silence. The way you are going into meditation makes me hopeful soon it will be happening; it will not be long. Soon the right amount of energy will be available. Then I can just sit silently with you; you can dance and sing around me or sit in silence. And there will be a communication -- more a communion than a communication. Something is bound to transpire then. But before that can happen I have to go on persuading you through words, through logic. It is a kind of seduction. I have to seduce you towards something which you have utterly forgotten.

The second question:
Question 2
BELOVED MASTER,
CAN YOU PUT YOUR PHILOSOPHY IN A NUTSHELL?

Vandan, any philosophy that can be put in a nutshell, belongs there.

The third question:
Question 3
BELOVED MASTER,
WHAT IS PESSIMISM?

Gyanesh, man can look at life in two ways: either through a no or through a yes. Either he can be negative in his approach or positive. These are the two easily available ways for the mind.

There is also a third way, but to achieve to the third you have to go through arduous effort of becoming more and more aware. To the sleeping person these two ways are ready-made, available from the very birth.

The positive person lives through a kind of optimism. His optimism is shallow, but he is full of hopes. He counts only the roses on the rosebush; he does not look at the thorns, he ignores them. Sooner or later he is bound to be disappointed.

Every child begins with a positive attitude towards life. That is natural because if the child begins with a negative attitude he will not begin at all; he would have died in the mother's womb. He waited for nine months, he passed through the birth canal, which is a painful process, suffocating. There must be deep down an unconscious hope; hence he is patiently waiting for the day when he can see the sun, see the light, be in the world. He is like a seed, very unconscious; he is not aware of it. But every child is born with great hopes, every child is an optimist; he looks through the positive.

But life disappoints everyone. Life is very strange, in a way: if you don't get what you want, you are disappointed, naturally; but if you get what you want, then too you are disappointed. Disappointment seems to be the destiny. If you don't get what you want, you suffer -- you have failed. You have not been able to prove yourself, you have not been able to prove your mettle. Others have succeeded, you are a failure. You can't respect yourself. And if you can't respect yourself, you can't respect life. It seems like a curse. You would like to return the ticket to God. If you meet him, your first question will be, "Why have you created me? For

what? -- for all these disappointments? Are you a sadist or something, creating so many people and then giving them so much misery?"
And the religious people say, "It is God's play, his LEELA." What kind of play is this? God does not seem to be in his right senses. It seems as if he is enjoying the tortures. He seems to be more like Adolf Hitler, Joseph Stalin, Mao Zedong, than like Gautam Buddha, Mahavira, Jesus.
These people don't seem to be like God, because when all your hopes are turned into hopelessness, when all your desires are frustrated, when nothing comes out of your optimism, naturally you become sour, you become bitter, and pessimism is born.
Pessimism is nothing but the failure of optimistic attitudes. Then you start counting the thorns and ignoring the roses. Then you look always for the darker side. That is the philosophy of pessimism.

Contemplate on these laws of Murphy:
First: If anything can go wrong, it will.
Second: Nothing is ever as simple as it seems.
Third: Everything takes longer than you expect.
Fourth: Left to themselves all things go from bad to worse.
Fifth: Nature always sides with the hidden flaw.
Sixth: Mother Nature is a bitch.
Seventh: It is impossible to make anything foolproof because fools are so ingenious.
Eighth: If everything seems to be going well, you have obviously overlooked something.

Ninth: If you can keep your head when, all around you, others are losing theirs, you just don't understand the situation.
And the tenth: For every human problem, there is a neat, simple solution -- and it is always wrong.

Pessimism simply means looking at life negatively, always searching for the flaw, for the loophole, for something negative, and accumulating all those negativities. And when you look at the dark side, always, of course, there are two nights and only one small day sandwiched between the two nights -- dark dark nights.
Optimism ends into pessimism. Every pessimist has been an optimist once -- he is an ex-optimist. He hoped too much and because those hopes were not fulfilled he has become sour, angry, enraged. Now he cannot see the flowers and the stars. He can't see anything beautiful; he goes on looking for the ugly. And when you look for the ugly you will find it on every step. Whatsoever you look for you are bound to find it, remember, because life consists of both -- positivity and negativity -- in the same quantity. Life cannot exist without the other; the other pole is a must.
It is just like electricity. Electricity cannot exist only with one polarity, positive or negative; it has to have both the poles together. It is possible only through the tension that is created between the negative and the positive.
But there is a third kind of person -- I call that person the awakened, the enlightened -- who looks at life in its totality, who is neither a pessimist nor an optimist, who simply accepts life as it is; who accepts the night, who accepts the day, who accepts the rose and the thorn,

because he understands that life is out of necessity dual, dialectical. And in his awareness grows a synthesis between the polar opposites. The synthesis never grows on the outside, as Karl Marx says.

Karl Marx says life is a dialectical process between thesis and antithesis and it always comes to a synthesis. Then synthesis turns again into a thesis and creates its antithesis. That is utterly wrong. Outside, life is always thesis and antithesis; it never comes to any synthesis.

Synthesis is achieved only in the inner vision of an enlightened being. Synthesis is attained when you have attained to absolute silence. In that silence you are so clear, so transparent, that you can see through and through. Then you know that life needs both: day and night, birth and death. Then there is nothing wrong in death; it is perfectly useful, needed, inevitable. Then a deep acceptance arises in you. Buddha calls that acceptance TATHATA -- suchness. Life is such. You understand it and through that understanding you transcend it.

Don't be a pessimist and don't be an optimist. Just watch, be a watcher and attain to the ultimate synthesis where you become a third force rising higher and higher and seeing from above, a bird's-eye view. Deep down everything is in conflict, but it is okay because you understand life cannot exist without it. It is not God's fault. There is no God as a person who can be blamed for it. It is just the nature of things -- tao, dhamma -- that life functions through duality. But consciousness can soar so high that it can transcend all duality and can reach to oneness.

The real meditator is neither pessimist nor optimist. He lives in a kind of suchness, in total "accept-ability."

The fourth question:
Question 4
BELOVED MASTER,
I AM BORED WITH MY HUSBAND. I HAVE TRIED EVERYTHING, BUT NOTHING SEEMS TO WORK. HAVE YOU ANY SUGGESTIONS?

Geetama, not many, just one. Write a letter to five of your friends like this:
Hello there!
This letter was started by a woman like yourself, in hopes of bringing relief to a tired and discontented wife.
Unlike most chain letters, this one does not cost anything. Just send a copy of this letter to five of your friends who are equally tired. Then bundle up your husband and send him to the woman at the top of the list and add your name to the bottom of the list.
When your name comes to the top of the list you will receive 16,478 men and some of them are bound to be a hell of a lot better than the one you already have.
DO NOT BREAK THE CHAIN... HAVE FAITH!
One woman broke the chain and got her own sonofabitch back.
At the date of writing this letter, another friend of mine received 183 men. They buried her yesterday.... But it took three undertakers thirty-six hours to get the smile off her face.

The fifth question:
Question 5

BELOVED MASTER,
YOUR MESSAGE IS UNIVERSAL, BUT IS IT ONLY FOR THOSE WITHOUT A RELIGION? WHY ARE NOT YOUR FELLOW INDIANS CROWDING AT THE GATE TO GET IN?

Charles Gardiner, my message is universal. That does not mean that everybody will be able to understand it. The more universal a message is, the less people will be able to understand it, because the more universal it is, the more mysterious it is. It is so beyond the reach of the ordinary, stupid mind -- just because it is universal.

People can understand things which are not so universal more easily. They can understand racial things, they can understand national things, they can understand ideological things. But any message that is really universal is bound to be understood only by a very few chosen people.

Only the most intelligent people will be interested in what I am doing here. Hence you will see gathering around me intelligent people from all over the world, young, fresh, intelligent.

India is not young, it is not fresh. It is very rare to find an Indian who is young. In India everybody is born old. It is such an ancient country with such a long long tradition that everybody is burdened. A younger country is of course more receptive.

For example, America is more receptive to any new message than any other country for the simple reason that it is the latest country in the world -- with only a three-hundred-year tradition, it is nothing. India has lived at least ten thousand years -- ten thousand years according to the

historians, one hundred thousand years according to Indians themselves. The truth may be somewhere in between. I can settle on fifty thousand years -- but that too is very long. And as the country becomes old it goes on gathering rubbish, junk. And every generation goes on giving its junk and rubbish to the new generation, thinking that this is heritage, thinking that they are giving something very valuable.

America is the most receptive. And next to America, Germany seems to be very receptive for the simple reason that Adolf Hitler killed the old Germany completely, he destroyed the old completely. He created a discontinuity. The new German generation is no longer looking backwards. Adolf Hitler is standing there and nobody wants to look at him, so better forget all about it! Adolf Hitler has done a great service to Germany. He has destroyed the old heritage -- not knowing that he is doing such good work, otherwise he would not have done it -- not knowing that he is doing something immensely valuable. Unconsciously he has done it.

India also needs a discontinuity with the past. The past hinders.

Hence people from other countries are coming to me more. And certainly one becomes curious, just as Gardiner has become curious: "Why are not your fellow Indians crowding at the gate to get in?"

India is too old, my message is too new. India is ancient, traditional; I am rebellious. There is no meeting ground between me and India. I am not an Indian, in fact. So please don't call them "fellow Indians" -- they are not. I am not an Indian, I belong to no nation; only then can I be universal.

If I am an Indian, then I am already prejudiced in favor of India. Then my message cannot be universal; it will be deep down Indian, basically Indian -- camouflaged, hidden behind beautiful words, abstractions, but it will remain essentially Indian; it can't be universal.

Mahatma Gandhi used to say that the whole universe is one, all religions are one. In his ashram he used to teach that Hindus and Mohammedans and Christians are all one. In his prayer meetings all the prayers of all the religions were recited. He loved one prayer the most which says: ALLAH ISHWAR TERE NAM -- Ishwar and Allah, both are your names, God.

But when he was killed he forgot all about Allah. He said, "Hey Ram!" Then the hidden Hindu came to the surface. His whole life he was saying, "Both are the same, both are names of the same." But when the bullet went into his heart he forgot all his philosophy. It would have been really beautiful if he had said, "Allah!" But he said, "Ram!"

He used to say that the Gita and the Koran and the Bible have the same message, but he worshipped the Gita and he called the Gita his mother. Then what is the Koran? He has not even called the Koran his auntie! The Gita is his mother -- and of course he has chosen a few pieces from the Koran and from the Bible which are in agreement with the Gita. Anything that disagrees with the Gita has not been chosen by him, so the Gita remains the criterion. Now this is so clear, that anything that does not fit with the Gita is wrong; it may be in the Koran, it may be in the Bible, but it is wrong. He would not say it so clearly because he was a politician.

I am not a politician -- I say things as they are. I call a spade a spade -- and sometimes a fucking spade! I am not a politician; I simply say whatsoever is the case.

Indians are not very happy with me, they cannot be. Neither am I very happy with them, so why should they be? I am utterly against their traditionalism, their egoistic idea that they are holier than everybody else in the world. Nobody is holier than anybody else. I am against their idea that their country is the only religious country in the world, that they are the source of all that is great. These are stupid ideas. Every country carries them and every country believes in them.

You ask the Chinese, you ask the Japanese, you ask the Italians, you ask anybody. Every country believes it. And you can find always great arguments to support it.

Indians would have crowded at the gate if I was helping in some way, nourishing and feeding their ego. I am not doing that, I cannot do that. Only then can I be universal. I am continuously hammering on their ego. I am continuously trying to destroy their "holier-than-thou" look. They are angry at me. How can they crowd at the gate to come in? If sometimes a few of them out of curiosity come in, within five to seven minutes they start getting up. Only a few stupid Indians get up from here. What I am saying does not suit them. They would like me to praise their Vedas as the only scriptures, the real scriptures, written by God himself. They would like me to praise everything that is Indian. I cannot do that. I can praise only that which is praiseworthy, not because it is Indian. I can praise things, not because they are Hindu, Jaina, Buddhist, but simply because they are beautiful.

I praise the Taj Mahal not because it is Mohammedan, but just because it is a beautiful piece of objective art. I praise the Upanishads not because Hindus have written them but because they are so immensely valuable, intrinsically valuable. I praise Lao Tzu in the same way, I praise Jesus in the same way, I praise Mohammed in the same way. Wherever truth has happened, whomsoever it has happened to -- to Bahauddin or to Buddha -- it does not make any difference to me.

That makes Indians very angry. They would like me to criticize Mohammed and to praise Mahavira, or if I cannot do that then at least praise Mahavira more than Mohammed, but create a hierarchy in which Buddha, Krishna and Mahavira are at the top. Yes, Jesus is also good and Mohammed is also good, but not at the top -- far below in the hierarchy. That I cannot do because I see the same phenomenon happening in Buddha and the same experience in Jesus. I am not helping Indians' ego in any possible way -- I am doing just the opposite. They cannot crowd at the gate to come in.

What I am trying here is not something of the past; it belongs to the future. So only a few Indians will be able to come to me -- a few Indians who are capable of rising above their Indian mind, very rare individuals who are ready to rise with me above nationality, above race, above all kinds of egoistic attitudes. They are here, but they are here because they are also no longer Indians.

Indians believe that they know, they are very knowledgeable. Naturally -- it is an ancient country; you need not read the scriptures, the scriptures are in the atmosphere. And my idea is that the knowledgeable person

can never be religious. And up to now India has believed in the knowledgeable person -- the pundit, the scholar, the professor. And my effort is to help you become more and more childlike, more innocent, full of wonder not full of knowledge, full of awe not full of information. There is no need to read the Vedas -- because anyway ninety-nine percent of the Vedas is absolutely rubbish! Now this hurts the Indians. Only one percent is beautiful; you have to be very choosy.

The same is the case with other scriptures of the world. You look at the Bible, look at the Old Testament; ninety-nine percent is just rubbish. It would be better if we got rid of that rubbish so only diamonds can shine forth. Otherwise the pebbles are so many, the diamonds are lost. But no -- no Jew will be ready to drop anything out of the Old Testament. And the same is the case with the New Testament, and the same is the case -- more so -- with the Koran.

I have many Mohammedan sannyasins. They go on asking me when I am going to speak on the Koran, and I go on postponing it for the simple reason that there is not much in it to speak on. Very rarely do you come across a line one can manage to speak about in a beautiful way. Otherwise, just very ordinary statements....

But the reason is, in those days everything was written in the religious scriptures: history, geography, mythology. That was the only way. The old religious scriptures are like ENCYCLOPAEDIA BRITANNICA; they are the encyclopedias of the old days. Everything is written, whatsoever was happening in those days and whatsoever

was thought important. It may have been important in those days; now it is irrelevant.
And even when I speak on Buddha, Mahavira, Krishna, I speak in an absolutely nontraditional way. I speak out of my own experience, I am not a commentator. I love Buddha because I have known the same light, I have experienced the same truth. So when I comment on Buddha it is not a commentary. Buddha's statements are only excuses, just pegs; I go on hanging myself on those pegs. The Indian mind is very much against that. They think I am distorting. They think I should comment according to the scriptures. I am commenting according to my consciousness, not according to any scripture. And when I see something which cannot be said by a buddha I simply drop it, I don't comment on it.
I know what buddhahood is! I go on creating Buddha again. That is resisted very much. They would like me to be just a historian, a commentator, a scholar. They would like me to quote their scriptures, refer to their scriptures. I never refer, I never quote. In my books you will not find any footnotes. I don't believe in all that nonsense. I speak out of my heart. I love Buddha, I love Jesus. I speak, I use their statements as grounds to take off, that's all -- just jumping boards. It goes against the Indian approach, Indian scholarship.
Gardiner, because my message is universal it will appeal only to those people who ARE universal, who don't belong to any country anymore, to any religion, to any church. Yes, you are right. You say, "Is it only for those without a religion?"

Yes, it is for those who are without a religion, without a nation, without a race; it is only for those liberated ones. It is for the new generation. The new generation is courageous; it has dropped much of the load that people have been carrying for centuries. Only then can there be a communion between me and you.

And you can see this is a universal gathering. People from at least forty countries are here. Except the Chinese and the Russians -- except the communist bloc -- you will find people from every country here. And even in Russia the orange people are starting to work underground. Small cells have started functioning. People are meeting really in underground basements, meditating. A few people even have become sannyasins. It is very difficult to send them malas and names, but we have found ways and they have found ways. They cannot wear orange in the open.

One woman who has become a sannyasin wrote to me, "What to do?" I said, "Use red instead of orange. Wear red and tell people that you love communism so much that you cannot resist the temptation of wearing red!" She loved the idea. She said, "This is beautiful!"

But when they meditate and they meet in underground basements they wear orange, they wear malas, they read the books, they listen to the tapes. They have even translated a few books into Russian; just hand-written, those books are passed from one hand to another. But they are not here; it will be difficult for them to be here.

One woman has written that she is ready to escape from Russia if somebody can help her so that she can remain here forever. She is ready to leave her husband, her home, her security, safety, everything.

Soon from China and Russia also people will be coming here. This is becoming a universal temple -- and it is especially for those who have no more interest in religion. They can understand me, because the priests have destroyed their interest in religion. The churches have destroyed any possibility for any intelligent person to be religious.

The last question:
Question 6
BELOVED MASTER,
WHY DO I ALWAYS GET SEXUALLY EXCITED WHEN I SEE A BEAUTIFUL WOMAN?

Nanda Kishor, the first thing is that you are an Indian. It is very difficult for an Indian not to get excited when he sees a beautiful woman. Long long repression... your unconscious is full of repressions so you don't miss any opportunity.
Of course you don't show it. It is courageous of you that you have asked the question.
Nothing is wrong in being sexually excited by seeing a beautiful woman. You are simply paying a compliment to her, that's all. You are saying she is beautiful and attractive. In a more understanding world you will simply go to the woman and thank her and she will accept your compliment with gratitude. If a woman passes and nobody gets excited about her, nobody ever, that is really a miserable thing to go through.

I was a professor in a university for a few years. One day it happened: I was sitting in the vice-chancellor's room. A girl came, she was crying and weeping and she said that one boy was continually teasing her. He was throwing small stones at her, writing love letters to her.
The vice-chancellor was, of course, very angry. I was sitting there so he told me, "Can you help this girl? Can you console her?"
I asked the girl, "If nobody ever teased you and nobody ever wrote a love letter and nobody threw pebbles at you, would that be right? Would you be happy?"
Her tears disappeared. For a moment she was shocked. Then she said, "I have never thought of it in that way."
I said, "That will be real misery! This simply shows that somebody is interested in you. Go to him and thank him! Nothing is wrong in it. He is simply a little foolish; he does not know how to pay compliments to a beautiful girl. Send the boy to me and I will teach him a few things! He needs a little tuition -- he has no intuition. And you need not be worried and you need not be crying: this is natural!"

You are, Nanda Kishor, one of the species of animals. Man is an animal unless he becomes a buddha. If you become a buddha and then you are excited by seeing a beautiful woman, come and ask the question. Then it will be something worth asking because then it will be a problem. But you are not a buddha -- so meanwhile enjoy! Once you become a buddha, then I cannot help -- nobody can help. Then even if you want to get down, there is no way.
It is an animal instinct, as much in animals as in human beings. Yes, it has to be transcended, but by repression you

cannot transcend. Accept it. Acceptance is the first step towards transcendence. And don't feel guilty about it -- it is not a sin.
When you see a beautiful sunset you don't feel any guilt. When you see a beautiful flower and you are attracted you don't feel any guilt. When you see a beautiful face of a man or a woman, why should you feel guilty if you are attracted, if you want to look back, if you want to go close and have a closer look? Why should you feel guilty about it? But that's how you have been taught for centuries. If you go closer to the woman, the woman will start shouting for the police and you will start finding excuses.

Nobody looks into each other's eyes. It is thought to be offensive. Even if you want to look into some beautiful eyes you cannot. Only three seconds is allowed. How all over the world people have come to agree on three seconds is something mysterious. Just for three seconds you can look at somebody and the other will not be offended. If you look more than that, the other feels offended.
Maybe there is a reason. You don't know how to look at the other; you don't know how to look gracefully. Maybe your look is ugly -- and it is bound to be ugly if you are carrying much repressed sexuality. Your look will be pornographic. Deep down in your imagination you will be undressing the woman, and she feels offended. Who are you to undress her even in your fancy? Your look is ugly; it looks as if you are penetrating her being, as if you have found a substitute for sexual penetration through the eyes. You are reducing her into a thing, and nobody wants to be reduced into a thing.

Your look has no respect in it. If your look has respect, if your excitement has beauty, grace, there is no problem. Yes, it has to be transcended one day because this is also a duality -- man/woman -- the same duality as between positive and negative, birth and death, summer and winter. It has to be transcended. One has to come to a point from where nothing disturbs your coolness, nothing distracts you from your center.

But the way to come to it is not repression, Nanda Kishor. The first step is acceptance: it is natural. Accept it as part of your nature, as part of your biology. And then try to understand it, watch it, observe it, witness it. Slowly slowly, as your witnessing will grow, you will go beyond it. One day you will not find any difference between a man and a woman: you have gone beyond sexuality. That is true BRAHMACHARYA, true celibacy, but it is not what has been told to you.

In the name of celibacy, sex has been repressed for centuries and you have become just full of sexuality. Rather than transcending it you are boiling within.

In order to find out whether his wife was cheating on him, a man bought a parrot. The parrot was an amazing bird, but in a fight had lost both legs and had to balance itself on its pelvis.

One day the man questioned the parrot and found out that his wife was, in fact, cheating on him. Quickly he asked the parrot, "What happened?"

The parrot said, "First your wife was kissing a strange man, and then she started to take off her clothes...."

"And then?" interrupted the man.

"And then they both got on the bed...."
"And then?" cried the man.
"Then she pulled on the blankets...."
"And then, and then?"
"I don't know," said the parrot. "I fell over!"

Enough for today.
The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 9
Chapter #9
Chapter title: The monkey in the forest
19 February 1980 am in Buddha Hall

IF YOU SLEEP,
DESIRE GROWS IN YOU
LIKE A VINE IN THE FOREST.

LIKE A MONKEY IN THE FOREST
YOU JUMP FROM TREE TO TREE,
NEVER FINDING THE FRUIT --
FROM LIFE TO LIFE,
NEVER FINDING PEACE.

IF YOU ARE FILLED WITH DESIRE,
YOUR SORROWS SWELL
LIKE THE GRASS AFTER THE RAIN.

BUT IF YOU SUBDUE DESIRE,
YOUR SORROWS FALL FROM YOU
LIKE DROPS OF WATER FROM A LOTUS FLOWER.

THIS IS GOOD COUNSEL

AND IT IS FOR EVERYONE:
AS THE GRASS IS CLEARED FOR THE FRESH ROOT,
CUT DOWN DESIRE
LEST DEATH AFTER DEATH CRUSH YOU
AS A RIVER CRUSHES THE HELPLESS REEDS.

FOR IF THE ROOTS HOLD FIRM,
A FELLED TREE GROWS UP AGAIN.
IF DESIRES ARE NOT UPROOTED,
SORROWS GROW AGAIN IN YOU.

Gautama the Buddha's most fundamental message to humanity is that man is asleep. Man is born asleep. He is not talking about the ordinary sleep; he is talking about a metaphysical sleep, a deep deep unconsciousness within you. You are acting out of that unconsciousness, so whatsoever you do goes wrong. It is impossible to do right with this unconsciousness within you. This unconsciousness perverts all of your efforts, it leads you into wrong directions. It is bound to be so.
Even if a buddha is with you, you will misunderstand him for the mere reason that you are not conscious. If you are really asleep and a buddha is sitting by the side of you, you cannot recognize him, you cannot see him, you cannot feel him. You will go on dreaming in your own way; you will remain confined to your own private world of dreams.
The most private thing in life is your dreaming. When the dreaming disappears you enter into the world of the universal. Then you enter into truth, into God, into nirvana. But with all your dreams, that is impossible; you are lost in your own dreams. And it is not only one dream within you;

millions of them are constantly growing... one is being replaced by another. You think that now you are awake because one dream has left you, but another has taken its place. You can even dream that you are awake. Buddhas go on shouting, but you don't hear.

Jesus says: If you have eyes to see, see. If you have ears to hear, hear. He is not talking with deaf and blind people, he is talking with people like you. He is saying exactly the same thing that Buddha is saying: that you are asleep.

Jesus had been to India, and when Jesus came to India, Buddha was very much alive. Although he had left his body five hundred years before, the air was still full with his songs. There were still people deeply connected with him; there were still people for whom he was almost a tangible reality.

Buddha had said that "My religion will last for five hundred years." Those years were coming to an end; it was the last phase. The sun was setting, but the sun was still on the horizon.

Jesus must have visited Buddhist schools, monasteries. In Ladakh there is still a hand-written scripture in existence in which Jesus has written about his coming to India, his visit, his experiences, what he had gained here. Christian scriptures are completely silent about his life. He is mentioned once when he is twelve years old and then for eighteen years there is a gap. Then he is mentioned when he is thirty, and then he lives only three years more. Where had he been for eighteen years? The people who were writing the gospels must have been aware of the gap, but they were afraid to say anything about those eighteen years,

because he was traveling, moving from one mystery school to another mystery school.
He talked very much the way Buddha talked. He carried a similar message and a similar understanding to his people. He was misunderstood for the simple reason that he had brought something which was not part of Jewish tradition; he had brought something alien. And the most alien thing was that he was telling people, "You are asleep, you are really dead."
Just being born is not enough to be awake. Awakening has to be achieved through arduous effort; otherwise you can pass your whole life wandering in the forest of dreams. And he was aware that the people who were listening to him were not capable of understanding him at all. He was saying one thing and they would understand another. He was aware that there was something that seemed to be hindering the message.

Jesus is sitting at the table with his twelve disciples, eating beef and drinking wine. At a certain point he looks intensely up at his disciples and says, "One of you will betray me. Judas, Judas, why, why you?"
At this, in a fit of anger, Judas gets up and screams at the disciples, "Why the hell is it that every time he gets drunk he takes it out on me?"

Jesus looks drunk to Judas. Buddha also looks drunk to the people. And in a way, they are drunk -- drunk with the divine. They belong to another world. We live in the night, they have seen the dawn. We live in our dreams of achieving this and that, in our ambitions, in our ego trips

for power, for money, for prestige. And they live at a totally different point. They live as beings, we live as becomings. We live as desires, as dreams; they are real beings: they have no dreams, no desires. We live in the past or in the future; they live in the present. We live in words, they live in silence. We live in thousands of frustrations, they live in deep peace.

Why do we live in frustrations? How do we manage to live in so many frustrations? We have become experts in creating frustrations although we don't do it intentionally. We don't do anything intentionally; our whole lives are accidental. In sleep, your life is bound to be just accidental, at the mercy of the winds. We are just as straws in the wind or dry leaves in the wind. We don't know who we are, we don't know where we are going, we don't know from where we are coming. We don't know anything about our being -- and we know great information about facts, figures which are utterly meaningless.

Unless you know yourself, no knowledge is of any meaning. At the very center of your being there is darkness; no light from the outside can dispel it.

The greatest problem in the world is how to commune your awakening with those who have never tasted it. They are bound to misunderstand. Misunderstanding is almost inevitable.

The color TV was invented in the USA. News of this beautiful new toy arrived up to the kingdom of God. God, being very curious, sent one of his archangels down to the earth to get one.

As God sat in front of his new color TV set with the archangel sitting beside him, he pressed the first button. Immediately, the image of naked, tired, sweating people appeared on the screen. They were working incredibly hard in a Johannesburg diamond mine.
Upon seeing this, God shouted, "Ah Christ, holy shit, what the hell are they doing down there?"
Saint Peter replied, "They are being good and working hard, my Lord, just as you wanted."
"No, no, no, that is not what I meant! They have missed the whole point!" screamed God at the top of his thunderous voice.
Then he pushed another button. The image changed to the glorious Vatican in all its pomp and splendor, with his holiness the pope, dressed in gold. He was surrounded by luxuriously dressed nobles and velvet-cloaked cardinals with massive crowns on their heads.
God turned to Peter, shouting, "And who are they?"
Saint Peter humbly replied, "These are the ones who did not miss the point...."

In fact, everybody misses the point; it is bound to be so. Coming from the peaks of awakening to the dark valleys of sleep one cannot expect that it will be understood rightly. Hence Buddha insisted, he always emphasized to his disciples, "Before you start trying to understand what I am saying and what I am doing, be silent at least for two years, utterly silent, thinking nothing. When you have attained to stillness, then you will be able to communicate with me. Then if you have any questions you can ask, and then it will be possible for me to pour my heart into your heart."

But it used to happen that whenever somebody would come and would stay for two years in silence, he would never ask anything -- because silence is the answer of all the answers. Silence is the answer for all the questions. There would be no need to ask Buddha because in silence he would see the glory, the splendor of Buddha, and it would start permeating his being like a flood, taking away all dust accumulated down the centuries.

The first sutra:

IF YOU SLEEP,
DESIRE GROWS IN YOU
LIKE A VINE IN THE FOREST.

Desire cannot be dropped unless you wake up. Millions of people have tried to drop desiring without waking up. In fact, the very idea of dropping desire was another desire and nothing else. They heard from the buddhas, from the awakened ones, that there is great peace if you drop desire, there is great bliss if desires wither away; that you will attain to eternity, that you will not know any birth, any death anymore, that you will become part of the universal celebration that goes on and on -- if you drop desire. Millions became greedy, thinking that by dropping desire they will attain all these joys. Now, this is a new desire taking root in you. The desire for God, the desire for truth, the desire for liberation, the desire for becoming desireless, is still a desire. You have misunderstood the whole point again. A new greed -- religious greed -- has taken possession of you.

Millions of people have lived in the monasteries -- monks and nuns and all kinds of ascetics -- torturing themselves in the hope, in the desire, that this is the way to destroy desires. When all desires are destroyed they are going to attain to heavenly pleasures. And those pleasures are real pleasures; they are not momentary like the pleasures on this earth, they are eternal. How can you drop desire by creating a new desire, a bigger desire, a far more dangerous desire? As I see it, the religious people are more in the grip of desire than the nonreligious. The nonreligious is satisfied with small things -- a good house, a beautiful wife, children, a little bank balance -- small things. But religious people go on condemning these people that they are sinners. And they themselves are saints because they want a bank balance in the other world, and a bank balance which will be inexhaustible!

It is very difficult to drop desire; unless you wake up you cannot drop desire. Desire is a natural phenomenon when you are asleep. Desire is dreaming and nothing else. When you wake up dreams disappear, and when you wake up desires disappear.

Hence it has to be understood: the real point is not to fight with your desires but to fight with your sleep. That is cutting the very root; otherwise you remain the same. You will function out of your unconsciousness and you will go on doing the same; it does not matter what it is.

Three men were riding in a bus on a hot summer day in Israel. One of them was a rabbi, a Jew, another a Greek, and the other a Palestinian.

The bus departed, and a fly flew onto the shoulder of the Greek. He simply slapped it away. The fly then flew over to the rabbi's shoulder and he did the same. The fly then flew over to the Palestinian. The Palestinian immediately grabbed the fly and ate it.
A second fly flew into the bus and exactly the same thing happened: the fly landed on the Greek, the Greek slapped it away over to the Jew, the Jew also slapped it away, and finally it landed on the Palestinian who grabbed it and ate it.
At this point, the Greek and the Jew both looked at the Palestinian in amazement.
Sure enough, a third fly flew into the bus. It flew over to the Greek and was slapped away. It flew over to the rabbi and this time the rabbi grabbed the fly, went over to the Palestinian and asked, "You want to buy a nice fly?"

Rabbi or no rabbi, a Jew is a Jew! If there is some business he is not going to miss it.
You are living in dreams. Your priests, your rabbis, your monks, your nuns, your bishops, your popes, they are all living in the same sleep. Maybe your dreams are a little bit different from each other, but the quality of the dream is the same.
Why do you dream? -- because there are so many desires unfulfilled, and to live with unfulfilled desires is painful. In dream you try to fulfill them; in dream you create a false feeling of fulfillment. Hence your dreams show much about you: what your desires are, what you want to become. But if you want to become anything in life, you are asleep.

The man who is awake knows there is nowhere to go, nothing to become. He is already that which he ever can become. Seeing the grandeur of his being, desires wither away on their own accord. You are not even expected to drop them; they drop by themselves, like dry leaves falling from the trees.

IF YOU SLEEP, says Buddha, DESIRE GROWS IN YOU....

Remember: desire grows only when you are asleep, unconscious, unaware, unmeditative. And this is natural. It grows... LIKE A VINE IN THE FOREST. And whatsoever you do in this sleep is going to be wrong, remember. You can become an ascetic, you can fast, you can pray, but your prayers will be wrong.

Hence, Buddha never says pray; he says meditate. What can you pray? You will always pray FOR something; it will be a desire. You can go to the churches and the temples and listen to people's prayers, and you will be surprised: they are always asking and asking. Their prayers are superficial. They had not gone there to thank God; their prayers are not full of gratitude but full of complaints. They want more and they are ready to pray. Their prayer is nothing but buttressing: they praise the Lord; they hope that this buttressing will help their prayers to be fulfilled. And behind the prayer there is a desire.

Buddha says: Don't be bothered with prayers, because you are asleep and your prayer is bound to be nothing but a desire. Your asceticism is bound to be nothing but an expression of your desire. Your asceticism is going to be nothing but a deep hedonism. Hence all religions talk about the joys and the pleasures of heaven and paradise. These

are the allurements which keep people going to the temples and to the churches and to the mosques.
Buddha says: Go into silence, because silence creates the right space to wake up. Silence goes to the very center of your being like an arrow and wakes you up. And when you are awake, your whole life is a prayer! And don't go on doing things in your sleep because you can do much more harm. It is better to be ordinary when you are asleep -- your harm will be ordinary. Don't try to be extraordinary, don't try to be a saint or a mahatma; your harm will be far bigger.

Contemplate on this maxim of Murphy:
If two wrongs don't make a right, try three.

What else can you do when you are asleep? Try and try and try again; go on trying. But if the fundamental is wrong, whatsoever you do is going to be wrong.
And the problem with desire is this: if you DON'T get it -- which is almost inevitable because all your desires are impossible.... You ask for the impossible; it can't happen in the nature of things; hence you feel frustrated when it doesn't happen. And if at all it happens by some miracle, by some accident... if it happens, then, too, it is not going to fulfill you or make you contented because the moment it happens, again your mind starts asking for more; or, by the time it happens you are no longer interested in it.

The soldier boy was unhappy.
"But this is Christmas time," I tried to cheer him up. "Santa Claus and all that!"

"What Santa Claus?" he cried. "Twenty years ago I asked Santa for a soldier suit -- now I get it!"

Murphy's maxim: Being frustrated is disagreeable, but the real disaster in life begins when you get what you want.

Blessed are those who don't get what they want, because at least they can hope. The real disaster happens when you get what you want, because then there is no possibility to hope; then you are stuck with it. And it is YOU who have desired it, who had worked for it. But out of sleep nothing else is possible.

Sleep is our common disease; we are born with this disease. It is so common, that's why we don't think about it at all as a disease; otherwise this is the greatest disease, according to all the awakened ones.

Buddha's suggestion is: Be conscious. Bring more consciousness to your inner being and also to your outer actions. He does not want you to create new desires -- holy desires instead of unholy desires. He does not want you to become a saint as against being a sinner. He does not want you to substitute your mundane desires with sacred desires. He wants you to do something totally different, that is his great contribution to humanity: he wants you to become conscious.

Out of consciousness a radical transformation happens: desires disappear and peace descends -- the peace of desirelessness.

LIKE A MONKEY IN THE FOREST
YOU JUMP FROM TREE TO TREE,

NEVER FINDING THE FRUIT --
FROM LIFE TO LIFE,
NEVER FINDING PEACE.

Observe what you have been doing: LIKE A MONKEY IN THE FOREST....
Charles Darwin became aware of the phenomenon very late: that man is a descendant of monkeys. And he may not be right, because he thinks that PHYSICALLY man is a descendant of the monkeys. That does not seem to fit the reality: man seems to be essentially different from monkeys as far as the body is concerned.
For millions of years, monkeys have been seeing man standing on two feet and they have not learned the trick yet. You don't see suddenly a monkey walking like a man. How did it happen in the first place that a few monkeys started walking on two feet and became the ancestors of humanity? It does not seem to be likely.
But all the awakened ones of the world have known that as far as the MIND of man is concerned, it is very like the monkeys; it is not much different. The real monkey is not in your body but in your psychology; it is not physiological, it is psychological.

Your mind is continuously jumping from one tree to another tree. It is constantly restless; it cannot remain restful even for a single moment. It wants to be continuously occupied. And what is the gain?
Buddha says: LIKE A MONKEY IN THE FOREST YOU JUMP FROM TREE TO TREE, NEVER FINDING THE

FRUIT -- FROM LIFE TO LIFE, NEVER FINDING PEACE.

Peace is the fruit -- and the mind has no idea what peace is. It knows only conflict, it knows only war, violence, destruction. It knows only all sorts of perversions, neurosis, psychosis. It knows a deep inner split, but it knows nothing of peace; it has never tasted it, it is absolutely unknown. It is only a word, empty of any meaning. Meaning comes through experience, otherwise all words are empty. God is an empty word to you because you have not experienced it. Peace is an empty word to you because you have not experienced it.

Buddha does not use the word 'bliss'. That was always the case before Buddha: that bliss is the fruit. SAT-CHIT-ANAND -- truth, consciousness, bliss -- these are the three aspects of the ultimate fulfillment. But Buddha does not talk about bliss for a certain reason. The reason is that the moment you talk about bliss you are bound to be misunderstood. People start thinking about happiness and pleasures -- maybe on a higher plane, but their idea of pleasure remains the same, their idea of happiness remains the same. They think of sexual pleasure even in paradise. There are religions who even allow homosexuality in paradise, because they were born in countries where homosexuality was very much prevalent. And every religion promises you beautiful women in paradise. Who has projected these ideas? Frustrated people, those who have failed here; now they are hoping they will succeed in the other world, on the other shore.

Buddha does not use the word 'bliss' for the simple reason that it can create a misunderstanding. It creates it because

you know something about happiness, and you think maybe there is a great difference between bliss and happiness, but happiness gives you some idea of what bliss will be.
Bliss is not happiness. Bliss is more like peace than like happiness. Bliss is neither unhappiness nor happiness; it is peace from that turmoil, that conflict. It is peace, absolute peace, because it is a transcendence of duality. Happiness always lingers with unhappiness; unhappiness is always with its other side, happiness. They are two sides of the same coin. When the whole coin drops from your hand you are neither happy nor unhappy.
It is because of this that Buddha never had a great appeal to the Indian masses. Who wants peace? Everybody wants happiness -- and everybody knows that happiness is followed by unhappiness, as day is followed by night, as death is followed by birth, birth is followed by death. It is a vicious circle: if you are happy, you can be certain that soon you will be unhappy; if you are unhappy, you can be certain that soon you will be happy again.
Seeing this game of happiness and unhappiness, the watcher, the meditator becomes unidentified with both. When happiness comes he knows that unhappiness will be coming, so why get excited? When unhappiness comes he is not at all disturbed because he knows happiness will be coming just around the corner, so why become disturbed? He is neither excited by happiness nor disturbed by unhappiness. This is peace. He remains the same, in a deep equilibrium; his silence is undisturbed. Day comes and goes, night comes and goes, everything comes and goes. He remains a witness, unconcerned, cool. That coolness, that unconcernedness is peace.

But nobody wants peace. People who are asleep cannot want peace. Hence Buddha, although while he was alive thousands of people were transformed by him, as had never happened before.... Many more people became enlightened around him than around anybody else in the whole history. Still, his religion disappeared from India; it did not appeal to the masses. That carrot was not there hanging in front of you: bliss. He was talking of peace.

Peace seems to be very unalluring; it does not ring bells in your heart. Peace, just peace? So much effort for meditation and so much effort for waking up, and the result is only peace? You want something more exciting, more sensational. You want ecstasy, not peace. Your sleep creates the dream of bliss, of ecstasy, of great joys, eternal joys.

But Buddha's choice of the word is very right, absolutely right. He never moves from the inner truth, he goes on insisting on it. Whether it appeals to you or not, he is not much concerned about that. He is not at all going to compromise with you and your desires and your sleep.

Of course, when Buddha died, the scholars started interpreting his peace as bliss -- another name, they said, for bliss. But from India it disappeared, the religion disappeared. The scholars and the pundits learned it a little late. When the religion had disappeared from India, then they thought over it, and why it had happened. And this was the cause: Buddha was talking about peace, about nirvana. Nirvana means cessation, that you will cease totally. Who wants to cease totally? Deep down you want to remain, abide. Yes, you can accept that the body will not

be there, the body will fall into dust -- dust unto dust. But your spirit, your soul WILL be there.
And Buddha says you don't have any soul, because your soul is nothing but a holy name for your old ego. And what is your spirit? -- nothing but another facade for the ego to survive. He is very compassionately cruel. He says you will not be there at all.
People used to ask him, "Then why should we meditate? It seems like committing absolute suicide!"
And Buddha said, "Yes, exactly it is that. But peace will be there."
Now the problem becomes even more complicated. You can even become interested in peace; tired of your joys, happiness, unhappiness, sadness, misery, suffering, you can even reluctantly, in a resigned way, agree to attain to peace -- but YOU will not be there. Then another problem arises which is far more significant to you in your sleep: "If I am not there, who is going to experience peace? And what is the point of attaining something if you can't experience it, if you are not there at all?"
And Buddha is absolutely right. He says: If YOU are there, peace cannot be. When you are not there, peace is.
Shakespeare says: To be or not to be is the question.
Buddha says: Choose not to be. To be is the problem; not to be means all problems have been transcended, all worries have been transcended.
Buddhists learned that there is something dangerous in Buddha's message; it has to be changed. They changed it. In Tibet, in China, in Japan, they dropped Buddha's words or they gave new meanings to those words. While they were translating Buddhist scriptures into Tibetan, into

Chinese, into Japanese, Korean, they made it a point that all negatives should be dropped from Buddha and they should be replaced by positives. "You will be there in all your glory, in all your grandeur, in all your beauty. You will be there in your purity. Your soul will be there, utterly purified, pure gold. And you will attain to bliss: MAHASUKH -- great bliss."

And then, like fire, the religion of Buddha spread all over Asia. It disappeared from the country of its origin for the simple reason that Buddha would not compromise with your sleep; it succeeded all over Asia because the followers compromised. They destroyed the purity of Buddhism; they brought it down to your level. Buddha's effort was to raise you to HIS level, and his followers brought him to your level.

That's what happens always with the followers, because they are also asleep; they are people like you. They are also dreaming like you, they are also desiring like you. There is a certain understanding between you and them. They can understand your dreams because they are their dreams too. Buddha is as far away from them as he is from you. It is a strange phenomenon, but it has always been so. Christians succeeded when they betrayed Christ and Buddhists succeeded when they betrayed Buddha. You have to betray the master, then you can be a success. When the master starts speaking like sleepy people, then sleepy people become interested; then he is speaking in your language.

The other night, Veet Marco had a dream:

While Jesus Christ was on the cross, three soldiers were playing cards beneath him. At a certain point one of the

soldiers got up and pierced Jesus' rib with his spear. Jesus moaned, and the soldier laughingly returned to his seat and continued playing cards.
Soon after a second soldier got up and held a sponge soaked in vinegar up to Jesus' face.
Jesus screamed, "Father, Father, why have you forsaken me?"
The soldier started laughing, then went back to his seat and resumed playing cards.
Suddenly the sky became dark, the earth started to tremble, lights beamed from the north and from the south and a mysterious silence filled the air.
The nails on Jesus' hands and feet started disappearing. The third soldier, seeing this, ran to Jesus' feet and began praying and worshipping God. A terrible wind started blowing and Jesus began to ascend. The soldier hung on to his legs, screaming and crying, "Jesus, Jesus, yours is the power and the glory!"
Jesus' face was filled with light, his hair blowing in the wind, his body donning a white silken robe, ascending up and up into the sky, with the third soldier clinging to his legs, ascending along with him.
The soldier, suddenly realizing what was happening, became frightened and cried up to Jesus, "Jesus, Jesus, where are you going?"
Jesus smilingly replied, "I am going to my father up in the Kingdom of God."
"And how about me?" quizzed the frightened soldier. "Where am I going?"
Jesus, kicking him off, screamed down to the falling figure, "You sonofabitch, you go back to your fucking mother!"

Now, Marco's dream is Marco's dream; it has nothing to do with Jesus. But in your dreams, Jesus will take a form that is really imposed by you, Buddha will take a form that is imposed by you. Rather than allowing them to transform you, you would like to transform them according to YOUR ideas. This has been happening down the ages.

IF YOU ARE FILLED WITH DESIRE, says Buddha,
YOUR SORROWS SWELL
LIKE THE GRASS AFTER THE RAIN.

The more desires you have, the more misery you will create for yourself. Misery is a consequence of desiring -- and you go on desiring. In fact, you think that if your desires are fulfilled your miseries will disappear. In the first place they are never fulfilled; in the second place, if they are fulfilled, nothing is fulfilled by their fulfillment. You remain as empty as you have always been -- or even more, because up to now you were occupied with a certain desire; now even that is fulfilled. A deep deep emptiness comes to you. You wanted to have a beautiful house; now you have it. Suddenly, you don't know what to do. You were so much engaged in earning money, you were so mad after getting the house; now you have got it. For a moment you feel good -- not because of the house, remember, but just because the whole tension, that mounting tension has disappeared -- the house is yours. All that strain and tension is relaxed; it is the relaxation of that tension that gives you a little experience of pleasure. That you could have

experienced any time if you had relaxed; it has nothing to do with the house.

See the mechanism of desire! But after that relaxation, after a few moments or a few hours or maybe a few days... it depends how intelligent you are. If you are really intelligent, then within seconds that disappears -- you can see the futility of it. If you are not that intelligent, then a few hours; if you are really stupid, then a few days. It is in the proportion of your stupidity: you will remain happier for a longer period if you are more stupid because you will not see the point. But sooner or later, howsoever stupid you are, it is bound to disappear. And then you will be left with a great emptiness, hollowness, and you would like again to strive for something else. Maybe you need more money now or a beautiful woman to suit the beautiful house. Again a new desire, and you rush. Again you will attain... and for a few moments, the relaxation.

It is like the sexual experience. What pleasure you attain in sexuality is nothing but the pleasure of a mounting excitement, tension, and then the relaxation. Your energies go on mounting higher and higher and higher, and then you explode -- you ejaculate. And suddenly you fall back into a certain calmness; the excitement is gone. But you don't learn anything from it: that this is the whole secret of all your pleasures. Running, rushing, competing, fighting for something creates great tension.

That's why it happens that if you are involved into something really deeply you may not feel any interest in sexuality. If you are involved deep in scientific endeavor you may not be interested in sex at all. You may be a little puzzled, confused: "Why are people so much interested in

sex? What is there?" You have found a new sexuality for yourself. Science is your wife; now you are running after science. Or you may be a politician; then politics is your wife. But one day, when you become the prime minister of the country or the president of the country, you have reached to the climax, and then after the climax there is nowhere to go... a certain calm falls over you. That calm is misunderstood as if you have attained it through the experience, by becoming the president, the prime minister, famous, respectable, a Nobel Prize winner. It is not that; it is because of relaxation.

If you relax right now without attaining anything, that same calm will fall over you -- even deeper because you will be full of energy. But we never look into anything, and even if we look into anything we conclude very superficially.

I have heard about a man who was passing through a forest, felt his bladder was full, stopped his car, went behind a bush. As he was pissing, a wild bee stung his prick. He screamed -- the pain was too much and he did not know what to do.

Then suddenly he remembered, twenty years back when he was just a child it had happened once and his mother had a remedy for it. She had given him a glass of milk and told him to put his prick in the glass, and it had soothed him, calmed him. But where to find the glass of milk? And the pain was excruciating! And tears were coming down from his eyes as he started driving in the hope of finding somebody in the forest.

He was able to find a small hut. He knocked on the door. He was feeling very embarrassed -- how to say it and what

to say? A woman opened the door, but the pain was so much that he had to say something. So he said, "Please don't ask me why, just give me a glass of milk. I am in terrible pain, I am dying! Just give me a glass of milk and please, don't ask why because I cannot answer it. I am feeling so embarrassed!"
The woman could see the pain of the man. She rushed in, brought a glass of milk.
The man took the glass of milk, rushed towards the back of the house.
The woman was curious, naturally, as to what was happening. She had never seen such a thing before! So she went back just silently so she would not disturb the man. And what she saw... she could not believe her eyes! She said, "My God, I have been married for thirty years, and now I know how you fill up these things! I was always wondering how you fill up these things again and again and again! Now I know!"

Your conclusions are as superficial as that! That poor man is not filling it up! You pass through experiences, but you never go deep into them to find out the truth, what really happens.
You must have made love many times, but have you ever thought about it? -- what really happens that gives you calmness, a certain pleasure, a certain joy? Nothing much... just a mounting tension is relaxed. First you go into mounting it higher and higher, and then you fall from that height in a deep deep valley of calmness. But this calmness is available to any meditator without creating any tension.

Hence, meditation takes you beyond sex; nothing else can ever take you beyond sex. Everything else is a substitute for sex. Somebody is running after money -- money is his sex; and somebody is running after power -- power is his sex; and somebody is running after something else. Those are all sexualities, substitutes for sex. These people can easily avoid sex because they have found their own new version.

IF YOU ARE FILLED WITH DESIRE, YOUR SORROWS SWELL LIKE THE GRASS AFTER THE RAIN.

BUT IF YOU SUBDUE DESIRE,
YOUR SORROWS FALL FROM YOU
LIKE DROPS OF WATER FROM A LOTUS FLOWER.

The word 'subdue' has to be rightly understood. It does not mean repression; it means understanding, it means transforming. It means transcendence. It means that you have become master of your own soul, that now nothing dominates you -- sex, power, money, nothing dominates you. It does not mean that you have to renounce the world; it simply means that you have to renounce your unawareness.

Desire disappears as you become more and more aware. When awareness is one hundred percent, there is no desire at all. YOUR SORROWS FALL FROM YOU LIKE DROPS OF WATER FROM A LOTUS FLOWER.

Ordinarily, people are not raising their consciousness. On the contrary, they live through conscience, not through consciousness. To live through conscience is to live

according to the mob psychology, is to follow the crowd. Conscience is created by the crowd; consciousness is an individual phenomenon -- you have to create it. The society won't help you at all; it will hinder you in every possible way. The society does not want conscious people at all. They are rebellious, they are dangerous for the status quo, for the establishment, for the church, for the state, for the nation. They are dangerous because they have gone through a revolution and their very vibe creates revolution in others. The society lives through conscience. It gives you the idea about what is right and what is wrong: "Do this and don't do that." It goes on giving you commandments. It gives you detailed information about what is right and what is wrong. And in fact that is absolutely absurd, because life goes on changing every day.
What was wrong in the times of Moses is no longer wrong today, and what was right in the days of Krishna is no longer right today. Nobody can give you a detailed map of what is right and what is wrong. In fact, something may be right in the morning and may be wrong in the evening. Next moment it may not be right! Life is a flux, and conscience is a static thing. Consciousness goes on moving with life; it is a flow.

Murphy says: A conscience cannot prevent sin -- it only prevents you from enjoying it.

Conscience prevents nothing; it simply prevents you from enjoying your life. You remain the same; you simply become more miserable! That's why your saints have such long long faces, look so serious, sad, dead. Nothing has

changed in them: they don't radiate life, they don't radiate love, they don't radiate peace. They only show you what conscience can do. It can kill you, it is a slow poisoning. Buddha does not believe in conscience; he believes in consciousness. But buddhas talk about consciousness and you always understand conscience. In fact, there are languages like French in which conscience and consciousness are not two words; 'conscience' means both, consciousness and conscience. That's actually the process, how you understand.

A man lost in the woods finally arrived at his destination, The Old Log Inn. On his arrival, however, he was all beaten up, with swollen eyes, bloody nose and mouth.
The alarmed receptionist demanded, "My God, what happened to you?"
The man replied, "I was lost and found a couple making love in the woods, and all I asked was 'How far is The Old Log Inn?'"

Please remember, consciousness does not mean conscience. Don't translate it as conscience; it has been translated so for centuries.
And then sorrows fall away from you LIKE DROPS OF WATER FROM A LOTUS FLOWER. So naturally they disappear, they don't leave a trace behind.

THIS IS GOOD COUNSEL
AND IT IS FOR EVERYONE:
AS THE GRASS IS CLEARED FOR THE FRESH ROOT,
CUT DOWN DESIRE

LEST DEATH AFTER DEATH CRUSH YOU
AS A RIVER CRUSHES THE HELPLESS REEDS.

The unconscious man is a helpless victim of circumstances; he is accidental. He has no intrinsic value yet because he has not created any inner light yet. Only with consciousness you have intrinsic value; otherwise your life is just accidental.

When a child was born in Bethlehem, three kings came bearing gifts for him in the stable where he lay.
The first king came forward, putting down his gift of frankincense and myrrh before the cradle. The second king set down his gift of a large bar of gold. The third king advanced with his gift, but tripped over the bar of gold.
"Jesus Christ!" he exclaimed.
The father of the child looked up at him and said, "That's a good name! We were thinking of calling him Fred."

Your names, your lives, your everything is accidental. Consciousness will make you go beyond accidents.

FOR IF THE ROOTS HOLD FIRM,
A FELLED TREE GROWS UP AGAIN.
IF DESIRES ARE NOT UPROOTED,
SORROWS GROW AGAIN IN YOU.

Remember: there is no other revolution except consciousness. It cuts the desires from the very roots and it brings freedom to you.
Enough for today.

The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 9
Chapter #10
Chapter title: Intelligent people are dangerous
20 February 1980 am in Buddha Hall

The first question:
Question 1
BELOVED MASTER,
IT IS LIKE DRIVING A CAR IN FORWARD AND REVERSE AT THE SAME TIME. I AM NOT GOING ANYWHERE. IS THE IGNITION SWITCHED ON OR AM I JUST A BAD DRIVER?

Ray Horton, the very idea of going somewhere is basically wrong. Nothing is going anywhere. Existence is now-here; it is not moving towards a particular destiny. There is no destiny, there is no ultimate purpose. But we have been taught for centuries that existence is moving towards a certain goal and we have been also taught to live ambitiously, to prove that you are something, somebody: "Reach somewhere." But existence is absolutely purposeless.
I am not saying that it is not significant. Precisely because it is purposeless it is significant, but its significance is not that of the marketplace. It is a totally different kind of significance: the significance of a roseflower, the significance of a bird on the wing, the significance of poetry, music. It is an end unto itself.
We are not to become something -- we are already it. This is the whole message of all the awakened ones: that you are

not to achieve something, it has already been given to you. It is God's gift. You are already where you should be, you can't be anywhere else. There is nowhere to go, nothing to achieve. Because there is nowhere to go and nothing to achieve, you can celebrate. Then there is no hurry, no worry, no anxiety, no anguish, no fear of being a failure. You can't fail. In the very nature of things it is impossible to fail, because there is no question of success at all.

It is just a conditioning by the society that creates the problem in you. And then you start thinking, "I am not reaching anywhere, and life is slipping out of my hands and death is coming closer. Am I going to make it or not?" And then there is great fear of missing, frustration that so much is lost. And who knows? -- tomorrow may never arrive. "I have not yet been able to prove myself, my worth. I have not become famous yet. I have not accumulated much wealth. I am not a president of a country or a prime minister."

Or you can start thinking in otherworldly terms, but the process is the same. You can say, "I have not yet become enlightened. I have not yet become a Buddha or a Jesus. Meditation is far away. I don't know who I am." And you can go on creating a thousand and one problems for yourself.

All these problems are created because the society wants you to be ambitious, and ambition can only be created if there is a goal in the future. For ambition, future is needed. And without ambition, the ego cannot be created. And the ego is the basic strategy of the society to rule over you, to exploit you, to oppress you, to keep you miserable. The ego exists in the tension between the present and the future: the

bigger the tension, the bigger the ego. When there is no tension between your present and future, the ego disappears because there is no point where it can have shelter, where it can exist.

Hence society teaches you, "Become this, become that." It teaches you becoming. Its whole education system is based on the idea of becoming.

And what I am telling you here is just the opposite of it. I am talking about BEING, not about becoming. Becoming is an invention of the crafty politicians and the priests -- and these are the people who have poisoned the whole humanity. They go on giving you goals. If you become tired of the worldly things -- money, power, prestige -- they are there to tell you about paradise, God, samadhi, truth. Again the whole process starts.

And it is easy to be frustrated with the worldly things. Sooner or later you can see the whole stupidity of having more money or more power. Sooner or later you are going to see the futility of the very idea of "more," because the more brings nothing else but more misery. It takes away all bliss from you, all peace from you. It is destructive. It gives you only fear, trembling, anxiety, neurosis. It makes you insane; that can be seen very easily. It has made the whole earth a madhouse.

But to see that the otherworldly goals -- nirvana and moksha and God and paradise -- are also the same is very difficult. You will need tremendous intelligence to see that those goals are also of the same quality. There is no qualitative change because you are still thinking in terms of becoming, you are still thinking in terms of the future.

Future does not exist, it is nonexistential. It is as nonexistential as the past. The past is no more, the future is not yet; only the present is. And in the present there is no possibility for desiring, no possibility of being ambitious, not space enough for the ego to exist. Whenever you are now and here there is no ego to be found. You are a pure silence. Right now... see what I am saying. I am not propounding a theory or a philosophy; I am simply stating a fact.

Ray Horton, just for a second see... this very moment! Where is the ego? And what heights and what depths of peace suddenly become available to you. They are always within you, but you never look at them -- you are running and running. And because you are not arriving anywhere you are very much worried.

You say, "It is like driving a car in forward and reverse at the same time. I am not going anywhere."

There is no need. This very moment, wherever you are, it is a blessing, it is divine. Where else do you want to go? Why live in the past? It is the past that gives you goals. It is the past that you are carrying in your head which projects goals in the future. Future is only a reflection of the past.

From your very childhood you have been told, you have been hypnotized, by the society, by the priests, by the politicians, by your parents, by the pedagogues. You have been hypnotized continuously that you should have a goal in your life, that you should have some purpose, that you should be a great achiever, that you have to be famous -- a Nobel Prize winner or something -- that you are not to die just an ordinary man. To die just an ordinary man is ugly;

you have to die like a president or a prime minister -- as if their death has something special!
Because of this constant hammering on your head you have become so much accustomed to the idea that it is driving you crazy. Otherwise, life is so beautiful as it is; no purpose, no goal is needed. Future can be completely dropped. You live in the future just to escape from the present, and you become so psychologically obsessed with the future that you go on missing that which is for that which is not.

Among the first things that a Jewish boy learns is the biblical injunction: "Honor thy father and mother -- or else!"
Herschel, aged six, was reminded of the admonition the day his father came home and announced that he had decided to buy a car, the first his family had ever owned.
The father was in high spirits. "Imagine, we are in this country only a few years and soon we will own a new car," he said proudly. "I can just see us riding around in Central Park. In the front I am steering, and sitting next to me is Mamma, and in the back is our little Herschel."
Mamma nodded, smiling her approval. "So, when are you planning to buy the car?" she asked.
"In two weeks, a month maybe -- no later."
The pleasant interlude was suddenly shattered by Herschel's mournful cry, "I don't wanna sit in the back! I wanna sit in the front and help steer!"
"Only one steerer we need in this family," the father reminded his son. "In the front sits Mamma, in the back sits you."

"If I have to sit in the back I will bang my head on the wall, you will see!" wailed Herschel. He ran to the wall and assumed a threatening pose, ready to give action to his words. "Mamma is sitting in the back, I am sitting in the front!"
"No, Herschel, you are in the back," said the father sternly.
"In the front, not in the back!" Herschel's voice rose in a sudden screech. "I ain't gonna sit in the back!"
Father, his manner grim, extended his arm and pointed a commanding finger. "Herschel," he said coldly, "get out of my car!"

People go on living in the future!
And the same is the case with your paradise, just like the car. The same is the case with your nirvana, your enlightenment -- the same as with the car.
It is only the mediocre mind that becomes psychologically obsessed with the future. But the society destroys everybody's intelligence and makes everybody mediocre. The society does not want you to be really intelligent; it is afraid of intelligence. Intelligent people are dangerous people. They are radicals, they are revolutionaries; they are always sabotaging the status quo. The society wants you to remain mediocre, stupid. It wants you certainly to be efficient, mechanically. It wants you to accumulate as much information as possible, but it does not want you to be really intelligent because if you are intelligent you will not care for the future. You will live IN the present and FOR the present, because there is no other life.
Listen to the birds chirping, chattering... the trees flowering... the stars, the sun, the moon. The whole

existence lives in the present except you, except human mind. And it is only human mind that suffers.
Come out of the future! It is your dream. You are not supposed to go anywhere. Be happy wherever you are. Be contented with your being and drop the idea of becoming. Then each moment is so precious, then each moment has such beauty, such grandeur, such splendor. Then each moment is exquisite. Then you can feel God everywhere each moment.
God is not a goal; God is the presence right now. If you are present, God is available. If you live in the moment, you are enlightened; there is no other enlightenment. And then ordinary life is so extraordinary. Then to be just a nobody is so fulfilling.

I call this whole approach sannyas: dropping the goals, the purposes, the future -- becoming part of existence this very moment, not postponing it. Then in this very moment, a great explosion is possible in you: the ego disappears, you are no more, but God is. And that is bliss and that is truth.

The second question:
Question 2
BELOVED MASTER,
WHY ARE SO MANY JEWS HERE?

Alexandra, Jews are intelligent people, the most intelligent in the world. That's why they are hated so much. They have committed only one mistake in their whole history: they crucified Jesus and missed the greatest business that was available to them! It is such a rare phenomenon, that it went

into the hands of the Italians -- the whole business! It is inconceivable -- Jews losing it to the Italians! If the Italians are selling spaghetti, that is okay, but they are selling Jesus! Otherwise, the Jews have never committed any mistake. But that one mistake has cost them very much: they became uprooted. But sometimes blessings come in the form of curses. When they became uprooted, when they lost their land, they became naturally more intelligent than anybody else because they had to exist in adverse conditions. No other race has existed in such adverse conditions as the Jews. And when you live in adverse conditions the challenge is such, you can survive only if you bring your intelligence to its highest peak. If you behave stupidly you will be destroyed. They were living always amongst strangers antagonistic to them; they became more and more intelligent.

More Nobel Prizes go to Jews than to anybody else. And wherever they are they succeed, whatsoever they are doing they bring a certain magic to it. So whenever they feel a certain vibe, a certain phenomenon happening anywhere, they are the first to reach, they are the first to reap the crop.

Yes, the question arises to many people. Almost fifty percent of my sannyasins are Jews -- so many Jews that sometimes I become suspicious whether perhaps I am a Jew!

Alexandra, you are right, your curiosity is right. But they can understand what I am saying. In fact, they have to drop a certain guilt that they have carried for two thousand years. If they can feel in tune with me, their guilt for killing Jesus will disappear. Deep down the guilt is there; they need somebody who can take away that guilt. It is like a

thorn in their very soul -- it hurts. They may not say it, but it hurts. They destroyed their greatest flowering.
Jesus was their highest potential actualized; he was the highest peak of Jewish intelligence -- and they destroyed it. They are carrying the wound; they are wounded people. They want somebody who can heal the wound.
But the problem is: if you go to the priests they wound you more. Go anywhere, you will be wounded more, because your so-called religions all exist on your guilt. The greater the guilt, the more is their power over you. They make you feel guilty, they make you feel sinners.
I am a totally different kind of man: I help you to get rid of your guilt. I want to tell you that you are not sinners, and to commit mistakes is just human -- to err is human. There is no need to make much fuss about it. And your errors are small; just a little awareness and they will disappear. You do not need to be thrown into hell.
And just see the stupidity of the idea.... Christians say that once you are in hell you are there for eternity. Nobody comes out of hell. It has no exit, only the entrance. And then for eternity! -- the very idea is absurd. Even the greatest criminal need not be punished for eternity.
Bertrand Russell has said, "When I look at my sins, if I confess all my sins that I have committed, they are not many, they are not very big. I have not murdered people. Then the cruelest magistrate can send me to jail at the most for four years. And if my thoughts are also to be included, not only my actions, then eight years jail, that's all." He has written a beautiful book, WHY I AM NOT A CHRISTIAN. And among the many that he has given, this is one of the reasons: "I cannot agree with the idea of

eternal hell. Nobody has committed such a sin that he should be thrown for eternity into hell -- forever, no escape. And nobody has done so much good that he should be enjoying paradise for ever and ever."

But religions have existed, and they are powerful, for the simple reason that they create fear in you -- fear of hell -- and they create greed in you -- greed for heaven. They wound you deeply. The more you bleed, the more your wound bleeds, the more powerful they are over you.

My effort here is to redeem you from all your wounds, to redeem you from the fear of hell and the greed for heaven. There is no hell and no heaven. Those are not places somewhere, those are just your own states of mind. Whenever you are in anger, in rage, you are in hell; and whenever you are in love, in compassion, you are in heaven. So you can move from heaven to hell many times in a day.

It is not a question to be decided after death; it is to be decided each moment. And it is absolutely within your capacity to decide.

One Sufi mystic was dying. His disciples had gathered and they said, "One thing we want to know. You are departing forever and then we will never know what was the secret. We have never seen you sad, unhappy, miserable. It seems so superhuman. We have watched you for thirty years, forty years; there are a few people who have lived with you for fifty years, sixty years" -- the man was almost a hundred years old -- "and nobody remembers that you were ever sad, not even a small sadness. What is your secret?"

He said, "There is no secret at all. Every morning when I get up, before I open my eyes I say to myself, 'Listen, old man, a new day is there. What do you want? -- to be sad or to be happy?' And I always say, 'To be happy.' So then I remain happy! I decide in the morning and I remain happy. I have to follow my decision. This I do every day. It is a decision."

You choose misery; it is not a punishment, it is your choice. And you choose joy; it is not a reward, it is your choice.
Jews have suffered very much; they are wounded. Of course, two thousand years of suffering have made them very mature, intelligent, alert. Hence they can recognize me better than anybody else. That's why, Alexandra, they are here.

In July 1974, President Nixon was in the Soviet Union, hoping to achieve a nonaggression pact between that country and the United States, but he was having a hard time of it.
"Before we sign," declared Prime Minister Brezhnev, "you Americans will have to announce to the world that Adam and Eve were communists."
Nixon, uncertain as to how he should cope with this dilemma, decided to consult an authority on Genesis -- in this case, Henry J. Kissinger -- who assured him that he had read several pages of the Bible in his younger days. Kissinger retired to his study, pored over the Old Testament and the text. Next day he told Nixon to go ahead and sign the pact with the Soviet Union. "The Russians are right," he

said, "Adam and Eve were indeed communists. After all, they did not have a stitch on their backs, they had nothing to eat but apples, and they still thought they were in paradise!"

Three boys, a Catholic, a Presbyterian and a Jew, were discussing how they each spent Christmas Day. The Catholic boy had gone to mass, come back, kissed all his family and given them presents, and later on had Christmas dinner. The Presbyterian boy had not gone to church, but had kissed all the family, given out his presents, and then had Christmas dinner.
The Jewish boy said, "Well, dad and I went down to our toy factory, looked at all the empty shelves, sang two verses of 'What a friend we have in Jesus!' and then caught a plane for Osho Commune International, Poona, India."

The third question:
Question 3
BELOVED MASTER,
IF YOU WERE HERE RIGHT NOW, I THINK I WOULD HIT YOU. IF YOU DON'T RECOGNIZE ME SOON AND START SAYING YES TO ME INSTEAD OF NO, I AM GOING TO HAVE TO KILL YOU.

Somendra... thank you, Somendra! I also will need a Judas; otherwise the story will remain incomplete. I can be a Jesus only with a Judas. Yes, somebody has to do the work of Judas -- it is hard work.

There are secret mystery schools which carry the tradition that Judas was one of the most obedient disciples of Jesus. He betrayed Jesus because Jesus wanted to be betrayed. That's exactly what George Gurdjieff used to say: that Judas was not a renegade, he was simply following Jesus. And his obedience was so total that when Jesus said, "Go and betray me, and sell me for thirty silver coins," he went and did it. Of course, he felt very sorry for doing it, miserable, in deep anguish, but he had to follow the master. So he betrayed Jesus, Jesus was crucified, and next day Judas committed suicide. Judas died the next day. He must have felt very bad, although he had to follow the master. He was the most intelligent of all the disciples of Jesus.
So, Somendra, somebody has to do the hard work of Judas. Some day, I may choose you -- don't be worried and don't be in a hurry! One day I may order you, "Now, Somendra, you can kill me." But before that, let ME kill YOU!
And that's why I go on saying no to you. That is my device to kill you. You would like to be recognized, but it will be too early if I recognize you. It will be nothing but a recognition of your ego. I will recognize you only when I see the ego has disappeared; while the ego is there I will go on destroying it. My no's are nothing but hits on the ego. Yes will also be said when you have become capable of accepting my no's joyfully. When you have become worthy of receiving the yes, it will come on its own accord; you need not remind me. Your reminding me will only delay it. Your reminding me will make me say more no's to you. You cannot force yes from me, you cannot force me to say yes to you. If you can force yes from me, my whole

function of being a master is destroyed. You cannot force anything from me.
Pass through these no's: this is the dark night of the soul. And when the night is the darkest, the dawn is very close.

The fourth question:
Question 4
BELOVED MASTER,
ARE SCRIPTURES NOT REALLY OF ANY USE WHATSOEVER?

Thomas, scriptures ARE beautiful, but beautiful only for those who can understand them -- not for you. You cannot understand them, you can only MISunderstand them. I am not against the scriptures -- how can I be? I am speaking on one of the scriptures, THE DHAMMAPADA, Buddha's sayings. I have spoken on Jesus' sayings, I have spoken on Mahavira, on Krishna. I have spoken on the Upanishads, I have spoken on TAO TEH CHING. I have spoken on almost all the beautiful scriptures of the world. How can I be against them and how can I think they are useless? -- although I insist that you don't depend on them. For you they are of no use.
Then what is their use? Their use is a totally different thing. When you become more meditative, the deeper you go into meditation, the more will be your capacity and clarity to understand the scriptures. Scriptures will become witnesses to you that you are on the right track. And when you reach to your innermost core, when you realize your being, then you will know what Jesus means by the kingdom of God, then you will know what Buddha means by nirvana, then

you will know what the Upanishads mean by truth -- not before that.

Right now, if you read the Bible or the Koran or the Gita, you will interpret them according to your unconscious state, according to your nonmeditative state. You will misinterpret, you will misunderstand. You are not in the right shape; you are upside down, you are topsy-turvy. You are a confusion, a chaos. You are a crowd, you are not yet an individual. You don't have a center at all. So how are you going to understand Jesus or Buddha or Krishna? Remember one very fundamental thing: you can understand Jesus only if you have tasted something of Christ-consciousness in you; otherwise there is no way. You can have some glimpses of Buddha only when you have attained something of buddhahood, some texture, some taste, some fragrance. When you have entered into the country of Buddha and the buddhas, then you will be able to see the meaning.

Otherwise, words are there, but who will put meaning into those words? YOU will put meaning into those words. You will be reading Krishna but you will not be really reading Krishna -- you will be reading yourself THROUGH Krishna. The words will be Krishna's, the meanings will be yours -- and it is the meaning that is significant, not the word.

Chauncey de Plotkin was suffering from the heartbreak of psoriasis. After vainly trying the usual patent medicines sold over the counter he finally consulted a doctor and was given a prescription and told how and when to take it.

That evening at home Chauncey's wife was astonished to see her husband swallow a spoonful of the medicine, race out of the house and dash around the block. When he returned he was so exhausted that he flopped down onto the bed and fought to catch his breath.
On the second evening he repeated the performance: he gulped down the medicine, galloping around the block and returning home a few minutes later.
On the third evening he changed his tactics. This time he took his medicine as usual, but instead of racing he began to skip around the room with all the grace of a prancing pachyderm.
The wife could stand it no longer. "Chauncey," she cried, "what in the world are you doing racing around the block and jumping about like that? Have you lost your mind?"
"Of course not," replied the weary hubby. "I am just following the doctor's orders. He told me to take my medicine two nights running and to skip the third night."

The words may be of Christ, Buddha, Zarathustra, but who is going to give the meaning to them? Chauncey de Plotkin -- he will put meanings into those words! He will impose his meaning, he will project his meaning.
I am not against scriptures. How can I be? I am for all the scriptures, but I cannot say to you that through the scriptures you can find the truth. That is not possible.

A Christian missionary and a rabbi were traveling together in a train. The Christian missionary said to the rabbi, "Jesus saves."

The rabbi looked at the missionary and then said, "But Moses invests."

Words are bound to be colored by you, they are bound to be part of you. They may descend from very high sources.... It is just like rainwater. When it comes from the clouds it is pure, the purest, but when it falls on the ground it depends on the ground. If it falls in cow dung, then it may be holy for the Hindu but for nobody else! Pure water descending from heaven will have the color of the earth on which it falls, will have the taste of the earth on which it falls.

Exactly the same is the case with the words falling from Buddha, Jesus, Zarathustra, Lao Tzu. It depends on your earth -- on your mind. And what is the state of your mind? Can you think anything original? Can you understand anything original? Your mind only repeats that which it has heard or read, that which it has been taught. It is a machine; it can never produce a single original thought. The original thought never comes from the mind; it comes from the beyond.

Buddha uses the mind to communicate with you. He has to use words, obviously, and by using words he is taking a dangerous step. For seven days he was hesitating.... When he became enlightened, for seven days he didn't utter a single word.

The story is that the gods came from heaven, touched his feet, and asked him to deliver the truth that he had attained because the masses were so thirsty for it. Millions of people would be benefited.

He listened in deep silence. He simply said one thing: "As far as I am concerned, for seven days I have been pondering over it and this is my conclusion: that those who can understand me need not hear my words. Those who can understand me are already meditative, they are already on the way. They don't need my words; they will reach anyway, with me or without. Maybe with me they will reach a little earlier, alone a little later, but what difference does it make in eternity whether you come one year earlier or one year later?

"Those who can't understand me are bound to MISunderstand. My words will become a problem for them. They are already confused and I don't want to confuse them any more. My words will create more confusion in them."

The gods were at a loss what to say, how to persuade Buddha. They went away. They discussed it among themselves to find out some way, and then they came back with a new argument. They said, "You are right, there are people, a very few people, who will understand you immediately. And yes, we agree with you totally, they don't need it; they will reach anyway. They are just on the borderline: one step more and they will be buddhas. Even without you they will become buddhas, that is certain. If YOU could become a buddha without any other buddha helping you, they can also become -- we can understand it.

"And your other point is also right: there are millions of people who will not understand you. But we don't agree with you that your words will create more confusion. Those people are so confused, there cannot be more confusion. They have already reached to the rock bottom of confusion;

you cannot confuse them any more. So don't be worried about them.

"And we have thought about a third category also. There are a few people who are just in between these two categories: who are not so evolved that they will immediately understand you and become enlightened and who are not so unevolved either that they will simply become more and more confused by hearing you. They are just in the middle -- a small minority, but those people are there. With your help they will reach to the other shore; without your help they may wander and wander for centuries and centuries.

"And you are right in saying that what difference does it make in eternity? It does not make any difference to YOU because you know eternity, but for those poor people who live in time it makes much difference. For many many lives they will be suffering. For you it makes no difference -- you have entered eternity -- but they are living in time, and time means birth, death and the wheel of birth and death. And they will have to go on the wheel, in the vicious circle, millions of times. Compared to eternity it is nothing, but compared to a small life -- a seventy-year life, a sixty-year life -- it is too much. You have to think about that third category too."

Buddha listened to them and immediately agreed to speak. He followed the argument: yes, there IS a third category. The first category is of those people who cannot understand at all. Words they can understand; intellectually they are capable of understanding whatsoever is said to them. But deep down the meaning is missed, the significance is missed. They hear the music, but they don't get the melody

of it. They hear the noise, but they don't feel the harmony; that is a subtle phenomenon. They hear the words.

All the three categories are here. The majority is hearing my words, but they will not feel my silence, they will not feel my presence in them. It is the same to them. They can read a book, they can listen to a tape or they can hear me directly; it is all the same to them, no difference, because the words are the same.
But to the second category there is a difference. To read my words in a book is one thing, because I will not be there in those words, my presence will not be there. I will not be breathing in those words; they will be dead. When you listen to the tape it is a little better than the book, but still my presence is not there. Tapes are mechanical repetitions; there is nobody behind them.
Here when you are listening to me, my words are there and my silence is there. My silence can go with the words if you are available. The second category of people will be able to feel my presence, my silence, my song. And the first category of people will immediately realize that this is it! A sudden enlightenment... not even a moment's gap.

The fifth question:
Question 5
BELOVED MASTER,
THE OTHER DAY I READ THAT TARU MET YOU ONCE IN THE STREETS OF BOMBAY WHILE YOU WERE CARRYING A BAG OF GIN AND WHISKY IN BOTH HANDS. ARE YOU REALLY A DRUNKARD? 5

Prem Aditya, if Taru says so, it must be so. I am such a drunkard that I can't remember! Yes, vaguely I remember Taru meeting me on the streets of Bombay. I can remember her hug -- it is difficult to forget! But my memory is not very good... so maybe I was carrying bottles of whisky in both of my hands.
That has been very usual for Zen masters in Japan. That is the last stage of enlightenment! To be enlightened means to be utterly drunk -- drunk with the divine.
Maybe those bottles of whisky were empty. They must have been, because a drunkard like me cannot keep those bottles full very long. The moment I get them I drink them. I don't postpone anything! But my memory is not very good....

"Doctor, I have a very serious problem," Max began. "I am losing my memory -- maybe I have already lost it completely. I can't seem to remember anything."
The psychiatrist smiled indulgently. "I am sure it is not quite that drastic. You must remember SOMETHING."
"No, nothing at all. I tell you, I can't remember a single thing."
"You mean, of course, such things as names and faces and dates? We all tend to forget them now and then."
"Doctor, you don't understand. I mean EVERYTHING!"
"Ah, that is pure nonsense!" snapped the doctor. "No one just forgets everything he has ever known. Even a person suffering from amnesia remembers SOMETHING -- such as whether he drinks coffee or tea or whether he smokes cigarettes or not."

"Listen, Doc," Maxwell said despairingly, "I am telling you for the last time -- I can't remember anything at all. Everything I see, everything I hear, everything I read, it just makes a temporary impression and then goes out of my head forever. That's it, Doctor, I swear to you. I simply can't remember one single goddamn thing!"
The psychiatrist frowned, leaned back in his chair and pondered this unique malady for several moments. Then he asked, "How long has this been going on?"
"How long has WHAT been going on?"

That's my situation too! I don't remember much. I am not much interested in the past, I am not interested in the future either. My whole interest is in the present moment.
And you can see right now -- I am a drunkard! Why bother what Taru says, and somewhere it is written and you read it? Why bother? You can look into my eyes... and they are full of whisky!
And if you don't believe me, come to me in private, and I will cry a little and you can taste my tears. And you will know how they taste -- they will taste of whisky! If Jesus can turn the whole ocean into wine, can't I turn my own tears?

The sixth question:
Question 6
BELOVED MASTER,
NO ERECTION HAPPENS. AM I STILL SEXY? FISHES COME, BUT GO THIRSTY.

Sant... Sant, contemplate on Murphy's maxim: If you play with something long enough, you will surely break it.

The big tomcat was eyeing the cute angora from behind a barbed wire fence. Finally, he decided to jump over it to get to her. With a big leap he landed on the other side.
"Say, aren't you Toby, the tomcat?" asked the angora.
"Not anymore," he replied. "That fence was higher than I thought."

The seventh question:
Question 7
BELOVED MASTER,
WHAT ARE THE ABC'S OF PSYCHOLOGY?

The A of psychology: neurotics build air castles. The B of psychology: psychotics live in them. The C of psychology: psychiatrists collect the rent.

The last question:
Question 8
BELOVED MASTER,
WHY DID YOU DECIDE TO SPEAK INSTEAD OF WRITING YOUR PHILOSOPHY?

Gautam, my spelling is far worse than my pronunciation! Enough for today.

The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 10

Talks given from 21/02/80 am to 04/03/80 am
English Discourse series
13 Chapters
Year published:
The original tape and book title was "The Book of the Books, Vols 1 - 6". Later reissued as twelve volumes under the present title.

The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 10

Chapter #1

Chapter title: Beyond happiness is bliss
21 February 1980 am in Buddha Hall

THIRTY-SIX STREAMS ARE RUSHING TOWARD YOU!
DESIRE AND PLEASURE AND LUST....
PLAY IN YOUR IMAGINATION WITH THEM
AND THEY WILL SWEEP YOU AWAY.

POWERFUL STREAMS!
THEY FLOW EVERYWHERE.

STRONG WINE!
IF YOU SEE IT SPRING UP,
TAKE CARE!

PULL IT OUT BY THE ROOTS.

PLEASURES FLOW EVERYWHERE.
YOU FLOAT UPON THEM
AND ARE CARRIED FROM LIFE TO LIFE.

LIKE A HUNTED HARE YOU RUN,
THE PURSUER OF DESIRE PURSUED,
HARRIED FROM LIFE TO LIFE.

O SEEKER!
GIVE UP DESIRE.
SHAKE OFF YOUR CHAINS.

YOU HAVE COME OUT OF THE HOLLOW
INTO THE CLEARING.
THE CLEARING IS EMPTY.
WHY DO YOU RUSH BACK INTO THE HOLLOW?

DESIRE IS A HOLLOW
AND PEOPLE SAY, "LOOK!
HE WAS FREE.
BUT NOW HE GIVES UP HIS FREEDOM."

Gautama the Buddha's whole religion can be reduced to a single word. That word is freedom. That is his essential message, his very fragrance. Nobody else has raised freedom so high. It is the ultimate value in Buddha's vision, the SUMMUM BONUM; there is nothing higher than that. And it seems very fundamental to understand why Buddha emphasizes freedom so much. Neither God is emphasized

nor heaven is emphasized nor love is emphasized, but only freedom. There is a reason for it: all that is valuable becomes possible only in the climate of freedom. Love also grows only in the soil of freedom; without freedom, love cannot grow. Without freedom, what grows in the name of love is nothing but lust. Without freedom there is no God. Without freedom what you think to be God is only your imagination, your fear, your greed. There is no heaven without freedom: freedom is heaven. And if you think there is some heaven without freedom, then that heaven has no worth, no reality. It is your fancy, it is your dream.

All great values of life grow in the climate of freedom; hence freedom is the most fundamental value and also the highest pinnacle. If you want to understand Buddha you will have to taste something of the freedom he is talking about.

His freedom is not of the outside. It is not social, it is not political, it is not economic. His freedom is spiritual. By "freedom" he means a state of consciousness unhindered by any desire, unchained to any desire, unimprisoned by any greed, by any lust for more. By "freedom" he means a consciousness without mind, a state of no-mind. It is utterly empty, because if there is something, that will hinder freedom; hence its utter emptiness.

This word 'emptiness' -- SHUNYATA -- has been very much misunderstood by people, because the word has a connotation of negativity. Whenever we hear the word 'empty' we think of something negative. In Buddha's language, emptiness is not negative; emptiness is absolutely positive, more positive than your so-called fullness, because emptiness is full of freedom; everything else has

been removed. It is spacious; all boundaries have been dropped. It is unbounded -- and only in an unbounded space, freedom is possible. His emptiness is not ordinary emptiness; it is not only absence of something, it is a presence of something invisible.

For example, when you empty your room: as you remove the furniture and the paintings and the things inside, the room becomes empty on the one hand because there is no more any furniture, no more paintings, no more things, nothing is left inside; but on the other hand, something invisible starts filling it. That invisibleness is "roominess," spaciousness; the room becomes bigger. As you remove the things, the room is becoming bigger and bigger. When everything is removed, even the walls, then the room is as big as the whole sky.

That's the whole process of meditation: removing everything; removing yourself so totally that nothing is left behind -- not even you. In that utter silence is freedom. In this utter stillness grows the one-thousand-petaled lotus of freedom. And great fragrance is released: the fragrance of peace, compassion, love, bliss. Or if you want to choose the word 'God' you can choose it. It is not Buddha's word, but there is no harm in choosing it.

Meditate over these beautiful sutras:

THIRTY-SIX STREAMS ARE RUSHING TOWARD YOU!

"Thirty-six" is only a Buddhist metaphor; it stands for "many." Many streams are rushing towards you. Each moment you are surrounded by a thousand and one desires,

and they are all pulling you in different directions. You are a victim and you are falling apart.

A young man entered an hotel. He saw a very beautiful woman sitting alone in the corner drinking coffee. She was so beautiful and so attractive, the young man could not resist the temptation. He went close to her and asked her, "Can I join you?"
The woman looked at him for a few seconds and said, "Do you think I am falling apart?"

But that's exactly the case: everybody is falling apart, even that woman. If I had been in the place of that young man I would have said, "Yes. You need to be glued together." Everybody is falling apart. You are not one; you have become many many fragments, and all the fragments are going in different directions. That's why there is so much misery in your being, because when your parts, which are essentially your intrinsic parts, are being pulled in different directions you feel the pain of it. That's what misery is: the pain of falling into different directions simultaneously, rushing into different directions simultaneously. That is what creates craziness, insanity.
Buddha says: THIRTY-SIX STREAMS ARE RUSHING TOWARD YOU! Beware! Not only one but many streams are rushing toward you. And if you don't take care, if you are not alert, you will be possessed by them. If you remain unconscious, if you remain sleepy, you will be defeated by those streams. Those streams are not basically enemies to you. They are pure energy, and energy is always neutral. But when you are asleep those same streams are dangerous;

when you are awake, those same streams become great creative energies for you. They are rushing towards buddhas too, but in the hand of a buddha, dust turns into gold. The touch of awareness is alchemical. In YOUR hands, even if by chance you come across gold, it turns into dust. You are so asleep, you impart your sleepiness to whatsoever comes to you.

Those thirty-six streams he is talking about are gifts of existence, gifts of great energy. It is coming from everywhere. Now, it depends on you whether you can transform those energies into a synthesis, whether you can transform those energies into an integrated whole, whether you can create an orchestra out of all those energies. Then you become a song, you create great music. Your life becomes a melody.

But if you cannot transform those energies, then you will be a victim and you will be divided into so many parts. You will lose all integrity. You will become a crowd; you will not be an individual anymore.

THIRTY-SIX STREAMS ARE RUSHING TOWARD YOU!

DESIRE AND PLEASURE AND LUST....

And so on, so forth. What is desire? Desire means greed for more. It is unfulfillable. It is impossible to fulfill the greed for more because that "more" has no limitation. "More" simply means an unlimited phenomenon. You have ten thousand rupees, you want one hundred thousand rupees. One day you get one hundred thousand rupees -- now you want more. You want more and more and more.

Whatsoever you get, the distance between you and your goal will remain the same; it is never reduced, not even by a single inch.
That's why beggars are beggars, obviously, but emperors are also beggars. Both are still hankering for more. What is the difference? No difference as far as the quality of their consciousness is concerned. Of course, the beggar does not possess much and the emperor possesses much, but that is not the point. The distance between the beggar's possessions and what he wants and the emperor's possessions and what he wants is exactly the same. One is a poor beggar, the other is a rich beggar; that much difference you can make. But both are beggars all the same. To be in the grip of "more" is to be really eccentric, off-center. If you can't see it then you are not intelligent at all. It is such a simple phenomenon that just a little intelligence is needed to see it. In your whole life you have been trying and it is not that you have always failed; it only LOOKS as if you have always failed. You have succeeded many times, but each time you succeed, your desire for more is projected again and you remain in the same position: miserable, unhappy, frustrated. If you DON'T get what you want, you will be frustrated; if you GET what you want, you will be frustrated. It seems frustration is the destiny, the absolute destiny, of the unconscious man.

A psychiatrist was going around a mental hospital. He saw one man beating himself, pulling his hair, looking very suicidal. He was kept in a cell -- he was dangerous. He asked the superintendent, "What happened to this man?"

The superintendent said, "He loved a woman, he loved her very much, but he could not get her. She married somebody else. Since then he has been in this state. He wants to commit suicide, he does not want to live. He says there is no meaning in life: 'My meaning was in that woman. If I could not get that woman, that means my life is finished!'"
Feeling sorry for the man -- he was young and beautiful -- they moved ahead. They saw another cell and another man was inside it, and he was even more ferocious, very murderous.
The psychiatrist asked, "What has happened to this man?"
The superintendent said, "This is the man who married that same woman! Since he has married her he wants to kill her, and if he cannot kill her then he wants to kill anybody instead, but he wants to kill and destroy. He wants to kill the whole world! That woman drove him mad."

One is mad because he could not get her, the other is mad because he COULD get her. This is the whole history of every human being, more or less. It may not be so extreme, so you don't see it, but the differences are only in degrees. The man in the grip of desire is bound to become insane.
And Buddha says: PLEASURE.... Pleasure means that you think the body is the only source of happiness. That is sheer stupidity. The body's pleasures are very momentary; they are not real pleasures. But everybody is caught in the net of the body. We are born as bodies, but we need not die as bodies. If we die as bodies, our whole life was a sheer wastage. You have to grow up.
And remember: growing old is not growing up. Everybody grows old, but very few people, very rare people grow up.

One who really grows up becomes a buddha. Growing up means you start becoming alert about bodily pleasures -- that they are momentary and they can change into their opposite very easily.

For example, you love eating and you can go on eating too much. Then it becomes a pain. It was pleasure in the beginning, but there is a limit to that pleasure. It is said of Nero that he used to have four physicians always with him. Even when he was going into war those four physicians used to accompany him. When Nero would eat, their whole work was to help him to vomit so that he could eat again. He used to love eating so much that he would eat twenty times, twenty-five times per day. You will call him mad -- and he was mad.

Now, what is the pleasure of eating? Maybe just a little pleasure of taste.... On your tongue there are little buds which experience taste. They can be operated on very easily and then you will not feel anything at all. Then the whole pleasure of eating disappears. That's what happens when you are in fever: your buds become dull, insensitive, so you eat but you don't feel any taste. People are living for eating; there are very few people who eat to live. Millions are living only to eat.

Humanity can be divided into two types of mad people: one type is obsessed with food, another type is obsessed with sex. And there is a deep relation between the two. The person who is obsessed with sex will not bother much about food and the person who is repressive of sex will become obsessed with food.

Whenever a country is repressive of sex it becomes very obsessed with food. That's what has happened in this

country: for centuries it has been repressive of sex. That's why Indians have been very inventive about food -- new sweets, thousands of sweets. The world is completely unaware of all those sweets! And their food is so spicy.... When a foreigner comes he cannot eat it; he cannot see how people can eat it. It is burning hot! Why so much spicy food? It is repression of sex! If your sex is not repressed you will not eat such spicy food.

Just the other day I received two letters, one from a Western sannyasin, Mudita. She says, "Beloved Master, listening to you I feel great joy, but then suddenly I become horny." She must have been brought up with Victorian ideas, with Victorian education -- outmoded thoughts.

And another letter has come from Rekha, an Indian sannyasin. She says, "Listening to you, suddenly I had a great desire to eat spicy food." Now, she is an Indian! An Indian woman cannot recognize even in herself that she is feeling horny -- that is impossible. The whole desire has to move towards spicy food. But both are the same, there is no difference.

Food and sex have one thing in common. Food is needed for the individual's survival; without food you will not survive. And sex is needed for the species' survival; without sex the species will disappear.

Another phenomenon: the person who is living a natural life will neither be obsessed with sex nor will be obsessed with food. He will not be obsessed at all. But religions don't allow that: you have to be obsessed with something or other. If you are not obsessed you will not go to the temples and the mosques and to the churches and to the synagogues. That is the very secret of their trade. This

whole business of religion goes on and on with no sign of ever stopping, for the simple reason that YOU go on being obsessed with something or other.

The person who is obsessed with sex will be less selfish; the person who is obsessed with food will be more selfish, for the simple reason that food means YOUR survival and sex means survival of the species. It is better to be sexual and to be after sexual pleasures than to live just to eat.

This country has become very selfish for the simple reason that sex has been completely denied; BRAHMACHARYA -- celibacy -- has been propounded down the ages as one of the greatest values. And the ultimate result has been that everybody has become obsessed with food. Whenever people are obsessed with food they become selfish -- obviously, because they are no longer interested in the species.

Immanuel Kant, one of the great thinkers of the world, says: This to me is the fundamental criterion of all morality: that any principle, if followed, destroys humanity. It is immoral. Now, what will Immanuel Kant say about brahmacharya? If brahmacharya is followed by the whole humanity it will destroy humanity. It will be a suicidal phenomenon. According to Immanuel Kant, brahmacharya is immoral -- more immoral than stealing, more immoral than dishonesty, more immoral than breaking your promise, more immoral than anything.

And I agree with Immanuel Kant, rather than with the whole Indian tradition. The criterion is this: you should think what will be the result if the principle is followed by everybody. It will be suicidal -- it will be global suicide. There will be nobody left to be celibate anymore.

And the same is true about the so-called old escapist sannyas -- renunciation; that too is immoral. If everybody follows the escapist idea and drops out and escapes to the Himalayas, the whole humanity will die.

In fact, your so-called mahatmas and saints live because you are in the world and you go on supporting them. If you are not in the world -- if you are also in the Himalayas, following your saints and mahatmas -- they will be at a loss. Who will feed them? Who will support them? They will have to commit suicide with their followers -- and the Himalayas is a really beautiful site if you want to commit suicide, the best place in the world. If you could not live beautifully, at least you can die in a beautiful place. Your mahatmas are supported by the worldly people -- and still they go on condemning the world. It is an immoral act. Escapism is an immoral act.

I agree with Immanuel Kant; his criterion has something really valuable about it.

Pleasure means either the pleasure of the tongue, food -- which is very childish -- or the pleasure of sex, which is also very childish because you are not just the body, you are more than that.

Rise from pleasures to happiness. Happiness is psychological, pleasure is physiological. Listening to great music or reading great poetry or watching a sunset or just enjoying a morning walk and the wind passing through the pines and the music that it creates, the sound of running water -- it thrills you. Although it comes through the body, it reaches deeper -- deeper than food or sex. It is more fulfilling. But that, too, is not the end because anything that is psychological is bound to be momentary.

Beyond happiness is bliss which is of the spirit, which is a timeless phenomenon. You go beyond time, you go beyond mind and body both. Then you know who you are. Then you function from your center. For the first time you are not eccentric. You become centered, you are not off-center. For the first time you have roots in your being, and those roots connect you with God, with the whole. You become holy only when you are blissful. But pleasure prevents you; it prevents you at the lowest.

I am not against pleasure, remember. I am not against anything. Everything has to be used as a stepping-stone for the ultimate peak. The body IS beautiful and enjoying your food is good. Just don't be obsessed by it. But if your saints are continuously condemning it, you will be obsessed by it. Obsession is created by your so-called saints. Whatsoever they condemn becomes your obsession. In fact, the more they condemn, the more attractive it becomes, the more magnetic it becomes.

I am not against sex, but I would like you to go beyond it. Use it as a stepping-stone, use it as a ladder. It is beautiful in itself, but it is not the end, only the beginning. Don't stop at the first chapter of your life; it has much more, much more hidden value that has to be discovered.

... AND LUST. Lust is even far below pleasure. Pleasure at least respects the other. If you love a woman, you love her company, or a man... you respect the other. But in lust you don't have any respect; you simply use the other. Lust is even more degraded than pleasure; it is falling below humanity. You are simply using the other as a means. When you make love to a woman without any respect towards her, what you really are doing is nothing more than

masturbation. You are using the woman only to deceive yourself. There is no connection between you and her. When you go to a prostitute, that is not pleasure; that is lust. You are paying. Love cannot be purchased; only bodies can be purchased.
And remember, when you purchase a body it is a dead body; the soul is not there. The woman is somehow tolerating you because she needs money. She hates you from her very guts; she would like to kill you. But she is pretending to be very loving, very affectionate, because she is being paid for it. With her closed eyes she thinks of other things; she simply tolerates you. You are using her as a means, and she is using you as a means. She wants the money, you want the body; it is a mutual exploitation.

Lloyd went to visit his favorite lady of the evening. He rang the bell and found there was no answer. Then he put on his glasses and read a note that was pinned to the door: "On vacation. Do it yourself."

It is not more than that. It is a mutual masturbatory practice -- ugly. It is not even pleasure.
Buddha says: All these streams are rushing towards you -- DESIRE AND PLEASURE AND LUST....

PLAY IN YOUR IMAGINATION WITH THEM
AND THEY WILL SWEEP YOU AWAY.

And you are all full of imagination. Making love to your wife you are not making love to her; you may be thinking of Sophia Loren or Lollobrigida, and she may be thinking

of somebody else. Both are pretending. Their imagination is somewhere else. If you could look into the minds of people who are making love you would be surprised.... It is very rare to find only two persons in a single bed; you will find a crowd. At least four are absolutely certain. It is always group sex, because their minds are fancying, fantasizing.

Even grown-up people -- so-called grown-up people -- are living in imagination. Not only children live in imagination; even old people live in imagination. People go on playing with toys, they never wake up. Their imagination continues to keep them asleep.

Once again we enter that handy vehicle, the time capsule, and journey back through the sexy sixties, the nifty fifties, the fighting forties, the dirty thirties, and on into the roaring twenties where we stop, hat askew and shirt-tails flying from that fast and breezy trip. We are at that point in time when the transplanting of monkey glands and other such operations for the restoration of male vigor were in vogue. Surgery for the restoration of youth had just been performed on a seventy-year-old man who had hoped that, as a result, his chromosomes would henceforth be bouncing off the ceiling. As he came out from under the influence of the ether he began to weep bitterly.

Mrs. Bernstein, the attending nurse, bent over him. "Mister, it is not necessary for you to feel worried," she said kindly. "The operation was a big success. Take my word, when you leave here you will feel twenty years younger. Maybe more, who knows?"

But the poor old man only continued to wail, the tears coursing down his cheeks and losing themselves in his long white whiskers.
"Please don't cry," pleaded Mrs. Bernstein. "The pain will soon go away."
"Who is crying from pain?" sobbed the patient. "I am afraid I will be late for school."

Just look deep down inside yourself and you will find the child intact; it has not grown up. The ordinary mental age of every human being is not more than twelve. Physiologically you may be eighty; psychologically you are hanging around twelve. Hence, once in a while, you start behaving like a child -- in spite of yourself. If you are pushed and pulled too much you forget that you are a grown-up person. The child is sitting there, covered by many experiences, but those experiences have not been digested; covered by much knowledge, but that knowledge has not become your wisdom because it has not been achieved through awareness. You have been collecting and accumulating it in your sleep, so you have accumulated much rubbish alongside. Yes, once in a while you may have picked up a diamond too, not knowing that it is a diamond -- just another colored stone.
PLAY IN YOUR IMAGINATION WITH THEM AND THEY WILL SWEEP YOU AWAY. If you allow desire and pleasure and lust and greed and anger and jealousy and possessiveness and violence and all these rushing streams towards you, they will sweep you away. Don't play with them in your imagination; that is strengthening them, that is getting under their sway.

And the miracle is that everybody can understand everybody else's imagination, except his own. When somebody falls in love with somebody else you say, "How foolish!" Everybody thinks they have gone crazy. "Look at the face of that woman. She looks like a Picasso painting! And why is this man crazy about her? What does he see in her?" And when YOU fall in love, then it is totally different. She is a Cleopatra! Nobody else will agree with you; it is your imagination. And the same goes on and on in different layers, in different dimensions.

The nonsense that is written in your religious scriptures is absolutely right; it is scientific. The nonsense that is written in others' scriptures is so clearly nonsense; there can be no question about it, no doubt about it. Hindus can see all kinds of stupidities in the Bible, and Christians see all kinds of stupidities in Hindu scriptures. But this seems to be really a miracle: that no Hindu will see in his own scriptures anything wrong; everything is scientific. And not only does he think it is scientific, he tries to prove it.

Once a Hindu monk was brought to me. He came with many followers. One of his followers said, "He is a very great scholar; he has written many books. And his whole effort in his life has been to prove that Hinduism is the only scientific religion of the world."

I said, "Can he give any example?"

He said, "You can ask anything and he will say why it is scientific."

I asked him, "Why do Hindus cut all their hair but keep a small bunch -- the CHOTI -- on the top of their heads?"

He said, "Simple! Have you ever looked at big buildings? They keep there an iron rod."
I could not see the point immediately.
He said, "It is to protect the building from electricity. Hindus discovered it long ago: if you keep a choti -- a little bunch of hair -- standing up on your head, it saves you, protects you from electricity."
Now, what nonsense he is talking! But he is known as a great mahatma because he is helping your egos; he is proving that your religion is scientific. He had come to see me with all his disciples. They were all wearing wooden shoes, wooden CHAPPALS -- KHARHAON -- and making great noise. The way Hindus have been using those wooden shoes for centuries.... It is really difficult because you have to hold them on with your toes, between your toes. It is heavy.
I asked him, "Why this? What science is there?"
He said, "It keeps one celibate. The pressure of it is such that it keeps one's sexual glands nonfunctioning." Great, just great!
So I said, "Then India need not bother about population. Just give wooden shoes to everybody and let them all grow chotis so electricity does not affect them, sexuality does not affect them. They will all be saints. Such simple formulas!"
But Hindus think he is doing a great service to Hinduism. That's how it is with all the religions. Your imagination is truth; others' truth is only imagination.

A rabbi and a priest were discussing the differences between the Old Testament and the New. It was the priest's

contention that the New Testament gave more proof of divine cooperation because of all its purported miracles. "Remember," argued the priest, "our Lord walked on water, he raised the dead, he fed hundreds of people with a few loaves of bread and some little fishes, he changed water into wine, and he ascended bodily into heaven."
"So what does that prove?" insisted the rabbi. "The Old Testament includes such miracles as parting the Red Sea, making the sun stand still, Moses ascending bodily to Mount Sinai to talk personally with God and to receive the Decalogue from the very hands of the Almighty."
The priest nodded. "I believe in those miracles too," he acknowledged. "But be honest about it -- do you really think your miracles have as much substance as ours?"
The rabbi glared at him. "What is the matter with you?" he snapped crossly. "Can't you distinguish between fact and fiction?"

OUR fiction is a fact and YOUR fiction is fiction -- your fact too is fiction.
Beware of imagination. It can cloud your mind. It can destroy your capacity to see clearly. Hence I say: Unless you drop being Hindus, Mohammedans, Christians, you will not be able to see clearly. Your imagination has been contaminated for centuries. All your ideas and ideologies have to be put aside so that your eyes can face, can encounter truth as it is.
Imagination keeps you asleep. If you come out of your imagination you start waking up.
Gurdjieff used to say to his disciples that the most important thing is to remember in a dream that "This is a

dream." But how to do it? It seems almost impossible. How to remember in a dream that "This is a dream"? But if you practice the Gurdjieffian method, one day you can remember it.

The method is simple. You have to go on remembering the whole day, whatsoever you see, that "This is a dream." Walking on the street, "This is a dream"; the dog barking, "This is a dream." Go on remembering the whole day, "This is a dream, this is a dream...." It takes three to nine month for the idea to sink into your heart. Then one day, suddenly, in your dream you remember and you say, "This is a dream!" -- and that is a moment of great illumination. Immediately, the dream disappears. The moment you say it is a dream, it disappears and you are awake, fully awake, in the middle of the night.

Of course, these trees and the people on the road are not a dream so they don't disappear. You can go on saying, "This is a dream." That was just a method to practice. But when you really remember in a dream that "This is a dream," the dream disappears. The dream can exist only if believed; the dream disappears if you don't believe in it. Our imagination is intoxicating.

Lend an ear to this exchange of dialogue, circa 1936, when Dr. William Goldman was professor of English at Brandeis University.

It was Graduation Day, and the father of one of the students had celebrated, not wisely, but all too well. He was in the parking lot adjacent to the university campus, peering owlishly at the cars, when Dr. Goldman appeared.

"Say, mister," called the weaving celebrant. "Is my car the one on the left or on the right?"
"Yours is the car on the right, sir," replied the professor. "The car on the left is a subjective phenomenon."

It does not exist -- just a subjective phenomenon. That's exactly the meaning of the Indian word MAYA: a subjective phenomenon, it does not exist. But if you believe, it exists. It depends on you. You can make it almost function as real. And there are many things which don't exist, but you are believing in them and for you they are realities. And you are surrounded by fictions -- religious, spiritual, metaphysical. There are so many fictions surrounding you -- and you have to wake up from all these.

POWERFUL STREAMS! Buddha says.

They are everywhere....

THEY FLOW EVERYWHERE.

These streams are powerful, and your sleep is so deep. It seems very difficult to wake up -- but you can wake up. My own observation is that these streams are powerful only in the proportion that you are asleep. If you become less sleepy they are less powerful. If you become fully awake, their power disappears totally.

A drunk was passing a bus intersection when a large Saint Bernard brushed against him and knocked him down. An

instant later a foreign sports car skidded around the corner and inflicted more damage.
A bystander helped the poor fellow up and said, "Are you hurt?"
"Well," he answered, "the dog did not hurt so much, but that tin can tied to his tail nearly killed me."

Now, when you are not in your senses you go on seeing things which are not there at all or you go on projecting things. The world becomes a screen and you live in a private world. That's exactly the meaning of the word 'idiot': to live in a private world, to live in a subjective phenomenon. That's the meaning of 'idiot'.

After each drink at the local pub, Murphy took a small, furry kitten from his pocket, put it on the counter and stared at it. Finally the barman could no longer contain his curiosity and asked Murphy what he was up to.
"Well, you see, it is this way," said Murphy. "So long as I can see one kitten it is alright. But when I see two of them I have to do something."
"Like what?"
"I pick up the two of them, put them in my pocket, and go home," said the Irishman.

If you are intoxicated you will see the same world but in a different way. Your imagination will get mixed with it. You will not be able to make any distinction between what is fiction and what is fact. You will not have any power of discrimination. That's exactly what makes these streams so powerful. THEY FLOW EVERYWHERE.

STRONG WINE!
IF YOU SEE IT SPRING UP,
TAKE CARE!
PULL IT OUT BY THE ROOTS.

So whenever you see some imagination arising in you, be alert. Don't let it grow, don't let it become a big tree. It will be far more difficult then for you to get rid of it because you may become attached to it; you may have invested many things in it; you may have started liking its company; you may feel unsheltered without it. It is better to cut it from the very roots in the very beginning. The moment you see it arising in you, take care, beware -- beware means be aware -- PULL IT OUT BY THE ROOTS.
People go on changing. They don't pull out things by their roots; they substitute one fiction with another fiction. That may give you a relief for the moment, but it does not transform your life. Somebody is running after money, then he stops running after money; he starts running after power. Then he stops running after power and starts running after God or meditation or enlightenment. But he goes on running after something or other. He goes on substituting a new fiction for the old; the old functions no more. He has seen it is fictitious, but he has not yet got the point that one has to uproot ALL imagination in one's being.

Lovebirds are supposed to be so devoted to one another that if one dies the other dies of a broken heart. A woman who owned a very cute pair had a fire in the house and one of the lovebirds was suffocated. Right away the other bird

began to pine. The woman wondered if there was not some way to keep it alive so she put a mirror in the cage.
The lovebird let out a joyous coo and cuddled up against the mirror, and lived for two years. It then died -- of a broken mirror.

One can postpone -- but don't go on postponing. Your life is very precious. If one lovebird dies it is better to come to your senses rather than replace it by a mirror or by something else.

PLEASURES FLOW EVERYWHERE.
YOU FLOAT UPON THEM
AND ARE CARRIED FROM LIFE TO LIFE.

Watch out. It is a risky phenomenon to remain too much attached to your pleasures, to your imagination, because this is how you have been going from one life to another. The seed cause of birth and death is desire, imagination, hankering for more. And remember, you are feeling so discontented in life because of your imagination. The more imaginative you are, the more discontented you will feel. Poets are very discontented people, so are painters, for the simple reason that they can imagine very well. They can imagine such a beautiful world that this world, in comparison, starts looking like hell. Ordinary people are not so discontented for the simple reason that they don't have that much imagination. This world seems to be good enough for them.
When imagination simply disappears from you, this world -- this very world -- is the lotus paradise. It is because of

your imagination that you go on condemning this world. And remember, your imagination will be with you even if you are taken by the back door into heaven. You will condemn it, you will find faults. You will find a thousand and one things which should not be. You will find loopholes, flaws. Even in paradise you are going to be miserable. And a man without imagination, without desire, even in hell will find paradise. It is not outside you that paradise or hell exist; they exist inside you.
If your mind is unclouded, if you can see clearly, then everywhere you will find bliss showering. Each moment you will find paradise descending in you. Each moment you will find yourself surrounded by God. You need not go to Kaaba, you need not go to Kashi, you need not go anywhere. God is coming to you in thirty-six streams, but because you are asleep that which could have been a blessing becomes a curse. Be aware and transform your curses into blessings. Just by being aware the transformation happens on its own accord.

LIKE A HUNTED HARE YOU RUN,
THE PURSUER OF DESIRE PURSUED,
HARRIED FROM LIFE TO LIFE.

You think you are the pursuer, you think you are the hunter; that is not true. You think you are the possessor; that is not true. The possessor is really the possessed: your things start possessing you. You watch, and you will see the fact in your own life. Your things start possessing you. You don't use them -- they start using you. And you are not a hunter... in fact you are hunted by your desires; those are

the real hunters. And you are running, pursuing shadows which you will never find. And who is pushing you from the back? Who is making you run? The real power is in the hands of your desire, imagination, in your unconsciousness.

O SEEKER!
GIVE UP DESIRE.
SHAKE OFF YOUR CHAINS.

One day Miss Tilly saw her big tomcat corner a cockroach in the kitchen. He was about to kill the bug when it addressed Miss Tilly: "Have your cat spare my life and I will grant you three wishes."
"A million dollars?" asked the spinster.
"Granted!" said the roach, producing the money.
"I want to be young and beautiful!"
"You got it!" And she was.
"Now," said Tilly, "turn my tomcat into a tall, handsome prince lying next to me in bed!" It was done.
"I am so happy!" she exclaimed.
"I am glad," said the prince beside her. "But aren't you sorry now you had me fixed?"

Even if your desires are fulfilled, something or other will be missing.
O SEEKER! GIVE UP DESIRE. SHAKE OFF YOUR CHAINS. The more you desire, the more you become imprisoned. People are imprisoned in things, people are imprisoned by wives and husbands, people are imprisoned by their power. People are creating so many prisons -- prisons within prisons, boxes within boxes -- and still they

want to be happy, they want to be joyous. How can you be joyous? Your life is suffocating! And nobody else is responsible except you.

The kindly rebbetzyn asked, "Tell me, my good man, why do you drink all that whisky?"
"Madam," replied the good man, "what else should I do with it?"

You don't know what else you can do with your life. You know only how to create prisons. You know only how to create more misery. You have become really skillful! For centuries, for lives together, you have done only one thing: creating chains, creating misery, creating pain for yourself and for others. You are sadomasochistic; that is your whole art. Either you will torture others or you will torture yourself, but you will torture. You don't know that life can be a dance, a celebration. You can't know it till you drop your desiring.
Desire exists like a cloud of smoke around you; you can't see anything. And you go on giving more fuel, you go on creating more and more smoke around yourself. Your eyes are burning, your eyes are full of tears, you can't see, but still you think what you are doing is going to help you one day attain all the joys of life. What you are doing to yourself is only going to give you more pain, more misery, more suffering.

YOU HAVE COME OUT OF THE HOLLOW
INTO THE CLEARING.
THE CLEARING IS EMPTY.

WHY DO YOU RUSH BACK INTO THE HOLLOW?

Once in a while, it happens to you too; that you come out of your black hole -- the black hole of desiring -- into the clearing. Once in a while you can see.

Right now many of you can see that yes... a deep yes arises in you. You know perfectly well that you have been creating your misery, and you don't want.... It is just that you have become very skillful in the art; you don't know what else to do so you go on doing it. Without doing it you feel very empty -- and you are very afraid of being empty. For centuries emptiness has been condemned. Emptiness is beautiful. And the foolish people have been telling you, "The empty mind is the Devil's workshop." The empty mind is God's workshop! The OCCUPIED mind is the Devil's workshop.

But one has to be truly empty. Just being lazy does not mean that you are empty; not doing anything does not mean that you are empty. Thousands of thoughts are clamoring inside. You may be lazy on the outside, but inside much work is going on. Many walls are being created, new prisons are being prepared, so that when you get fed up with the old you can enter into the new. Old chains may break any time so you are creating new chains in case the old chains break; then you will feel very empty.

Once in a while it happens naturally -- because it is your very nature to be free. So once in a while, in spite of you... seeing a sunset, suddenly you forget all your desires. You forget all lust, all hankering for pleasure. The sunset is so beautiful, so overwhelming, that you forget the past and the future; only the present remains. You are so one with the

moment, there is no observer and no observed. The observer becomes the observed. You are not separate from the sunset.

You are bridged; in such a communion you come into a clearing, and because of the clearing you feel joyous. But again you are back into the black hole for the simple reason that coming out into the clearing you need courage to remain in the empty sky.

That's what I call sannyas.

This courage I call sannyas -- not escaping but coming into the clearing, seeing the sky unclouded, listening to the songs of the birds without distorting. And then again and again you are becoming more and more attuned with the emptiness and the joy of being empty. And slowly slowly, you see that emptiness is not just emptiness; it is fullness, but a fullness of which you have never been aware, a fullness of which you have never tasted. So in the beginning it looks empty; in the end it is full, totally full, overflowingly full. It is full of peace, it is full of silence, it is full of light.

YOU HAVE COME OUT OF THE HOLLOW INTO THE CLEARING. Sometimes while meditating it happens, sometimes while listening to music it happens, sometimes while dancing it happens, sometimes while just sitting doing nothing it happens. That's what meditation is all about: allowing these moments to come more and more, welcoming these moments, cherishing these moments, so that you become easily capable of coming out of the black hole. And as you become accustomed to the clearing and the beauty of it and the blessing of it, you move less and less into the black hole. One day, suddenly you abandon the

black hole; it is no more your home. The clearing becomes your home, clarity becomes your home. That is the day of great rejoicing.

DESIRE IS A HOLLOW
AND PEOPLE SAY, "LOOK!
HE WAS FREE.
BUT NOW HE GIVES UP HIS FREEDOM."

I can see it happening in you. Many times I see a certain person coming into the clearing and then moving again into the black hole.
This is what is happening to Somendra. He was coming into the clearing, he had tasted something of the clearing, but then the very experience of the clearing made him egoistic. It gave him a certain pious egoism. He started feeling special; hence, just the other day he was asking for recognition. He used to sit here in the third row; he wanted to sit in the first row. Now he has disappeared from the third row. He sits somewhere in the back, and there too he sits not facing towards me; his BACK is towards me! Moving into the black hole again!
And this is happening to many people. Many people come into the clearing and then so easily they move into the black hole. In a way it seems logical, because they have lived in the black hole so long. The new experience is new and threatening and the black hole starts claiming them again and again.
This is happening to Turiya. She was coming into a clearing, and now moving into a black hole -- on her own accord. And the beauty of the whole thing is that when

people start coming into the clearing they don't thank me at all. They don't write letters to me saying, "Thank you, Beloved Master." But when they start moving into the black hole they write great letters to me: "Why are you doing it to me? Why are you taking it away?" They had never thanked me. In the first place I had not given it to them, so how can I take it away? These things are not given or taken away.

These things, you have to understand, happen from your very center. And you have to learn one very fundamental rule: that when they happen there will be every possibility of moving back to the old pattern. You are so familiar with it, so accustomed to it -- you have lived in it for so long; it seems so safe, secure, cozy, warm. And the clearing seems to be cold, vast, empty, insecure. But in the clearing is real security because in the clearing is eternity. That black hole is only your mind, a small mind. But with the small mind you are familiar.

You have to learn to love the unfamiliar, the unknown, and one day finally, the unknowable. Then you move into the mysterious more and more. Only then can you say one day, "I know nothing" -- because existence is not knowable; it is a mystery, not to be solved. It is not a problem to be solved but a mystery to be lived, to be loved, to be shared.

DESIRE IS A HOLLOW AND PEOPLE SAY, "LOOK! HE WAS FREE. BUT NOW HE GIVES UP HIS FREEDOM." And you are ready to give up your freedom -- you are ready to give up anything. You are so ready to give up your freedom -- for any toy. You don't know the value of freedom.

When the daughter of an aristocratic French family announces her engagement to a black man, Big Sam, her parents decide they must try to stop the marriage.
They call Big Sam in and tell him that their daughter is used to every luxury and has to have the finest, largest house in Paris to live in. The black man draws himself up and announces, "When Big Sam loves, Big Sam buys," and off he goes.
Sure enough, he buys the biggest and best house in Paris. So the parents call him in again and tell him that their daughter longs for the largest, brightest diamond in all of France.
"When Big Sam loves, Big Sam gets," says the groom-to-be, and off he goes, returning with the biggest, brightest diamond the parents have ever seen.
In the last-ditch attempt to stop the marriage, the girl's father goes to see him privately, and tells him that to make their daughter happy he absolutely must have a prick that is twelve inches long.
The black man answers firmly, "When Big Sam loves, Big Sam cuts."

Enough for today.

The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 10

Chapter #2

Chapter title: Whatsoever happens is good
22 February 1980 am in Buddha Hall

The first question:
Question 1
BELOVED MASTER,
CANNOT THE PRIESTS HELP HUMANITY IN SOME WAY OR OTHER?

Veeresh, they have been helping humanity for centuries; hence this miserable state of things. They have helped a lot to create as many lies as possible -- lies which appear comfortable. But in the end, lies are lies. Maybe for the time being they give you a feeling of warmth, coziness, security, but only for the moment. Sooner or later you are in a far darker state, far colder than ever.

Priests have been inventing down the ages strategies for you to remain as you are. You don't want to change; you simply want comfortable lies to be handed over to you so that you can go on living the way you are. To change oneself needs courage. Priests help you to remain cowards. You are afraid of death. Priests go on consoling you, "Don't be worried. Your soul is eternal." And you don't have any idea of the soul at all.

George Gurdjieff used to say that it is very rare to come across a person who has a soul. Others are only empty; there is nothing inside. Yes, there is a potential to create the soul in everyone, but it is not an actuality. You can be a soul, you can become part of eternity, you can be immortal, but that is only a possibility. Much work -- hard work, arduous work -- will be needed to make it a reality, to realize it.

But priests have been telling you for centuries that you already have a soul. Only the body dies and the soul

continues on its eternal pilgrimage. It consoles you. It keeps you, in a certain sense, together. You don't become too scared of death. In fact, it would be better if you WERE too scared of death. That very fear might start an inquiry in you. That very shock might trigger a process of transformation in you.

Buddha used to send his disciples to see the dead bodies being burned, to meditate there, to go on watching the flames consuming a body. And then in the end nothing is left, only a few bones and ashes. This was his usual procedure -- for the new sannyasins to be sent to watch the burning bodies, for three months at least, so that they can feel the reality of death, so that the reality of death sinks deep into their hearts. Only that can wake you up.

But the priests are helping, by giving you tranquilizers, to keep you asleep as comfortably as possible. That has been their service and we have paid them enough for their service. They are as ignorant as you are, as unaware as you are. They are in the same situation as you are: they also need consolation. They look into scriptures for their consolation. They go on reading the scriptures, continuously repeating the same scripture again and again, because that's how one gets autohypnotized. The Christian priest goes on reading the same Bible again and again, and the Hindu priest goes on reciting the Gita again and again. Every day, every morning he recites the same scripture. It becomes mechanical. It becomes like a gramophone record. He goes on repeating. It becomes part of his memory with no meaning, no significance. He is just like a parrot. But it gives consolation. Repeating again and again certain truths hypnotizes you.

Krishna says: When the body dies, the soul does not die. You can burn the body, but the fire cannot consume the soul. NA HANYATE HANYAMANE SHAREERE -- you can kill the body, but you cannot kill the spirit, you cannot kill the soul, because no arrow can reach to it, no sword can cut it. NAINAM CHHINDANTI SHASTRANI, NAINAM DAHATI PAVAKAH -- neither any weapon can cut me nor fire burn me. Go on repeating it again and again and again, year in, year out; you become autohypnotized. You start believing it, although you have not created any soul in you yet.

Krishna is right: the soul is eternal -- but in the first place you have to have it. It is not there. Soul means consciousness, soul means integratedness. Soul means that you know through your own experience that you are not the body and not the mind. It arises only through witnessing the bodymind mechanism; it is not created by repetition. Repetition is hypnosis. It is experienced just the other way: you have to become dehypnotized, you have to become unconditioned. You have to forget all the scriptures and all the priests and you have to look into yourself. Howsoever fearful it is, you have to encounter your interiority.

The priests help you to remain on the circumference. They seem to be great friends, but in the final reckoning they are the greatest enemies. It is not Adolf Hitler and Joseph Stalin and Mao Zedong who are the real enemies of religion. The real enemies are the priests, the popes, the shankaracharyas, and so on, so forth. They don't know what they are doing. How can they help you? They simply go on repeating tradition, handing over to you conventions -- ancient conventions, but dead.

You ask me, Veeresh, "Cannot the priests help humanity in some way or other?"

Yes, they can help... if they disappear! We no more need them. Man has come of age. All these consolations are not needed. We need people, rebellious people, not conventional priests. We need buddhas, awakened people to wake you up. We need buddhas, not these priests who go on giving you new toys to play with. And they have created beautiful toys, no doubt about it. They are very clever, cunning. Centuries of experience is behind them, how to exploit humanity, how to exploit humanity's weaknesses. But remember: they don't differ from you in any way as far as consciousness is concerned. Maybe they know more than you know, their information is more than yours. That is a quantitative difference; it is not a difference that MAKES a difference. Some qualitative difference is needed.

And being led by blind people is dangerous. They have destroyed the whole beauty of human beings, they have destroyed the freedom of human beings. They have destroyed all that is valuable. They have left you just deserted, empty, meaningless. It is felt all over the world. Why are people feeling so empty and meaningless? Who has done this to them? Centuries of priesthoods, of different religions, have been giving them false consolations. All those false consolations are no longer applicable. Man has become more adult. It is good to give children toys to play with, but when somebody comes of age and you go on giving him toys to play with, he will start feeling life is meaningless. He needs something more; he needs something more real.

Beware of being led by blind people!

A young woman, hardly more than a girl, went to see the local rabbi. "You don't know me," she began with a catch in her throat, "but I just had to speak to somebody. You see, I have no mother or father and I don't know much about worldly matters."
"You don't have to say another word," said the rabbi. "I understand perfectly. It is a man, isn't it?"
"Yes, and he is always trying to kiss me. Kiss, kiss, kiss -- that's all he ever thinks of."
You must be firm," said the rabbi sternly. "That kind of man you don't need. Just tell him you don't allow such kinds of goings-on."
As she left, the rabbi said, "Come back in a week and let me know how you are making out."
Sure enough, the girl returned a week later, but this time she was even more disturbed than before.
"What is the matter now?" asked the rabbi.
"I stopped him from all that kissing," said the unhappy young lady, "but now -- well, I don't know how to put it...."
"Put, put!" urged the rabbi. "With me you got nothing to be ashamed."
"He's trying to -- er -- touch me with his hands," she stammered in embarrassment.
The rabbi rose from his chair in righteous anger. "You tell that no-goodnik he should keep his dirty hands to himself!" barked the rabbi. "What kind of a way is that to treat a decent Jewish girl? Tell him to stop at once, you hear?"

But when she visited the rabbi again she was almost in tears. "I did everything you said," moaned the girl, "but now he insists he wants to sleep with me."
"What!" yelled the outraged rabbi. "I never heard of such chutzpah in my whole life. You go right home and the next time you see him I want you to throw that bum out of the house. You understand? I am ordering you! Throw him out!"
A few days later she visited the rabbi once more. Her eyes were red from weeping and her face was a picture of misery.
"Did you do like I ordered?" demanded the rabbi.
She nodded, and, still sobbing, she said through her tears, "Now he wants a divorce!"

Your priests are as unconscious as you are, or even more. They are not even aware of the situation man is passing through. They go on handing out old recipes which are no more relevant. They go on giving you great advice which may have been useful sometime in the past but is utterly out of context in the present situation.
You don't need more priests and their help. You need a few awakened people in the world. You need more meditators -- not mediators. The priests have been mediators between you and God. You need more meditators, people who go deeper into their being, people who become centered, people who know the inner silence, the virgin silence and the tremendous beauty of it. They will help humanity, and they will not help humanity directly either. Their very presence will radiate new vibes which can transform.

A real person always helps people indirectly. He is not aggressive. He does not command you, "Do this, don't do that." He does not destroy your freedom in any way. He simply lives his life in the light that he has found within himself. And being with him, something transpires between you and him.
A real master is never a priest. And I have never heard about a priest who was a real master. If you are a master you cease to be a priest, and if you are a priest it is impossible for you to be a master. The priest belongs to a certain ideology -- Hindu, Christian, Mohammedan. The master belongs to no ideology. He is more conscious, not more knowledgeable. He has more being, not more knowledge. He has more soul, not a bigger memory. He may not know the scriptures -- because he himself IS the scripture! And you will not find him in the temples and the mosques and the churches.

I have heard about a very religious Negro who wanted to go to the church, but there was only one church in his neighborhood and that belonged to white people.
The priest was a kindly man -- as priests are supposed to be. When the Negro knocked on the door one day, the priest came out. The priest was in an embarrassing situation -- whether to say yes to him or no. To say yes was dangerous because the whole congregation will be against it. It was the white people's church and no black person had been allowed; that was a tacit agreement. But how to say no to this simple man whose eyes were full of tears and who said, "I want to come in and I want to pray to Jesus Christ"?

But priests are cunning people. Howsoever kind they may appear on the surface, deep down they are cunning. If they are not cunning they will not be in the profession of the priests at all, because that profession is far worse than any other profession. Even prostitutes are better than priests! At least they sell only their bodies, and priests are selling even their souls.

The priest immediately invented some strategy. He said, "Good, you can come, but not right now. First purify yourself, only then your prayer will be heard."

That was a tricky strategy. No white man was ever asked to purify himself first, and then enter into the church. And who is going to decide when the man is pure enough? That will be up to the priest and he can always go on saying, "You are not pure enough yet."

The Negro went back. He was really in a deep love affair with God; he cried and wept, and he tried in every possible way not to do anything wrong, to avoid anything that may make him impure. For three weeks he remained in isolation, fasting, praying. And after three weeks God appeared to him: his desire was fulfilled.

After that experience he went to the church. The priest was very much afraid -- this man was coming again, and he had such a beautiful aura around him that the priest was very much afraid to say, "You are not pure yet." His purity was shining; it was like a sun rising on the horizon. It was so clearly there that to deny it would be a sin, and the priest was afraid.

The man came very close to the door, just near the steps, stood there, laughed loudly, turned back and went home. The priest was very much puzzled why he did this. He ran

after him, got hold of him and said, "Why did you do this? Don't you want to come in the church?"
He said, "No, I don't want to come in the church. I had just come to see you and the church once more, because last night God appeared and I asked him -- when he himself was there I asked him, 'Can I enter into the church? Am I pure enough now?' God said, 'You are pure, more pure than anybody else who goes into the church, more pure than the priest himself. But please, don't go into the church. They won't allow you in. I know it from my own experience because for years I have been trying to go into that church and they don't allow me. If they don't allow ME into the church, how can they allow you? You drop the whole idea. I have dropped it myself!'"

Your churches, your temples are empty. They are graves of religion. Religion no more flowers there. Yes, when a Jesus is alive there is a great flowering, when Buddha is alive there is a great flowering, but not in a Buddhist temple, not in a Christian church.
Priests are the people who take advantage of the awakened ones. Once the awakened person goes, leaves his body, the priests jump upon his doctrine, start making a great business out of it, start making interpretations according to themselves.
Christianity has nothing to do with Christ, remember, and Buddhism has nothing to do with Buddha, and Jainism has nothing to do with Mahavira. It is a strange thing, but it has been happening consistently. No religion has anything to do with the original source. In fact, Christians are more destructive to Christ's message than anybody else, and the

priests are the leaders of the Christians. They don't have any relationship with Christ -- they can't have. They are afraid of Christ. They must be afraid deep down that if sometime they come across Christ and he asks, "What have you done to my message?" how are they going to answer it?

I have heard:
Once the phone rang in the pope's room in the Vatican. There was nobody else there so the pope himself took the call. It was from New York, and the archpriest from New York was trembling, his voice was trembling. He said, "Look! Listen! Believe me -- one man has come into the church and he looks exactly like Jesus Christ. What am I supposed to do now?"
The pope pondered over it for a few moments and then said, "Look busy!"

What else to do?
Priests have dominated humanity. They are the politicians of the inner world, just as politicians are the priests of the outer world. And there is a conspiracy between the priests and the politicians, a mutual understanding, a division: "You rule man in his subjectivity and we will rule man from his outside." They have exploited, oppressed. They have destroyed much.

And, Veeresh, you ask me, "Cannot the priests help humanity in some way or other?"

The only way that I can conceive is that because they are no longer needed, they should disappear. That will be their greatest service to humanity.

The second question:
Question 2
BELOVED MASTER,
I FEEL AN URGE FOR ARTISTIC EXPRESSION AND HAVE HAD A DISCIPLINED, CLASSICAL TRAINING IN WESTERN MUSIC. OFTEN I FEEL THIS TRAINING IMPRISONS SPONTANEOUS CREATIVITY AND IHAVE FOUND IT VERY DIFFICULT TO PRACTICE REGULARLY LATELY. I AM NOT SURE ANYMORE WHAT THE QUALITIES OF TRUE ART ARE AND BY WHICH PROCESS THE ARTIST PRODUCES AND DELIVERS AUTHENTIC ART. HOW CAN I FEEL THE ARTIST IN ME?

Barbara Limberger, the paradox of art is that first you have to learn its discipline and then you have to forget it totally. If you don't know its ABC you will not be able to move very deep into it. But if you know only its technique and you go on practicing the technique your whole life you may become very skillful technically, but you will remain a technician; you will never become an artist.
In Zen they say, if you want to be a painter, for twelve years learn how to paint and then for twelve years forget all about painting. Just completely forget -- it has nothing to do with you. For twelve years meditate, chop wood, carry water from the well. Do anything, but not painting.

And then one day you will be able to paint. Twenty-four years training: twelve years training in learning the technique and twelve years training in forgetting the technique. And then you can paint. Now the technique has become just a part of you; it is no longer technical knowledge, it has become part of your blood and bones and marrow. Now you can be spontaneous. It will not hinder you, it will not imprison you.

That's exactly MY experience too.

Now don't go on practicing. Forget all about classical music. Do other kinds of things: gardening, sculpture, painting, but forget about classical music, as if it does not exist at all. For a few years let it remain deep down in your being so that it becomes digested. It is no longer a technique then. Then one day a sudden urge will take possession of you -- and then start playing again. And when you play again, don't be bothered too much about the technique, otherwise you will never be spontaneous.

Be a little innovative -- that's what creativity is. Innovate new ways, new means. Try something new that nobody has ever done. The greatest creativity happens in people whose training is of some other discipline.

For example, if a mathematician starts playing music he will bring something new to the world of music. If a musician becomes a mathematician he will bring something new to the world of mathematics. All great creativity happens through people who move from one discipline to another. It is like crossbreeding. And children that come out of crossbreeding are far healthier, far more beautiful. That's why in every country for centuries, marriages between brothers and sisters have been prohibited; there is

a reason in it. A marriage is better if it is between people who are very distantly related or not related at all as far as blood is concerned. It will be good if people from one race marry into another race. And if some day we discover people on some other planet, the best way will be a crossbreeding between earth and the other planet. Then newer kinds, newer people will be coming into existence. The prohibition, the taboo against brother/sister relationship, their marriage, is significant, scientifically significant. But it has not been worked out into detail to its extreme, to its logical extreme. The logical extreme is that no Indian should marry another Indian, no German should marry another German. The best thing is that a German marries an Indian, an Indian marries a Japanese, a Japanese marries a Negro, a Negro marries an American, a Jew marries a Christian, a Christian marries a Hindu, a Hindu marries a Mohammedan. That will be the best thing. That will raise the consciousness of the whole planet. It will give better children, more alert, more alive, richer in every possible way.
But we are so foolish that we can do anything, we can accept anything. Then what am I saying...?

Chauncey, a handsome, almost pretty young man, was speaking earnestly with his mother.
"Mumsie, the time has come -- it really has -- when we must have a heart-to-heart talk about my relationship with Myron. To be quite candid about it, our relationship has blossomed into -- how shall I say it without sounding indelicate? -- well, into something beautiful and good and even holy. The truth is, Mumsie dear, I love Myron and

Myron loves me in return. We want to be married as soon as possible and we both hope you will give us your blessings."
"But Chauncey," the mother protested, "do you realize what you are saying? Can you honestly expect me to condone such a marriage? What will people say? What will our friends and neighbors think?"
"Ah, Mumsie, you are going to be dreary -- I can feel it in my bones. And after we have been such good pals, too. I never would have believed it of you -- of all people. I could just cry!"
"But, son, you can't go against convention like this!"
"Alright, Mumsie, let us have it right out in the open like civilized persons. Exactly and precisely what possible objection could you or anyone else have to Myron and me becoming husband and husband?"
"You know perfectly well why I object: he is Jewish!"

She is not objecting to a homosexual marriage; she is objecting because he is Jewish. People are so much against each other. They have been conditioned for this antagonism for so long that they have forgotten completely that we are all human beings, that we belong to the same earth, to the same planet.
The greater the distance between the wife and the husband, the better will be the by-product of the marriage.
And the same happens in music, in painting, in mathematics, in physics, in chemistry: a kind of crossbreeding. Whenever a person moves from one discipline to another discipline he brings the flavor of his discipline, although that discipline cannot be practiced.

What can you do with your music when you go into physics? You have to forget all about it, but it remains in the background. It has become part of you; it is going to affect whatsoever you do. Physics is so far away, but if you have been disciplined in music, sooner or later you will find theories, hypotheses, which somehow have the color and the fragrance of music. You may start feeling that the world is a harmony -- not a chaos but a cosmos. You may start feeling, searching into deeper realms of physics, that existence is an orchestra. Now, that is not possible for one who has not known anything of music.

If a dancer moves into music he will bring something new, he will contribute something new to music.

My suggestion is that people should go on moving from one discipline into another discipline. When you become accustomed to one discipline, when you become imprisoned with the technique, just slip out of it into another discipline. It is a good idea, a great idea to go on moving from one discipline into another. You will find yourself becoming more and more creative.

One thing has to be remembered: if you are really creative you may not become famous. A really creative person takes time to become famous because he has to create the values -- new values, new criteria, only then can he be judged. He has to wait at least fifty years; by that time he is dead. Only then people start appreciating him. If you want fame, then forget all about creativity. Then just practice and practice, and just go on doing the thing that you are doing more skillfully, more technically perfectly, and you will be famous -- because people understand it; it is already accepted.

Whenever you bring something new into the world you are bound to be rejected. The world never forgives a person who brings anything new to the world. The creative person is bound to be punished by the world, remember it. The world appreciates the uncreative but skillful person, the technically perfect person, because technical perfection simply means perfection of the past. And everybody understands the past, everybody has been educated to understand it. To bring something new into the world means nobody will be able to appreciate it. It is so new that there are not any criteria against which it can be valued. No methods are still in existence which can help people to understand it. It will take at least fifty years or more; the artist will be dead. By that time people will start appreciating it.

Vincent van Gogh was not appreciated in his day. Not even a single painting was ever sold. Now each of his paintings is sold for millions of dollars -- and people were not ready even to accept those paintings as gifts from Vincent van Gogh -- the same paintings. He had given them to friends, to anybody who was ready to hang them in their room. Nobody was ready to hang his pictures in their rooms because people were worried. Others would ask, "Have you gone mad or something? What kind of painting is this?" Vincent van Gogh had his own world. He has brought a new vision. It took many many decades; slowly slowly, humanity started feeling that something was there. Humanity is slow and lethargic; it lags behind time. And the creative person is always ahead of his time, hence the gap.

So, Barbara, if you really want to be creative you will have to accept that you can't be famous, you can't be well-known. If you really want to be creative, then you have to learn the simple phenomenon: art for art's sake, for no other motive. Then enjoy whatsoever you are doing. If you can find a few friends to enjoy it, good; if nobody is there to enjoy, then enjoy it alone. If YOU are enjoying it, that is enough. If you feel fulfilled through it, that is enough.
You ask me, "I am not sure anymore what the qualities of true art are."
True art means: if it helps you to become silent, still, joyous; if it gives you a celebration; if it makes you dance -- whether anybody participates with you or not is irrelevant; if it becomes a bridge between you and God -- that is true art. If it becomes a meditation, that is true art. If you become absorbed in it, so utterly absorbed that the ego disappears, that is true art.
True art comes very close to religion. So don't be worried what true art is. If you rejoice in doing it, if you feel lost in doing it, if you feel overwhelmed with joy and peace in doing it, it is true art. And don't be bothered what critics say. Critics don't know anything about art. In fact, the people who cannot become artists become critics. If you cannot participate in a running race, if you cannot be an Olympic runner, at least you can stand by the side of the road and throw stones at other runners; that you can do easily.
That's what critics go on doing. They can't be participants, they can't create anything.

I have heard about a Sufi mystic who loved painting, and all the critics of his time were against him. Everybody would come and show him, "This is wrong, that is wrong." He became tired of these people, so one day, in front of his house he hung all his paintings and he invited all the critics and told them to come with brushes, with colors, so that they can correct his paintings, because they have criticized enough; now the time has come to correct.
Not a single critic turned up. It is easy to criticize, it is difficult to correct. And since then critics stopped coming and stopped criticizing his paintings. He did the right thing.

People who don't know how to create become critics. So don't be worried about them. The decisive thing is your inner feeling, inner glow, inner warmth. If making music gives you a feeling of warmth, joy arises in you, ego disappears, then it becomes a bridge between you and God. And art can be the most prayerful thing, the most meditative thing possible. If you can be in any art, music, painting, sculpture, dance, if any art can take a grip of your being, that's the best way to pray, the best way to meditate. Then you don't need any other meditation; that is your meditation. That will lead you slowly slowly, step by step, into God. So this is my criterion: if it leads you towards God, it is true art, it is authentic art.

The third question:
Question 3
BELOVED MASTER,
WHAT DO YOU THINK OF LIFE AFTER DEATH?

Sargamo, I totally agree with Tristan Bernard, the French-Jewish writer, who was once asked the same question. He was asked what he thought of life after death. He replied, "With regard to the climate, I would prefer heaven, but with regard to the company I would give preference to hell."

The fourth question:
Question 4
BELOVED MASTER,
WHAT TO DO WITH THE PERSISTENCE OF UNBLISSFUL, SEEMINGLY INFINITE RESISTANCE?

Amit Prem, accept it, don't resist it. Don't resist the resistance. That's what you are doing. The first resistance is not the problem at all; the second resistance creates the problem. You are resisting your resistance. Your misery is unnecessarily multiplied. You drop the second resistance and you will be surprised: if you drop the second, the first will evaporate on its own accord.
Jesus says: Resist not evil. A very strange statement... no other awakened person has given such a rebellious statement. Christian priests, missionaries, don't talk about it at all. They talk about other things, but they don't talk about this strange statement: Resist not evil. It seems very illogical, irreligious. Evil has to be resisted -- and Jesus says: Resist not evil. Why?
There is a secret in it. If you resist evil, you give energy to it. Every resistance gives energy to the thing resisted. "Don't resist evil" means if you don't resist it, it will drop

on its own accord because you will not be nourishing it by your energy; you are disconnected immediately.

Amit Prem, you say, "What to do with the persistence of unblissful, seemingly infinite resistance?"

Nothing has to be done. If you do anything you will create this resistance more and more; that's how you have made it infinite. It is not infinite. Only God is infinite, nothing else. How can your resistance be infinite? But you are making it infinite because you are pouring your energy into it. You are trying to resist it, fight it, repress it in subtle ways -- so it comes up again and again.

My suggestion is: Accept it, and then see what happens. Whatsoever happens is good. In the beginning you may be afraid in accepting it. In the beginning you will think, "If I accept it then I will have to follow it." No, that is not the truth. If you totally accept it you will see it dying immediately -- you have cut the very roots. That's what Jesus means. He wants to destroy evil totally; hence he says: Resist not evil. If you resist you will go on feeding it. The first resistance is never the problem, the second resistance is. And you cannot do anything about the first; you can do something only about the second, because that is yours. What can be done? If resistance is there it is there -- welcome it, accept it. But you are doing that in many ways.

Amit Prem goes on writing letters to me: "I feel very sad, I feel very miserable, depressed. I suffer from an inferiority complex." When I was reading his letter in which he talks about his suffering from an inferiority complex I was reminded about a politician who was going through psychoanalysis....

After three years of great psychoanalytic work, the psychoanalyst one day welcomed him beaming with joy, and he said, "Come in. I have found everything. Now there is no need for any psychoanalysis anymore. Your problem is solved!"
The politician was also happy. He said, "What solution have you found?"
And the psychoanalyst said, "You are not suffering from an inferiority complex -- you simply ARE inferior, so there is no problem!"

This is acceptance. Amit Prem, you simply ARE inferior -- accept it! You suffer from an inferiority complex because there is a great desire to be superior. That desire for superiority creates in its wake the suffering of an inferiority complex. Accept it.

I am inferior -- look at me! You can't be more inferior than me. I am so ordinary! I cannot do any miracle, I cannot walk on water. I must be suffering from an inferiority complex -- because Jesus walked on water. You see how ordinary I am! But I am so blissful because I go on saying, "So what?" I can't walk on water, that's true. I don't make a problem out of it. You can make a problem out of anything.

I have heard:
When Moses was coming from Egypt and the enemies were following on his heels and they came close to the sea, now there was a problem: What to do? The sea was a

barrier and the enemy was closing in. They were coming closer and closer every moment.
And then suddenly a miracle happened: the sea became divided into two parts. Huge columns of water on both the sides and a small pathway....
Moses looked at the sky and said, "My God, only one thing I have to ask you. Why is it always me who has to be the first? Now I have to enter into this danger! Why do I have to be the first always?"

You can even complain about your miracles -- and I don't complain even about my ordinariness.

Golda Meir, the ex-prime minister of Israel, used to say again and again, "I cannot forgive Moses. For forty years he led our people in the desert, and he found Israel -- the only place where there is no oil! I cannot forgive this man. And he passed many places which had oil."

Amit Prem, simply accept the way you are. You can't be anybody else. Because you are trying to be somebody else, that creates the trouble.
He goes on writing to me, "I want to be an insider in the ashram, and I remain on the periphery." So what is wrong with being on the periphery? I am not even on the periphery! You are at least on the periphery. Wherever you are, enjoy it. If you become accustomed to creating misery for yourself, even if you are at the very center you will be suffering. You will say, "God, why do I have to be at the center always and to carry the whole responsibility?"

I say, I am not at the center because I carry no responsibility at all. You will not find a more irresponsible person in the whole world than I am. I have no responsibility at all. Even on the periphery you have some responsibilities. Even the guards sitting on the gate have some responsibility.
Learn to enjoy wherever you are and whatsoever you are. Don't make much fuss about it. If there is resistance it is natural, because this whole process is of surrender. Sannyas is surrender. Resistance is natural. So accept it, and through acceptance it will die a natural death.

The fifth question:
Question 5
BELOVED MASTER,
ARE YOU AGAINST THE WOMEN'S LIBERATION MOVEMENT?

Shakti, I am not against women, I am all for them. But the liberation movement is something ugly -- and I know the responsibility is on the male chauvinists. They have been doing so much harm to women down the ages that now the woman wants to take revenge. But whenever you start taking revenge you become destructive. The movement is still in a destructive phase; it has not become creative. And I am against destructiveness.
It is of no use to go on looking at past wounds. It is of no use to take revenge because of the past. One should learn to forgive and forget. Yes, it was wrong -- accept it.
Whatsoever has been done to women down the ages was absolutely wrong. Man HAS exploited them. Man has been

very brutal, very animalistic. Man has reduced women to slaves; even more than that, he has reduced them to things, to possessions. But what is the point of taking revenge? Then you become the pursuer and man becomes the pursued. Then another kind of chauvinism begins to take form and shape. Then the female chauvinist is born. And this is not going to put things right. Then the women will start doing harm to men, and sooner or later they will take revenge. Where is this going to stop? It is a vicious circle. And my feeling is that instead of men stopping it, it is far easier for women to stop it, to come out of the vicious circle -- because they are more loving, more compassionate. Man is more aggressive, more violent. I don't have much hope from men, I hope much from women. Hence I am not in favor of the aggressive attitude and approach of the Women's Lib movement.

Mrs. Farid presented herself at the gate of heaven and knocked with trembling hand.
"Madam," said Father Abraham, peering suspiciously through a peephole, "from whence did you come?"
"From Flatbush I came," replied Mrs. Farid with embarrassment, as great beads of perspiration spangled her spiritual brow.
"Never mind, my daughter," replied the patriarch compassionately. "Eternity is a long time; you can live that down."
"Mister, I got something to confess," she went on, obviously worried.
"In our religion we don't have confessions."

"But this is different. If you will take a look in your records, you will see that maybe I don't belong here. I -- I -- well -- I poisoned my husband and I chopped up my brother-in-law. Not only that, I...."
Father Abraham suddenly grew stern. "Your aggressive behavior does indeed present a problem, madam. Were you a member of the Women's Liberation movement?"
"No."
The gates of pearl and alabaster swung open upon their golden hinges, making the most ravishing music, and the patriarch bowed low.
"Enter into thy eternal rest."
But Mrs. Farid hesitated. "The poisoning, the chopping, the... the...." she stammered.
"Of no consequence, I assure you. We are not going to be hard on a lady who did not belong to the Women's Lib. Take a harp."
"But I applied for membership. They would not let me in."
"Take two harps."

Don't be worried, Shakti. There are many women here who have belonged to the Women's Lib movement. But as they have come closer to me, their attitudes have changed, their approach has changed. Life's problems can only be solved by love, they cannot be solved by any violent approach. Men and women are different worlds; hence it is difficult to understand each other. And the past has been full of misunderstandings, but that is not necessarily to be so in the future. We can learn a lesson from the past, and the only lesson is that man and woman have to become more understanding of each other and more accepting of each

other's differences. Those differences are valuable, they need not create any conflict; in fact, they are the causes of attraction between them. If all the differences between men and women disappear, if they have the same kind of psychology, love will also disappear because the polarity will not be there. Man and woman are like negative and positive poles of electricity: they are pulled towards each other magnetically; they are opposite poles. Hence, conflict is natural. But through understanding, through compassion, through love, through looking into the other's world and trying to be sympathetic to it, all the problems can be solved. There is no need to create more conflict -- enough is enough.

Man needs as much liberation as woman. Both need liberation -- liberation from the mind. They should cooperate with each other and help each other to be liberated from the mind. That will be a true liberation movement.

That's what sannyas is all about.

The last question:

Question 6

BELOVED MASTER,

ARE YOU GOD THE CREATOR?

Sudheer, do you think I am mad?

For almost a year, Grandpa Sulzberg had been a constant embarrassment to his family. He would mount a soap box on street corners in his neighborhood and proclaim himself the messiah. Then he would proceed to harangue the

amused crowds that gathered, hurling fierce warnings and injunctions, reminding them of the dire consequences of their evil ways. In his long white robe which he had fashioned from a bedsheet, and his flowing, silvery beard, he did indeed look like a biblical patriarch.
Old Sulzberg's delusion gradually worsened, and finally his sons and daughters and grown grandchildren held a conference and reluctantly agreed to send him to an institution. There, they hoped, with proper treatment, he might regain his sanity and then return home.
At the Cedars of Lebanon Home for the Mentally Disturbed, the "messiah" got along famously with his fellow patients. Until, that is, he made the mistake of exhorting them to abandon their godless ways.
"I am Moses reincarnated," he thundered like a prophet of old. "I am the messiah!"
"Oh yeah?" yelled one of the patients. "Who said so?"
"I will tell you who said so," yelled Mr. Sulzberg-turned-messiah. "God said so!"
And from the outer circle of patients an indignant voice rang out: "I did not!"

Enough for today.

The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 10

Chapter #3

Chapter title: Meditation requires courage

23 February 1980 am in Buddha Hall

IT IS NOT IRON THAT IMPRISONS YOU
NOR ROPE NOR WOOD,
BUT THE PLEASURE YOU TAKE IN GOLD AND JEWELS,
IN SONS AND WIVES.

SOFT FETTERS,
YET THEY HOLD YOU DOWN.
CAN YOU SNAP THEM?

THERE ARE THOSE WHO CAN,
WHO SURRENDER THE WORLD,
FORSAKE DESIRE, AND FOLLOW THE WAY.

O SLAVE OF DESIRE,
FLOAT UPON THE STREAM.
LITTLE SPIDER, STICK TO YOUR WEB.
OR ELSE ABANDON YOUR SORROWS FOR THE WAY.

ABANDON YESTERDAY, AND TOMORROW,
AND TODAY.
CROSS OVER TO THE FARTHER SHORE,
BEYOND LIFE AND DEATH.

DO YOUR THOUGHTS TROUBLE YOU?
DOES PASSION DISTURB YOU?
BEWARE OF THIRSTINESS
LEST YOUR WISHES BECOME DESIRES
AND DESIRE BINDS YOU.

The most fundamental message of Gautama the Buddha is not God, is not soul... it is freedom: freedom absolute, total, unconditional. He does not want to give you an ideology, because every ideology creates its own slavery. He does not want to give you a religion, because religion binds you. That's exactly the meaning of the English word 'religion' -- that which binds you together. Religion is a bondage, very subtle, so subtle that unless you are very aware you will not be able to see it. He does not want to give you a philosophy of life, because any philosophy given by somebody else is going to fetter you. You have to live according to your own light, not according to somebody else's light.

The whole world is full of slaves for the simple reason that everybody is living according to somebody else. Somebody is living according to Jesus, somebody is living according to Mahavira, somebody is living according to Krishna, somebody is living even according to Buddha.

Buddha says: Be a light unto yourself. Unless you create a light within your own being you will remain a slave, you will be dominated. And there are crafty priests, cunning, very clever, very worldly; and they know, they are very experienced in creating new bondages for you. If you escape from one prison, they immediately create another. They are very clever with words. They go on interpreting words in such subtle ways that you will never be able to understand how these words of the buddhas are being manipulated, distorted. Words that were meant to give you freedom have been made into chains.

But man is very unaware; hence he goes on remaining a victim -- a victim of all kinds of psychological exploitation.

Buddha teaches you freedom as the ultimate goal, the SUMMUM BONUM, the highest good. There is nothing higher than freedom. Every other value is a by-product of freedom; they follow freedom as a consequence.

Jesus says: First seek ye the kingdom of God, then all else shall be added unto you. Buddha will not say that. He will say: First seek ye total and absolute freedom, and then all else shall be added unto you. If you seek God you are again seeking a new prison, maybe better than the old, maybe made of gold, very precious -- but a prison is a prison all the same. Whether your chains are made of iron or gold, it makes no difference at all. In fact, if the chains are made of gold it will be more difficult to come out of them because you will become attached. You will think those chains are not chains but ornaments. You will protect them, you will guard them -- somebody may steal them away from you!

Freedom is the fragrance of Buddha's whole message. No other enlightened person has emphasized freedom so much. Why did Buddha emphasize freedom so much? -- for the simple reason that he had seen all other ideals being changed into imprisonments. He had seen all beautiful philosophies poisoned by the priests. Beware of the priests! Buddha is not a priest, neither is Jesus, nor is Mahavira. No enlightened person is a priest. The priest lives on the words of the enlightened people and goes on exploiting the unenlightened. He certainly is clever but not wise, knowledgeable but not enlightened. He succeeds in manipulating you because you are unconscious.

Hence, the second thing Buddha emphasizes is meditation, awareness. Freedom can come only through being more and more aware. By freedom he does not mean any social

phenomenon or any political change. There are people... I have come across books written by communists, Marxists, socialists, who try to prove that Buddha's freedom means communism, socialism, that his freedom means a social revolution, a political revolution. That is utter nonsense! Buddha has nothing to do with the outside world; his concern is your interiority. He wants to change your unconsciousness into consciousness, he wants to change your darkness into light, he wants to change your death into deathlessness.

He is really doing the work of the seers of the Upanishads who have been praying to God, "ASATO MA SADGAMAYA. O God, O Lord, take us away from the false, from the untrue, to the truth. TAMASO MA JYOTIRGAMAYA. O God, O Lord, take us away from darkness into light. MRITYOR MA AMRITAMGAMAYA. O God, O Lord, take us away from death to eternal life." But they were praying to God. Buddha says: No prayer is going to help. Unless YOU do something, your prayer is impotent. There is no need to pray, but there is great need to meditate. His religion is not a religion of prayer. His religion is very scientific in the sense that he does not presuppose any belief. You need not believe in God, you need not believe in afterlife. He says when you can experience, then why believe? All beliefs ultimately reduce you to slaves.

Buddha is against all kinds of beliefs AND disbeliefs. He is an agnostic. He says remain open; if you believe you become closed. The Hindu is closed, the Mohammedan is closed, the Christian is closed: they have already concluded. They have already accepted a certain belief as

true without experiencing it. This is dishonesty! And these people are thought to be religious people. They are not even authentic, they are not even honest -- what to say about their religiousness? From the very beginning they are dishonest; belief makes you dishonest.

The very process of belief is believing in something that you have not experienced on your own. How can you believe if you are sincere? If your search for truth is authentic you cannot believe; you cannot disbelieve either. You cannot say God is, you cannot say God is not. You can only say, "I don't know and I am searching and I am seeking and I am experimenting and I am trying to experience."

That is the way of meditation.

Prayer requires belief as a presupposition; without belief there is no possibility of prayer. To whom will you pray? To whom will you address your prayers? -- to some God which you have accepted because it has been told to you from your very childhood, you have been hypnotized. Every belief is nothing but hypnosis. One is hypnotized as being a Hindu, another is hypnotized as being a Mohammedan; both are living in a kind of deep sleep. Hypnosis means sleep; the very word means sleep. You have been given so much poison, slowly slowly, through belief that you have fallen asleep. You are no longer aware what you are doing, why you are doing. Why are you going to the temple? Why are you bowing down to a stone statue? Why are you reciting something meaningless? Why are you going to Kaaba or Kashi or Girnar? For what? There IS something a priori. You already believe that is what religion is, without experiencing, without inquiring.

This is the way of the coward, this is the way of the zombie.
Meditation requires courage. It requires the basic integrity, sincerity, respect towards your own being. At least don't deceive yourself.
Buddha says: Let your own experience decide. If this is understood you are bound to move towards meditation instead of prayer. Then meditation will bring a prayer of its own -- a prayerfulness, rather. You will not be praying but you will be in prayer, because more and more you will become silent, more and more you will become still. More and more you will experience the presence, the mysterious presence that overwhelms everything, penetrates everything. You may like to call it God, you may not like to call it God; it doesn't matter what you call it. You may not like to call it anything; you may be silent about it, because that is the most appropriate thing to do. It cannot be put into any words; no words are adequate enough to express it. But Buddha has not been listened to. Humanity has remained in its old, zombielike, sleepy way. It has remained hypnotized, unconscious.

Howard Rabinowitz, a huge, granite-fisted, supertough young fellow, was drinking a whisky in a bar when he heard the announcement of the Six-Day War on the radio. Filled with excitement and Jewish fervor, he rushed to the airport and took the first available flight to Israel where he was immediately inducted into the army.
But his reception at the military base was rather cool. He was not exactly avoided by the Israeli soldiers, but neither did they go out of their way to welcome him.

"Listen, what's with you guys?" he complained to his sergeant. "Here I come halfway around the world to help you out and I'm practically ignored. What must an American do to get accepted in this army?"
The sergeant eyed the muscular young giant, glanced around somewhat furtively so that he might not be overheard, and then, in a voice that was almost a whisper, he said, "Confidentially and off the record, if you really want to be one of us, there are three things you must do."
"Name them," said Rabinowitz.
"First," explained the sergeant, "You must drink down a whole quart of our strongest Mount Carmel wine without stopping for a breath. Second, you must kill an Arab army officer. Third, you must make love to an Israeli beauty."
So Howard Rabinowitz chug-a-lugged a whole quart of Mount Carmel wine without stopping.
"Now," he demanded, "where can I find an Arab officer?"
"Right across the Suez Canal," said the sergeant. "I'm afraid you'll have to swim both ways -- that is, if you're still alive."
"I'll be alive," promised the American as he lurched off. "Hell, I was the roughest, toughest, biggest guy on the East Side. What's a little adventure like this?"
A few hours later he returned, soaking wet from his return swim, his clothes torn and his face scratched and bloody.
"Okay, I took care of that Arab officer," he roared. "Now, where's that Israeli beauty you want killed?"

That's exactly the situation of humanity. You don't know who you are, you don't know what you are doing, you don't know WHY you are doing it in the first place. You don't

know, even if you succeed, what is the point of it all. But still you go on doing something. It keeps you engaged and keeps you unaware of your unawareness.

All your occupations are basically nothing but an effort to remain unaware of your unawareness -- because it hurts. It hurts to know that "I am a zombie," it hurts to know that "I am a slave." So you go on bragging about your slavery as if it is something very precious and valuable. You go on bragging about your being Indian or Pakistani or Israeli or German or American. You go on bragging about your being Hindu, Mohammedan, Christian, Jaina -- and you don't know you are bragging about your prisons!

It is as if two prisoners are talking: "My prison is better than your prison. Look at the flag! My prison has the best flag in the world, the highest pole. And never say a word against my prison; otherwise you will suffer for it, you will have to pay for it."

MY nation, MY country, MY church, MY religion is higher than your religion, is higher than your church, is greater than your nation -- and we are bragging about our prisons. This is utterly stupid. But why do we go on doing it? -- because that is the only way to save our faces.

If we try to see the point, that all these are prisons, how can we avoid knowing that we are a prisoner -- not of one prison but of many prisons, prisons within prisons? And that will destroy our ego. It helps our egos very much that "We are a great nation," that "Our history is full of bravery," that "We have created the greatest warriors"... or greatest saints, or whatsoever it is. "We have created the most religious society in the world," or the most democratic society or the most communist society. This helps us to

protect our egos. We find in every way methods and means, devices and strategies so that our ego remains intact.
And the ego is the most false phenomenon in existence; there is nothing more false than the ego. It has no substance. It is a balloon full of hot air -- or maybe there is no balloon, only hot air! But we are living according to the dictates of this false god, the ego. And there are priests who go on helping us, who go on giving us new strategies, new interpretations. As times change, priests are ready to give us new interpretations.

A small boy in the Sunday school was very much puzzled when the priest said that God made everything. The boy looked puzzled, almost a question mark in his eyes.
The priest asked him, "What is the matter, Johnny? You look very puzzled."
Johnny said, "Yes. You say everything -- do you really mean EVERYTHING? Then where is the reference that God made railway trains? I have never come across it."
And the priest said, "Yes, you must have overlooked it. There is a reference. It is said in the Bible that God made all creeping things; it includes the railway train!"

And it is not only that they are deceiving small children; they do the same to you.

"Rabbi," said the worried father, "I wish you would speak to my son. Here he is, bar mitzvah age, and all he ever thinks about is baseball."

The rabbi sighed to himself. "With so many delinquent children getting into trouble," he thought, "this is indeed a minor problem."
"I am sorry to disappoint you," he said, suppressing a desire to show his annoyance, "but I cannot scold your son for something we Jews have been practicing for thousands of years. In fact, there are several references to baseball in the Bible."
"Are you serious?" demanded the father incredulously. "What are they?"
"Well, for example, you will recall that Eve stole first and Adam stole second; Gideon rattled the pitchers; Goliath was put out by David; and the prodigal son made a home run!"

Priests are the most cunning people in the world.

In Baltimore, at the turn of the century, an itinerant MAGGID, or preacher, looking for all the world like a prophet of old, with his majestic white beard and flowing, snow-white robe, was invited to speak at the Sanhedrin Temple. The synagogue's regular rabbi was somewhat apprehensive about the old man's ultra-orthodox views, but he had come highly recommended. The rabbi's fears, as it turned out, were justified. The maggid harangued the congregation with a scorching sermon that would have done credit to a Bible-thumping, fundamentalist Baptist preacher. As the venerable patriarch brought his sermon to a close he shouted, "And I say unto you, the Day of Judgment is at hand, and unless you have lived in strict accordance with the law as handed down to us by Moses

himself, there will be weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth!"
An old lady in the front row, frightened half out of her wits, cried out, "But, Rebbe, I have no teeth!"
"My good woman," thundered the righteous maggid, "teeth will be provided!"

Buddha is not a priest, he is not a prophet either; he is a totally different kind of person. He is an awakened being, he has come to know himself. He is not an incarnation of God -- he has no claims like that. He is not a special messenger of God; he has no ego like that. He does not claim that "I am the only begotten Son." All this looks absurd if you think of Buddha. He is very simple and yet his message is the most practical, most scientific, most penetrating.
He says, "I was as unconscious as you are; now I have become conscious and all my fears and sorrows have disappeared. One day I was like you, one day you can be like me; there is no qualitative difference between us. I am awakened, you are asleep; that is the only difference. I am not extraordinary, I am just as ordinary as you are. The only thing that has happened to me is that I have opened my eyes and you are still keeping them closed. Open them and see for yourself!"

The sutras:

IT IS NOT IRON THAT IMPRISONS YOU
NOR ROPE, NOR WOOD,

BUT THE PLEASURE YOU TAKE IN GOLD AND JEWELS,
IN SONS AND WIVES.

IT IS NOT IRON THAT IMPRISONS YOU... your prison is not that gross, it is very subtle. It is not so visible, it is very invisible. It is transparent. It is not that you remain in the prison; on the contrary, the prison surrounds you, wherever you go it moves with you. It is something in your mind, not something around your body. It is something in your very approach towards life.

He says: IT IS NOT IRON THAT IMPRISONS YOU NOR ROPE NOR WOOD, BUT THE PLEASURE YOU TAKE IN GOLD AND JEWELS....

Now one thing very significant has to be remembered: this sutra has been misinterpreted for centuries. Twenty-five centuries of misinterpretation are there. For the first time I am telling you that it does not mean what Buddhists have been saying that it means. They think it means that gold and jewels have to be renounced; it does not mean that -- it is so clear -- BUT THE PLEASURE YOU TAKE IN GOLD AND JEWELS.... It is not the gold that binds you but the PLEASURE that you take in it. If you don't take pleasure in it you can live in a palace and you are as free as anybody who lives in a cave in the Himalayas. If you take pleasure in your cave in the Himalayas you are as unfree as anybody who lives in a palace. The question is psychological.

And one thing more: why do you take pleasure in the palace, in gold, in jewels, in diamonds? They all decorate your ego. Your ego is empty in itself, it is nonexistential.

You have to continuously go on pouring things into it so it goes on giving you the sense that it is something substantial. It is constantly demanding, "Give me this, give me that." It goes on demanding. It exists in the demand, it exists in the desire.

It is just like when you are on a bicycle: you have to peddle it continuously. If you stop peddling, maybe for a few feet the bicycle may move out of the past momentum, but then it is bound to fall. Ego is just like a bicycle: you have to continuously peddle. If you stop peddling it falls then and there, flat on the ground.

So if you have a palace it will demand a bigger palace and it will take great pleasure in the palace. It will brag about it, it will feel very puffed up. If you are a president of a country, it feels very puffed up. If you become famous, respectable, it becomes very puffed up. And the ways of the ego are very subtle. It moves in your unconsciousness, in the darkest layers of your being. It can take pleasure in gold, it can take pleasure in RENOUNCING gold, but it is the same thing.

I know many so-called saints who go on bragging still after thirty or forty years. Forty years before they had renounced the world and they still go on saying that "We renounced so much money, so much gold." Still they go on talking about it! Forty years have passed, but they are still taking the pleasure.

You see the point? You can take pleasure when you HAVE gold, you can take pleasure when you RENOUNCE gold. In fact, when you have gold you can't take so much pleasure as when you renounce it. Why? -- because millions of other people have gold, it is nothing very

special. But when you renounce you are a rare person: your ego becomes more extraordinary, holier-than-thou, superior.

I know one person who was a homeopathic doctor. Now, you know about homeopathic doctors -- they somehow manage to live. Very rarely I had seen any patients visiting him. Yes, a few people used to come -- they used to come to read the newspapers! In fact, that's how I started going to his dispensary -- to read the newspapers and to have a little chitchat, and then we became friends. He was always talking about his troubles and he was very much worried. And then one day I heard that he had renounced the world; he became a saint. After three years I met him in Calcutta. He was worshipped, and people were telling me that he had MILLIONS of rupees that he renounced. I said, "Don't be stupid -- I know this man! He had only three hundred and sixty rupees in the bank!" Now they have become millions! When you renounce you can go on increasing your amount; nobody can prevent you and nobody can check on it -- no auditing is possible. You can go on spreading the rumor how much you have renounced.
When I saw him, I asked him, "Doctor...."
He said, "I am no longer a doctor."
I said, "You are still the same. I know perfectly well that you had three hundred and sixty rupees in the post office! What millions are you talking about? You should say simply that you have renounced three hundred and sixty rupees!"
He looked at me and he said, "Don't talk so loudly. You will destroy my whole reputation!"

The reputation depends on how much he has left, so when he moves from one town to another, the amount that he has renounced increases. It has been going on that way. This is not something new; this has happened before, too.

Even in Buddha's life story, Buddhists have written that he renounced so many golden chariots and so many elephants and so many horses and so many palaces. That is all nonsense, because he was not the son of a very great emperor or anything. The kingdom that he belonged to, Kapilvatu, was such a small place that it has almost disappeared from the earth, not even a trace.... All those palaces have not left any ruins. There were no palaces, and it was such a small village that to keep so many golden chariots there and so many elephants and horses would have been impossible. But the people who were writing the story had to go on making it look bigger and bigger.
There was great competition between the Jainas and the Buddhists because Mahavira and Buddha were contemporaries. So you can look in the scriptures.... Jainas write, "So many horses, so many elephants, so many chariots," and the next Buddhist scripture makes a bigger claim. Then comes another Jaina scripture which makes a bigger claim than the Buddhist scripture -- and this went on for hundreds of years, until now it appears as if Mahavira and Buddha were great emperors, as if they dominated the whole of India.
The truth is that in Buddha's time in India there were two thousand kingdoms. Two thousand kingdoms? -- that means each kingdom could not have been more than a district, at the most, and the father of Buddha was not more

than a deputy collector or maybe a collector... or, if you insist, a commissioner, but nothing more than that.
People take pleasure in gold, so much so that when they renounce it, still the pleasure lingers; one goes on thinking of it. Ego can fulfill itself either by having more money or by renouncing more money, but it always needs money and it always needs more. Remember it.
Buddha says: BUT THE PLEASURE YOU TAKE IN GOLD AND JEWELS... that is the real imprisonment; that creates your bondage -- not the gold, not the jewels. What can they do? How can they bind you?
I have lived in poor huts, they can't bind you; I have lived in palaces, they can't bind you. I have lived as a poor man -- poverty cannot bind you; I have lived as a rich man -- richness cannot bind you. Those things are on the outside. If you start taking pleasure in them, a certain gratification, then the bondage starts. If you take pleasure... IN SONS AND WIVES. That too has been misinterpreted: Renounce your wives and renounce your sons.
There is no need to renounce anything; just understand. MY interpretation of Buddha is that renunciation is not the point; UNDERSTANDING is the point. And if through understanding, something drops from your life, it is not renounced by you; it has simply fallen like a dead leaf from a tree. You cannot claim any credit for it.
Just look into your relationships with your wife, with your son, with your husband, and see the fragility of it all. It has no substance in it. It is all poetry and fiction, it is not a fact. Just a few days ago a man came to me and he said, "I would like to become a sannyasin, but my wife says she will kill herself!"

I said, "Let us try, for a change, because I have never seen anybody.... I have one hundred thousand sannyasins all over the world. No wife has yet killed herself, no husband has yet committed suicide, although many have said that." People take these things very seriously. Your wife or your husband may say, "I cannot live without you" -- and she was living without you perfectly well before! Just a few days before she was not even aware of you and she was living perfectly well -- in fact, she was better than she is now! But she says she cannot live without you, and you believe it because it nourishes your ego.

Mrs. Goldfarb stood weeping at her husband's grave when a courtly stranger approached her.
"Madam, I regret the unfortunate circumstances under which I say this," he began in a respectful manner, "but I must tell you I have fallen in love with you at first sight."
"Loafer! Bum!" cried Mrs. Goldfarb indignantly, aghast at this monumental impertinence. "Get out of my sight this instant or I will call a policeman! Is this a time to talk about love?"
"I assure you, madam, that I did not intend to reveal my feelings at this sad time," the gentle stranger explained, "but I was simply overwhelmed by your exquisite beauty!"
"Listen," said Mrs. Goldfarb, "you should see me when I haven't been crying!"

In a single moment things change. In this world, all your relationships are just made of the stuff poetry is made of; they are not even prose, they are fictions. People are living

in fictions, and they go on painting, repainting their fictions; they go on keeping the fiction alive.

Mrs. Saperstein had just sent the children off to school when the phone rang.
"Is your husband's name Philip Saperstein?" asked a sepulchral voice at the other end of the line.
"What else?" replied the lady.
"This is the coroner's office. I am sorry to tell you this, but we have a traffic death here. We found your telephone number in his pocket. Would you please come down here to the morgue and identify the body?"
Mrs. Saperstein arrived within half an hour and an attendant escorted her to a figure covered with a white sheet. The attendant then lifted a corner of the sheet and uncovered the victim's face.
"Was this man your husband?" he asked.
Mrs Saperstein eyes widened. "Ai-ai-ai! How did you -- yes, that is my husband -- ever get your sheets so white?"

Don't believe in fictions. Your wife, your husband, your children, your parents, all are beautiful fictions. And I am not saying to renounce them; I am saying, simply, understand the fictitiousness of them all. Live wherever you are, but don't get identified with these imagined roles. Act, but don't get identified with your acting role.
That's exactly what Buddha means:

SOFT FETTERS,
YET THEY HOLD YOU DOWN.
CAN YOU SNAP THEM?

They are not very strong fetters, very soft, but CAN YOU SNAP THEM? You cannot snap them if you are not conscious; and if you are conscious you need not snap them -- they are no longer there. You simply see the point that in this world we come alone, we live alone and we go alone. Yes, we play many games -- games of being a husband or a wife, being a friend or an enemy.

We play many games because we have to fill the time with something, or else we have to "kill time," as they say, by playing cards, by chess.... And these are all the same kinds of things, nothing more serious. You have seen playing cards -- kings and queens -- and when you are playing cards they become very real. You can fight, people have even killed each other; just in playing cards they became so serious!

We become so much identified because we are not conscious at all. It is consciousness that helps you to become unidentified.

Then you can go on playing all kinds of games -- I am not against games. Play them as artfully as you can. Let your life be fun! I don't want you to be serious, I don't want you to have long faces. Enough of that! Religious people have suffered much; there is no need. You can laugh and you can enjoy, but remember one thing: that all is just a game. Death will come and the curtain falls and the game disappears and the play is finished.

THERE ARE THOSE WHO CAN,
WHO SURRENDER THE WORLD,
FORSAKE DESIRE, AND FOLLOW THE WAY.

Who are those who can snap out of these identities? They are the courageous people, the meditators: the people who try to bring awareness to their life, to their acts, to their thoughts, to their feelings.
Buddha's persistent effort was one: to make you aware in everything that you are doing. If you are walking, walk with awareness. If you are eating, eat with awareness. Don't simply go on stuffing yourself in a mechanical way. De-automatize yourself. Don't be a machine, be a man.
And then you will be surprised to know that desires start fleeing away from you and the way opens.

Moe and Ike, aged ninety and ninety-two respectively, had been widowers for many many years. Both were healthy and handsome-looking despite their years. The Florida climate agreed with them, and many lovely widows were still after them despite their age.
One day Moe said to Ike, "Ike, I'm really lonely. It's been years since I lost my Becky and I've never remarried. But I think now is the time and I'm willing to take another chance at marriage -- even at my age."
"It sounds like a good idea," said Moe. "In fact, maybe I, too, should take a new wife."
Soon thereafter, Moe and Ike both married lovely ladies -- eighty-nine and ninety respectively -- and they both went on honeymoons.
A few days later, Moe and Ike met on the boardwalk.
"Well," asked Moe, "how was your honeymoon?"
"To tell you the truth, Moe, I couldn't consummate our marriage."

"Well," said Moe, "to tell you the truth, I didn't even think of it!"

But even at the age of ninety, people want to continue to play the old, childish games. Children can be forgiven. They need to play, they need to get identified, they need to go astray, they need to commit errors, mistakes, because that is the only way to learn and to mature. But even in old age, people behave as if they have not grown up at all. Remember, you grow only in the proportion that you become aware. You grow only in the proportion that you become unidentified with all the games that life makes available for you.

O SLAVE OF DESIRE,
FLOAT UPON THE STREAM.
LITTLE SPIDER, STICK TO YOUR WEB.
OR ELSE ABANDON YOUR SORROWS FOR THE WAY.

Buddha calls people who are just slaves of their desires... they are nothing but driftwood, victims of blind forces. They don't know their destiny, they don't know any meaning. They are just accidental; they don't experience any intrinsic significance in life. From one game they move to another game. Their whole life is a series of keeping themselves occupied somehow so that they don't become aware of the fact that they have wasted a great opportunity of growing up, of coming home, of becoming a conscious being, of becoming that which they were MEANT to be. They go on missing.

LITTLE SPIDER, Buddha says, STICK TO YOUR WEB. It is your OWN creation. The world in which you live is your own creation, just like the spider creates its web out of itself and then is caught in the web and cannot leave it. You project your world out of your own mind, you project thousands of desires. That's how you create the web and then you are caught in it. Somebody is caught in the desire for money, somebody is caught in the desire for power, somebody is caught in the desire for renunciation, somebody is caught in the desire for paradise -- all desires! A real man of understanding has no desire. He lives in the moment and whatsoever is available, he enjoys it to its totality. He squeezes each moment, he drinks each moment! He eats whatsoever is available. He sleeps, but he is total in whatsoever he is doing.

A Zen monk, Rinzai, was asked, "What is your meditation?"
He said, "When I feel hungry I eat and when I feel sleepy I sleep, that's all. I have no other meditation."
He is a real follower of Buddha! But you will miss the point if you are not told that when he says, "When I feel hungry I eat," he eats with total awareness.
In fact, a man who lives in awareness also sleeps in awareness.

Krishna, in the Gita, says: The real seeker is awake even while others are fast asleep. When it is night for others it is still day for him. Something deep inside him remains constantly alert.

That which is a night for everybody else is not a night for the one who is aware, who is alert, who is meditative, who is balanced, who lives in equilibrium, who lives in silence. Something deep inside him keeps awake. The body sleeps, the mind sleeps, but the soul is always alert. It is never tired so it need not sleep at all. It is awareness itself; it is made of awareness.
LITTLE SPIDER, STICK TO YOUR WEB.

Hilda and Herman were spending a quiet evening at home. That is to say, Herman was quietly engrossed in a book, but Hilda was in a talkative mood.
"Honey," she began, "if I should die before you do, will you promise me something important?"
"Yeah," grunted Herman, without lifting his eyes from the page he was reading.
"Promise me you'll always keep my grave green."
"Aw, don't be so morbid," he replied. "What's the use of talking about dying? You look pretty healthy to me."
He buried his nose in the book, completely absorbed once more, hoping he would not again be distracted.
"Well, yes, I feel healthy, dear," Hilda interrupted again after a minute of blessed silence, "but I want to be sure my final resting place won't be neglected. You might want to remarry or something, and forget all about me."
"Look, Hilda, I'll remember you forever. Stop shopping around for an undertaker and let me read!"
This time he was rewarded with three whole minutes of peace and quiet, when his wife again took up the thread of conversation exactly where it had broken off.

"I'd hate to be forgotten by my own husband. I suppose it is because I'm so sensitive -- because I have so much emotion. Darling, are you positive that you'll keep my grave green?"
"Yeah, I'm positive," he growled, his eyes glued to the page.
"Well, that's a great consolation. Only, I'd like for you to say it with more feeling.... Precious, are you absolutely, positively sure you'll keep my...."
"Hilda," shouted the pestered man, casting his book aside, "I will keep that damn grave of yours green if I have to paint it myself!"

First we create these relationships -- wife and husband... and then they start hankering for children, great desire for children arises... and it goes on and on. Then they want their children to get married; then they want their children to have children. This is an unending process. They go on and on thinking that this is going to fulfill them; if this is not going to fulfill them, then something else.... Your whole life is wasted.
And I am not saying don't love or don't have a wife or don't have a husband or don't have children. What I am saying is that the most essential thing should be looked at first. First be aware, be meditative, and then if you feel like having a little fun, enjoying a little misery, you are welcome! Get married, have children and children's children, but don't forget your awareness because only that is going with you. Only your awareness will pass through the fires of death; everything else will be left behind.

And one thing very important, Buddha says: OR ELSE ABANDON YOUR SORROWS FOR THE WAY.

People find it very difficult to abandon their sorrows. It looks, on the surface, somehow not right. Why should people hesitate to abandon their sorrows for the way?

A real master never asks you anything except to sacrifice your sorrows. He wants you to give your sorrows to him, nothing else. But it is the most difficult thing to abandon your sorrows because you have lived with them for so long, you are so friendly with them, and to live with the familiar sorrows feels so cozy, so warm -- old friends, and to abandon them.... And suddenly all your walls will disappear and you will be under the open sky because your walls consist of nothing but your sorrows. Your prison will disappear! -- and you have lived in the prison for so long, for so many lives that it has become your home.

I know many prisoners. Whenever they are released from the prison, within three or four months they are back; they will do something and they will be back in the prison. I used to visit prisons and I asked a few people who were coming again and again back to the prison, "What is the matter?"

They said, "When we leave the prison it feels as if we are leaving our home! We have lived in here so long and all our friends are here." One man said, "Not only my friends but my whole family is here! Outside I am just a stranger and I start feeling homesick, so I have to do something and come back."

Once a person is imprisoned it is very rare that he will not come back again. He will come back again because the prison gives some security, some safety. You need not

bother, you need not worry about tomorrow. At the right time the food will be provided, at the right time you will go to bed, at the right time you will be awakened in the morning. Life is so disciplined -- like a monastery!
In fact, monasteries and prisons are not very different, just the names are different. Monasteries are a little harder, that's all! Prisons are a little more human. And modern prisons, particularly in the developed countries, are far superior to the monasteries. It is better to be in a prison than to be in a monastery.

I have heard about a Trappist monastery. A man entered and he was told by the abbot, "Remember, our rule is that you can speak only once in six years." So for six years he was silent, boiling within.
After six years the abbot called him and asked him, "Have you something to say?"
He said, "Yes. The bed is too hard. I need another bed."
The abbot said, "Okay, that will be done. You can go."
For six years again he was boiling. Six years afterwards the abbot called him and said, "Have you something to say?"
He said, "Yes" -- he was really angry. He said, "The people who were bringing the new bed broke the glass of the window and it is too cold."
The abbot said, "Well, it will be mended. You go back."
For six years again he was boiling within. He was called and the abbot said, "Have you something to say?"
He was just going to say it and the abbot said, "Wait! For eighteen years you have done nothing but complain and complain. You get out of the monastery! You are not meant to be a monk. You want to live a soft and easy life."

Jails are far better, and modern jails are really worth living in, with color television and everything!
Man has been improving continuously for centuries. He has improved his prisons very well. He has become very sophisticated, cultured, civilized. And this is nothing but just painting the prison walls, making them beautiful. And now suddenly a buddha comes and says to you, "Come out in the open. Abandon your miseries, your sorrows." You cannot abandon your miseries and sorrows so easily. That's why people who leave the world, renounce the world, create new miseries of their own. If there is nobody else to create misery for them -- if you don't have a wife to create it, if you don't have a husband to create it, if there is nobody to support you in your misery -- you will create it yourself. People are sleeping on beds of thorns... now, no wife prepares it, they themselves work hard on it! People are fasting, almost killing themselves. Now, nobody is doing it to them, that is their own idea.

The ascetics are self-destructive; they are suicidal people, masochistic, perverted, but they are worshipped. They are worshipped because they create their own misery! You worship people as saints, as mahatmas, if they create their own misery. They should be entered into mental asylums, they should be treated! They need medical care. They are not mahatmas, they are simply masochists. They have renounced the world, but they cannot renounce misery so they start creating their own misery. And when a person creates misery for himself, you all respect him. You have

been told that this is something great; he is sacrificing his life for God.
God is not a sadist. He does not enjoy your miseries and your sorrows. Don't be foolish, don't be stupid! But the reason is that people cannot abandon their miseries. They can renounce the gold and the palaces and the money and the power, they can renounce everything, but when it comes to renouncing the miseries, this becomes the most difficult thing they encounter, because miseries have been with you so long that you don't know any other style of living. The only style that you have become accustomed to is sorrow.
That's why your saints are so ugly, so sad, so serious. And the more serious and the more sad they are, the more they are worshipped, so their ego is again nourished. When their ego is nourished they torture themselves more; you worship them still more, then they torture themselves still more. This becomes a vicious circle.

ABANDON YESTERDAY, AND TOMORROW,
AND TODAY.
CROSS OVER TO THE FARTHER SHORE,
BEYOND LIFE AND DEATH.

If you really want to reach to the ultimate, to the deathless, to the timeless, you will have to abandon yesterday. That which is gone is gone forever. Don't look back and don't look ahead. That which is not yet is not yet. Don't look for the tomorrow.
And people are so foolish: they are not only looking for tomorrow, they are looking for life after death; they are

even thinking of heavenly pleasures. They are rejoicing in the idea that there will be the eternal possibility of enjoying the same foolish things that they have renounced here. Strange logic! Here they say, "Don't drink alcohol, it is irreligious." But in BAHIST, in the Mohammedan paradise, there are rivers, streams, waterfalls of alcohol! There you can drink as much as you want, you can swim in alcohol, you can dive deep in alcohol -- and you don't have to pay anything for it!

Here they say, "The woman is the door to hell"; particularly Hindu scriptures say, "The woman is the door to hell." And what is happening in heaven? Beautiful women, continuously dancing! How did these women enter there? And they are doors to hell.... Your gods must have all reached hell long ago! Here, renounce the woman and then you will be rewarded with beautiful women in heaven. And do you know? -- those women never grow old. In the Hindu paradise, nothing is told about the men, whether they grow old or not, but it is absolutely certain that women are stuck at the age of sixteen, they cannot grow beyond that. That is the Hindu idea: sixteen is the climax of beauty, according to the Hindu idea. And ideas differ....

In the Mohammedan paradise, even beautiful boys are available, not only girls, because homosexuality was very much prevalent in the days when the Koran was being written. And of course, saints will not be satisfied only with girls, they will need beautiful boys too.

Louis Jourdan, the French movie star, was in the United States seeking a good literary script for his next film. He

happened to run into Budd Schulberg, the American author and playwright.
"There is a new book out called PRECOCIOUS PAULA," Schulberg suggested tentatively. "It would give you a great co-starring role."
"I nevair hear of zis book," said Jourdan.
"It is something like Nabokov's novel, LOLITA," explained Schulberg.
"And what ees zis LOLITA about?"
"Well, frankly, it is about a middle-aged man who falls in love with a twelve-year-old."
The Frenchman gave him a blank look. "I do not undairstan," he said. "A twelve-year-old what?"

Man, woman, animal -- what? The Frenchman has his own ideas. I don't know what happens in the French paradise -- it must be worth visiting! Not worth living in, but worth visiting. You will see all kinds of sexual perversions.

Two professors were talking, one French, another American, about how many positions there are for making love.
The Frenchman said, "One hundred and twelve," and the American said, "One hundred and thirteen."
The Frenchman said, "You surprise me, because we French are the experts. You start telling me what those one hundred and thirteen positions are."
And the American said, "First, the woman lying down on her back and the man on top of her."
The Frenchman said, "Wait! Yes, there are one hundred and thirteen. I never thought of that!"

It must be worth visiting, the French paradise! And what to say about the French hell? That may be even worth living in! You will find great company, and on each step a surprise.
And these are the people... all over the world they have been thinking of the same joys in a far bigger way in paradise -- the same joys they are condemning here! This is not renunciation; this is just repression.
Real renunciation comes out of understanding. It is not renunciation at all. The real renunciation is not renunciation at all, it is pure understanding. You see the point, and all that is stupid and all that is false disappears, and you start living your ordinary life with more awareness.
ABANDON YESTERDAY, abandon TOMORROW, abandon TODAY. Buddha says: Abandon time -- past, future, present, abandon everything. Forget about time; that's the way to enter into a timeless space within yourself. That is meditation. CROSS OVER TO THE FARTHER SHORE, BEYOND LIFE AND DEATH.

DO YOUR THOUGHTS TROUBLE YOU?

If they trouble you, then something immediately is needed. If your thoughts trouble you that means you have not yet been able to disidentify yourself from your mind.

DOES PASSION DISTURB YOU?

If it disturbs you that means you are still identified with the body. You think, "I am the body," then passion disturbs

you. If you think, "I am the mind," then thoughts disturb you.

BEWARE OF THIRSTINESS....

This word 'thirstiness' is a translation of a Buddhist word TANHA. Tanha has many more dimensions than thirstiness; thirstiness is a literal translation. Tanha means desire, desire for more, unending desire, endless desire. The more you get, the more you want. It is like throwing fuel in a fire. That is called tanha, and tanha is the root cause of your misery.
BEWARE OF THIRSTINESS LEST YOUR WISHES BECOME DESIRES.... Beware, because desires don't arise suddenly. First they are just wishes, then slowly they condense and become desires. And once they become desires it is more difficult to become aware; you can become aware more easily when they are just wishes. Destroy the seed rather than wait for the whole tree to grow and then to cut it; it will be unnecessary work.

... LEST YOUR WISHES BECOME DESIRES
AND DESIRE BINDS YOU.

Desire is our imprisonment. The man who wants nothing, who is absolutely contented as he is, is free of all bondage. He has attained to ultimate freedom, nirvana -- and that is the goal of life. And it is only by attaining that freedom that you will know the significance of being, the song of being, the celebration of being. Your life will become a continuous bliss, and not only that YOU will be blissful,

you will be able to bless others too. The whole existence will be blessed by you, by your very presence.
Enough for today.

The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 10

Chapter #4

Chapter title: Transcendence -- the true therapy
24 February 1980 am in Buddha Hall

The first question:
Question 1
BELOVED MASTER,
YOU SPEAK ON THE PSYCHOLOGY OF THE BUDDHAS, THE PSYCHOLOGY OF TRANSCENDENCE, AS THE ESSENCE OF THE WORK HAPPENING HERE IN THE BUDDHAFIELD. WHAT IS THE UNIQUENESS OF THIS THIRD PSYCHOLOGY? IS THERE A PSYCHOTHERAPY OF TRANSCENDENCE?

Amitabh, Sigmund Freud introduced psychoanalysis into the world. It is rooted in analyzing the mind. It is confined to the mind. It does not step out of the mind, not even an inch. On the contrary, it goes deeper into the mind, into the hidden layers of the mind, into the unconscious, to find out ways and means so that the mind of man can at least be normal. The goal of Freudian psychoanalysis is not very great.

The goal is to keep people normal. But normality is not enough. Just to be normal is not of any significance. It means the normal routine of life and your capacity to cope with it. It does not give you meaning, it does not give you significance. It does not give you insight into the reality of things. It does not take you beyond time, beyond death. It is at the most a helpful device for those who have gone so abnormal that they have become incapable of coping with their daily life -- they cannot live with people, they cannot work, they have become shattered. Psychotherapy provides them a certain togetherness -- not integrity, mind you, but only a certain togetherness. It binds them into a bundle. They remain still fragmentary. Nothing becomes crystallized in them, no soul is born. They don't become blissful, they are only less unhappy, less miserable. Psychology helps them to accept the misery. It helps them to accept that this is all that life can give to you, so don't ask for more. In a way, it is dangerous to their inner growth, because the inner growth happens only when there is a divine discontent. When you are absolutely unsatisfied with things as they are, only then do you go in the search, only then do you start rising higher, only then do you make efforts to pull yourself out of the mud.

Jung went a little further into the unconscious. He went into the collective unconscious. This is getting more and more into muddy water, and this is not going to help.

Assagioli moved to the other extreme. Seeing the failure of psychoanalysis he invented psychosynthesis. But it is rooted in the same idea. Instead of analysis he emphasizes synthesis.

The psychology of the buddhas is neither analysis nor synthesis; it is transcendence, it is going beyond the mind. It is not work within the mind, it is work that takes you outside the mind. That's exactly the meaning of the English word 'ecstasy' -- to stand out.

When you are capable of standing out of your own mind, when you are capable of creating a distance between your mind and your being, then you have taken the first step of the psychology of the buddhas. And a miracle happens: when you are standing out of the mind all the problems of the mind disappear, because mind itself disappears; it loses its grip over you.

Psychoanalysis is like pruning leaves of the tree, but new leaves will be coming up. It is not cutting off the roots. And psychosynthesis is sticking the fallen leaves back onto the tree again -- gluing them back to the tree. That is not going to give them life either. They will look simply ugly; they will not be alive, they will not be green, they will not be part of the tree -- but glued, somehow.

The psychology of the buddhas cuts the very roots of the tree which create all kinds of neuroses, psychoses, which create the fragmentary man, the mechanical man, the robotlike man. And the way is simple....

Psychoanalysis takes years, and still the man remains the same. It is renovating the old structure, patching up here and there, whitewashing the old house. But it is the same house, nothing has radically changed. It has not transformed the consciousness of the man.

The psychology of the buddhas does not work within the mind. It has no interest in analyzing or synthesizing. It simply helps you to get out of the mind so that you can

have a look from the outside. And that very look is a transformation. The moment you can look at your mind as an object you become detached from it, you become disidentified from it; a distance is created, and roots are cut. Why are roots cut in this way? -- because it is you who goes on feeding the mind. If you are identified you feed the mind; if you are not identified you stop feeding it. It drops dead on its own accord.

There is a beautiful story. I love it very much....
One day Buddha is passing by a forest. It is a hot summer day and he is feeling very thirsty. He says to Ananda, his chief disciple, "Ananda, you go back. Just three, four miles back we passed a small stream of water. You bring a little water -- take my begging bowl. I am feeling very thirsty and tired." He had become old.
Ananda goes back, but by the time he reaches the stream, a few bullock carts have just passed through the stream and they have made the whole stream muddy. Dead leaves which had settled into the bed have risen up; it is no longer possible to drink this water -- it is too dirty. He comes back empty-handed, and he says, "You will have to wait a little. I will go ahead. I have heard that just two, three miles ahead there is a big river. I will bring water from there."
But Buddha insists. He says, "You go back and bring water from the same stream."
Ananda could not understand the insistence, but if the master says so, the disciple has to follow. Seeing the absurdity of it -- that again he will have to walk three, four miles, and he knows that water is not worth drinking -- he goes.

When he is going, Buddha says, "And don't come back if the water is still dirty. If it is dirty, you simply sit on the bank silently. Don't do anything, don't get into the stream. Sit on the bank silently and watch. Sooner or later the water will be clear again, and then you fill the bowl and come back."

Ananda goes there. Buddha is right: the water is almost clear, the leaves have moved, the dust has settled. But it is not absolutely clear yet, so he sits on the bank just watching the river flow by. Slowly slowly, it becomes crystal-clear. Then he comes dancing. Then he understands why Buddha was so insistent. There was a certain message in it for him, and he understood the message. He gave the water to Buddha, and he thanked Buddha, touched his feet.

Buddha says, "What are you doing? I should thank you that you have brought water for me."

Ananda says, "Now I can understand. First I was angry; I didn't show it, but I was angry because it was absurd to go back. But now I understand the message. This is what I actually needed in this moment. The same is the case with my mind -- sitting on the bank of that small stream, I became aware that the same is the case with my mind. If I jump into the stream I will make it dirty again. If I jump into the mind more noise is created, more problems start coming up, surfacing. Sitting by the side I learned the technique.

"Now I will be sitting by the side of my mind too, watching it with all its dirtiness and problems and old leaves and hurts and wounds, memories, desires. Unconcerned I will sit on the bank and wait for the moment when everything is clear."

And it happens on its own accord, because the moment you sit on the bank of your mind you are no longer giving energy to it. This is real meditation. Meditation is the art of transcendence.

Freud talks about analysis, Assagioli about synthesis. Buddhas have always talked about meditation, awareness. You ask me, Amitabh, "What is the uniqueness of this third psychology?"

Meditation, awareness, watchfulness, witnessing -- that is the uniqueness. No psychoanalyst is needed. You can do it on your own; in fact, you have to do it on your own. No guidelines are needed, it is such a simple process -- simple if you do it; if you don't do it, it looks very complicated. Even the word 'meditation' scares many people. They think it something very difficult, arduous. Yes, if you don't do it it is difficult and arduous. It is like swimming. It is very difficult if you don't know how to swim, but if you know, you know it is so simple a process. Nothing can be more simple than swimming. It is not an art at all; it is so spontaneous and so natural.

Be more aware of your mind. And in being aware of your mind you will become aware of the fact that you are not the mind, and that is the beginning of the revolution. You have started flowing higher and higher. You are no longer tethered to the mind. Mind functions like a rock and keeps you. It keeps you within the field of gravitation. The moment you are no longer attached to the mind, you enter the buddhafield. When gravitation loses its power over you, you enter into the buddhafield. Entering the buddhafield

means entering into the world of levitation. You start floating upwards. Mind goes on dragging you downwards. So it is not a question of analyzing or synthesizing. It is simply a question of becoming aware. That's why in the East we have not developed any psychotherapy like Freudian or Jungian or Adlerian -- and there are so many in the market now. We have not developed a single psychotherapy because we know psychotherapies can't heal. They may help you to accept your wounds, but they can't heal. Healing comes when you are no longer attached to the mind. When you are disconnected from the mind, unidentified, absolutely untethered, when the bondage is finished, then healing happens.
Transcendence is true therapy, and it is not only psychotherapy. It is not only a phenomenon limited to your psychology, it is far more than that. It is spiritual. It heals you in your very being. Mind is only your circumference, not your center.

The second question:
Question 2
BELOVED MASTER,
I FEEL LIKE I HAVE JUMPED INTO AN OCEAN KNOWING NOTHING OF ITS WATERS. I SEE YOU AS THE LIFEGUARD. MY FEAR IS THAT I AM A TERRIBLE SWIMMER AND THERE ARE SO MANY OF US OUT HERE, YOU WON'T SEE OR KNOW WHEN I AM DROWNING.

My whole effort here is to help you drown, because the moment you disappear, God appears. To be drowned is to reach the other shore.

Yes, you are right, Mradula. If I was trying to take everybody to the other shore, it would be really difficult: one lifeguard and one hundred thousand people to be taken to the other shore. It will be really tiring and almost impossible, unmanageable. Then every possibility is that you will drown the lifeguard!

But the beauty of my work is that it is not a question of going to the other shore. If you are drowned, in that very drowning you have reached the other shore. So I need not remember everybody, his name, face -- there is no need for me to be bothered with all that. My whole concern is to push you into the water, and then the water takes care. And really it is a deep ocean, and there is no possibility of anybody ever crossing it -- so whether you are a terrible swimmer or not does not matter. If you are a terrible swimmer that is better, you will drown sooner than others! Those who can swim a little longer will remain a little longer in misery because they will be saving themselves. There are people here who are good swimmers, but they are the unfortunate ones. The really fortunate ones are those who don't know even the ABC of swimming, so the moment I push them in the water they are gone down! And that is the way to reach the other shore -- because only your ego drowns; you cannot. Only your ego dies; you cannot. You were never born and you will never die. No ocean can destroy you. No power can destroy you. No fire can consume you. That's why I go on pushing you without any worry about you -- whether you know swimming or not,

whether you will be able to reach the other shore or not. I talk about the other shore so that I can persuade you to jump into the ocean. Once you have jumped I forget all about you! I have to persuade others too!
So, Mradula, don't be worried. You are fortunate that you are not a good swimmer. Soon you will be drowned. And the moment you are gone, that is the greatest moment of your life, because in that very death is resurrection.

The third question:
Question 3
BELOVED MASTER,
WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY UNDERSTANDING SOMETHING IN MEDITATION? HOW DOES ONE GO ABOUT IT, AND WHAT PART OF ONESELF IS INVOLVED IN THE UNDERSTANDING?

Nigel, meditation and understanding are synonymous. So when I say "understand in meditation," I am simply saying to be silent, quiet, cool, and see. You are not to do anything else, you have to be just silent, cool and calm, and see. And understanding arises on its own accord. It is the fragrance of being silent.
Misunderstanding arises because your mind is very cloudy, noisy. Your mind never allows you to see that which is, never allows you to hear that which is said to you. Buddhas come and go but you remain the same. Yes, you become Christians and you become Buddhists, and you become Hindus, but you don't change. These are your strategies to escape change, to avoid the awakened ones.

You ask me, "What do you mean by understanding something in meditation?"
It is not a great problem. Meditation IS understanding. You are trying to figure it out intellectually, and that is not possible. You are trying to think about it, what it is all about. Whatsoever conclusion you arrive at will be wrong. It is not a question of thinking what is meant by it. Meditate, and experience. It is something to be experienced.
You say, "How does one go about it...?"
One does not go at all about it, otherwise you will go about and about. The word 'about' means around, and you will go around and around in circles. Don't make it an intellectual question; it is an existential approach. But the very word 'understanding' has misled you, because by 'understanding' we always think 'intellectual understanding'. That is not so. There is nothing like intellectual understanding. Intellectual understanding is pseudo. It is misunderstanding pretending to be understanding. The word 'understand' is beautiful. When you are in meditation everything stands under you, you are so above it. That's the meaning of understanding. Everything is there far below you, so you can see... like a bird's-eye view. You can see the whole from your altitude. Intellect cannot see it; it is on the same plane. Understanding happens only when the problem is on one plane and you are on a higher plane. If you are also on the same plane, understanding is not possible. You will misunderstand only. And that is one of the greatest problems to be encountered by every seeker.
Jesus says again and again to his disciples, "If you have ears, hear; if you have eyes, see." He was not talking to

blind people or deaf people, he was just talking to people like you. But why does he go on insisting? -- for the simple reason that hearing is not listening, and seeing is not true seeing. You see one thing and you understand something else. Your mind immediately distorts it. Your mind is upside down. It makes a mess of everything. It is in confusion, and you look through that confusion, so the whole world looks confused.

Old Nugent loved his cat, Tommy, so dearly he tried to teach it to talk.
"If I can get Tommy to converse with me," he reasoned, "I won't have to bother with ordinary humans at all."
First he tried a diet of canned salmon, then one of canaries. Tommy liked both -- but he didn't learn to talk. Then one day Nugent had two extremely talkative parrots cooked in butter and served to Tommy with asparagus and french fries. Tommy licked the plate clean, and then -- wonder of wonders -- suddenly turned to his master and shouted, "Look out!"
Nugent didn't move. The ceiling caved in and buried the old man under a mass of debris. Tommy shook his head and said, "Eight years he spends getting me to talk, and then the dummy doesn't listen!"

You go thousands of miles to listen to a master and then "... the dummy doesn't listen."
The mind cannot, it is impossible for the mind to listen; it is not in a state of receptivity. The mind is aggressive, it jumps to conclusions so fast, so quickly that it misses the

whole point. In fact, it has already concluded, it is simply waiting for its conclusion to be proved right.

Nigel, please don't try to understand; rather try to meditate. You must be new here. Dance, sing, meditate, let the mind settle a little bit. Let this stream of the mind, which is full of dead leaves and dirt, settle down a little. Let it become clean and clear, transparently clear; only then will you be able to understand what I am saying. Then it is so simple. I am not talking very complicated philosophy -- it is not philosophy at all -- I am simply indicating towards certain truths which I have experienced, and you can experience any moment you decide to experience. But it has to be a journey.

You say, "How does one go about it, and what part of oneself is involved in the understanding?"

It is not a question of any part being involved in it. Your totality is involved.

Meditation is not of the body, not of the mind, not of the soul. Meditation simply means your body, your mind, your soul, all functioning in such a harmony, in such wholeness, humming beautifully; they are in a melody... one. Your whole being -- body, mind, soul, are all involved in meditation. That's why my effort here is to start every meditation with the body. That is something new.

In the ancient days people tried to start meditation directly in your innermost core. That is a difficult process. You don't know anything about your inner center; how can you start your journey from somewhere where you have never been? You can start your journey only from where you already are. You are in the body, hence my emphasis is on dancing, singing, breathing -- so you can start from the

body. When the body starts becoming meditative.... And don't be puzzled by my use of the word 'meditative' for the body. Yes, the body becomes meditative. When it is in a deep dance, when it is functioning perfectly, undividedly, as a whole, it has a meditative quality about it, a certain grace, a beauty.

Then move inwards, then start watching the mind. Then the mind starts settling down. And when the mind has also settled, has become one with the body, then turn towards the center -- a one-hundred-and-eighty degree turn -- and a great peace will descend on you. It will pulsate from your soul to the body, from the body to the soul. In that pulsation you will be one.

So don't ask what part of oneself is involved in the understanding. Your totality is involved. And only when your totality is involved, there is understanding. Your body knows about it, your mind knows about it, your soul knows about it. Then you start functioning in unison, in unity. Otherwise the body says one thing, the mind says another, and the soul goes on in its own way. And you are always moving into different directions simultaneously. Your body is hungry, your mind is full of lust, and you are trying to be meditative. That's why I am not in favor of fasting -- unless it is done purely for health purposes, as a dieting for reducing weight, or maybe once in a while just for purifying, so the whole stomach is left for one day to rest, so the whole digestive system can sometimes get a holiday. Otherwise, it is continuously working and working and working -- it too gets tired.

Now scientists say even machines get tired. They call it metal-fatigue, just like mental fatigue. Even metal needs

rest, and your stomach is not made of metal, remember. It is not even made of plastic. It is made of fragile material, very fragile material. But it works your whole life. It is good sometimes to give it a holiday. Even God had to rest one day -- after six days work he rested for one day. Even God gets tired.

So sometimes, just out of kindness for the poor stomach, who works for you continuously, fasting is okay. But I don't suggest it -- that it is going to be helpful in meditation. When you are hungry your body wants you to go to the fridge.

I am against repressing your sex, because if you repress sex, whenever you will sit silently your mind will start fantasizing about sex. When you are occupied with other things the mind goes on fantasizing like an undercurrent, but when you are not doing anything it comes into the light. It starts demanding, it creates beautiful fantasies: alluring beauties surround you. How can you meditate?

In fact, the old traditions have created all kinds of barriers to meditation, and then they say, "Meditation is very difficult." Meditation is not difficult; meditation is a simple process, a natural process. But if you create unnecessary hindrances, then you make it something like a hurdle race. You create barriers: you put rocks on the way... you hang rocks around your neck, you keep yourself chained, imprisoned, locked from within and the key thrown out.... Then of course it becomes more and more difficult, more and more impossible.

My effort here is to make meditation a natural phenomenon. Give to the body what is the body's need, and give to the mind what is the mind's need. And then you will

be surprised, they become very friendly. And when you tell the body, "Now for one hour allow me to sit silently," the body says, "Okay. You have been doing so much for me, you have been so respectful towards me, I can do at least this much for you."

And when you say to the mind, "Please, keep yourself silent for a few minutes. Let me have a little rest," the mind will understand you. If you have not been repressing, if you have honored the mind, respected the mind, if you have not condemned it, then the mind will also become silent.

I am saying this from my own experience. Respect the body, respect the mind, so that they respect you. Create a friendliness. They are yours; don't be antagonistic. All the old traditions teach you to be antagonistic to the body and the mind; they create enmity, and through enmity you cannot move into meditation. Then the mind will disturb you more when you are meditating than at any other time. Then the body will become restless -- more in meditation than at any other time. It will take revenge, it won't allow you to sit silently. It will create so many problems for you. If you have tried to sit silently for a few minutes you will know. Imaginary things will start happening. You will think that some ant is creeping on your leg, and when you look there is no ant. Strange.... When you were sitting with closed eyes you felt absolutely that it was there, creeping, coming, coming, coming... and when you open your eyes there is no ant, nothing. It was just the body playing tricks with you. You have been playing tricks with the body. You have been deceiving the body in many ways, so now the body is deceiving you. When the body wants to go to sleep you force it to sit in a cinema hall. The body says, "Okay.

When the right opportunity arises I will see to it." So when you sit in meditation the body starts creating problems for you. Suddenly you start feeling your back needs scratching... and you are surprised because it never happens ordinarily.

One woman brought for me a plastic hand with a battery attached to it, to scratch your back. I said, "But why have you brought this to me?"

She said, "You must be sitting in meditation.... Whenever I sit in meditation the only problem is my back starts... I feel so much like I have to scratch it, and I cannot reach it. So I have purchased this hand. This is very handy! You put it on and it can scratch anywhere. So I was just thinking that you must be sitting in meditation... you will need this!"

I said, "I never sit in meditation. I AM in meditation, so I don't need to sit. Whatsoever I am doing I am in meditation. If my back needs scratching I will scratch it meditatively. What is wrong in scratching your own back? You are not scratching somebody else's back."

Just take care of the body and the body will repay you tremendously. Take care of your mind and the mind will be helpful. Create friendship, and meditation comes easily. Rather than trying to understand... because understanding is not possible before meditation, only MISunderstanding.

A man walked into a pub one night and sat down at the bar to drink a beer.

While he was engaged in conversation with the man on the stool beside him, a monkey clambered down one of the bar posts, stopped at his glass and pissed in his beer.

The man noticed it too late.

"Hey!" he exclaimed. "Did you see that? That monkey just pissed in my beer!"
"Well, no use tellin' me about it," said his neighbor. "Tell the barkeeper -- he owns this place."
The man called the barkeeper over.
"Hey!" he said. "Do you know that while I was talking with this gentleman a monkey came over and pissed in my beer?"
"Nothin' to do with me," said the landlord. "Go and have a word with the pianist over there -- it is his monkey!"
The man walked over with his pint mug, tapped the pianist on the shoulder and said, "Hey, do you know your monkey has just pissed in my beer?"
"No," said the pianist, "but if you sing the words, I will play it."

The fourth question:
Question 4
BELOVED MASTER,
IS NOT EGO A PART OF DIVINE PLAY? WHO AM I TO DROP IT?

Vedant Bharti... so please don't drop it!

The venerable old rabbi, known throughout the land for his wisdom, lay in a coma, very near death. On either side of his bed hovered his most worshipful disciples.
"Rebbenyu," pleaded the spokesman for the grieving congregants, "please do not leave us without a final word of wisdom. Speak to us for the last time, dear Rabbi." For a few moments there was no response, and the weeping

visitors feared he had passed on to his well-earned reward. But suddenly the rabbi's lips moved ever so slightly. They bent over him to hear his final words.
"Life is a cup of tea," he whispered in a faint voice.
The disciples looked at each other in perplexity. What did he mean? What great secret of life was hidden in that mystic statement? For the better part of an hour they exchanged opinions, analyzing the sentence from every conceivable standpoint, but they could not decipher the deeper meaning.
"We must ask him before it is too late," said the leader. Once again, he leaned over the still figure of the revered sage. "Rabbi, Rabbi," he called out urgently, "we implore you to explain. Why is life a cup of tea?"
With his last spark of energy, the rabbi lifted his palms and croaked, "Alright, so life is not a cup of tea."

Vedant Bharti, you say, "Is not ego a part of divine play? Who am I to drop it?"
If you are enjoying the divine play, please don't drop it. And there is one fear also: somebody may pick it up. It is better you keep yours. One to one is more than enough; somebody will have two if you drop it.
And do you understand what is meant by divine play? If you understand it, then where is the ego? If you understand it is all divine play, the ego has disappeared. The ego exists only when you take life seriously. Ego is a very serious phenomenon -- false, but serious. If life is a divine play, if you have come to this great wisdom, then where is the ego? Then you are just playing a part, you need not be identified with it. You are acting only. You need not become your

acting. Ego simply means you become identified with your part, so much so that you forget that you are separate, you forget that you are consciousness. You become lost in the acting itself, you become it -- that's what ego is.
Ego is not something that you have to drop. Ego is only a misunderstanding. You don't drop misunderstandings, you simply understand and the misunderstanding is no more there. You don't drop darkness, you simply bring light in and it is not found at all. Not that first you bring light in, then you catch hold of darkness and throw it out of the house -- there is no need. If you are really aware that it is a divine play, that means light has been brought in. Then you cannot ask the second thing.
If it is your understanding that life is a divine play, then you cannot ask, "Who am I to drop it?" Then you are not, you disappear. There is no dropper and nothing to be dropped.
But the first part of your question is not your understanding. So please, if you have dropped it, put it back, because there are so many foolish people, somebody may pick it up.

An angry mother dragged her nine-year-old son to the doctor's office and asked, "Is a nine-year-old boy able to perform an appendix operation?"
The doctor barked impatiently, "Of course not!"
The mother said to the kid, "So, was I right? Put it back!"

The fifth question:
Question 5
BELOVED MASTER,

LISTENING TO YOU, A DESIRE ARISES FOR AWARENESS; BUT IS NOT THIS VERY DESIRE ANTITHETICAL TO AWARENESS?

Prem Sunderam, if listening to me a desire arises for awareness, then you have missed the point. Listening to me you will become aware. If you are rightly listening, then awareness will happen through listening. If you are not listening, then a desire will arise to be aware. Desire means tomorrow you will be aware -- you want to be aware tomorrow. And if you are really listening to me, who bothers about tomorrow? This moment is all that is -- you ARE aware.

See right now....

This is awareness: the birds chirping, the silence, three thousand people lost into one organic, oceanic unity, as if there is nobody. This is awareness, and the taste of it will transform you. And then wherever you want to be aware you can be aware. It is something that is happening in you. Listening to me is only a device.

I am not here preaching to you; this is only a meditative device. Just as you are doing other meditations, this is also a meditation in which I participate with you so that your minds can become engaged with me, and your hearts can slip deep into your very core.

Sunderam, if a desire arises for meditation, for awareness, then you have missed the whole point, because desire is a barrier. Either be aware right now -- either now or never! You can't say "Tomorrow...." The moment you say tomorrow you have postponed it forever.

Yes, a desire is antithetical to awareness. Listening to me, understand that a desire is antithetical to awareness. Desirelessness is awareness. Seeing that desirelessness is awareness, how can you desire awareness? When, sitting with me each morning, you become silent, what is happening? There is no desire to be silent -- that's what is happening. Because there is no desire to be silent you are simply silent, and then that silence will go on surrounding you for the whole day.
And if you see the point then there is no need for any special situation for you to be aware in. You can be aware anywhere. In the very marketplace you can suddenly become aware. It is not a question of desiring; it is becoming aware suddenly. Any moment shake yourself a little, wake yourself a little.

Two drunks were riding a roller coaster when one turned to the other and said, "We may be making good time, but I've a feeling that we're on the wrong bus."

If you are postponing for tomorrow you are on the wrong bus; you are drunk; you are unconscious.

A policeman appeared in court as a witness against Max Loeb, arrested for being drunk in public.
"How do you know the defendant was intoxicated?" inquired the magistrate.
"No doubt about it at all," said the officer. "When I saw him, he was dropping a penny in a parking meter. Then he looked up at the big clock on the City Hall building and moaned, 'My God, I have gained eleven pounds!'"

Just a little consciousness.... And it can happen only now. God knows only one time, now, and only one place -- here. He knows no past, no future, he knows only the present. If you want to have any communion with reality you have to be aware right now.

Wife: "How did you happen to hit a telephone pole?"
Drunk: "I hit it in self-defense."

Just watch your life, what you are doing to yourself.

The fireman was pulling the drunk out of the burning bed. "You fool," he shouted, "that will teach you to smoke in bed!"
The drunk answered, "I was not smoking in bed -- it was on fire when I lay down."

So shake yourself. Don't say tomorrow. Whenever you remember, whenever you remember me, whenever you remember Buddha, whenever you remember Jesus, just shake yourself. Wake up! See all around -- the people, the trees, the birds. Be silent, available to existence, in a deep deep let-go... and awareness, slowly slowly, will go on penetrating deeper and deeper into you.

Mulla Nasruddin was saying to me:
"I am the sensitive type -- a poet. When I see a beautiful woman I want to cry... or write a poem... or jump on her!
"I was at a party in my hotel and I met this really great girl, and we drank champagne. I managed to get her up to my

room. I locked the door and took off my glasses -- showed her no mercy! And I winked... and she winked. And I took off my shirt... and she took off her shirt. I took off my pants... and she took off her pants -- and I lunged at her. Then I realized I had been looking into a mirror. I was taking glass out of my legs for weeks. I must say I was the best I ever had!"

The last question:
Question 6
BELOVED MASTER,
ARE YOU AN ANTI-SEMITE?

Levin, me? An anti-Semite? You must be crazy!

Louie Feldman -- a traveling salesman -- caught the last train out of Grand Central Station, but in his haste he forgot to pack his toiletry set.
The following morning he arose bright and early and made his way to the lavatory at the end of the car. Inside he walked up to a washbasin that was not in use.
"Excuse me," said Louie to a man who was bent over the basin next to his, "I forgot to pack all my stuff last night. Mind if I use your soap?"
The stranger gave him a searching look, hesitated momentarily, and then shrugged. "Okay, help yourself."
Louie murmured his thanks, washed, and again turned to the man. "Mind if I borrow your towel?"
"No, I guess not."
Louie dried himself, dropped the wet towel to the floor and inspected his face in the mirror. "I could use a shave," he

commented. "Would it be alright with you if I use your razor?"
"Certainly," agreed the man in a courteous voice.
"How you fixed for shaving cream?"
Wordlessly, the man handed Louie his tube of shaving cream.
"You got a fresh blade? I hate to use one that somebody else already used. Can't be too careful, you know."
Louie was given a fresh blade. His shave completed, he turned to the stranger once more. "You wouldn't happen to have a comb handy, would you?"
The man's patience had stretched dangerously near the breaking point, but he managed a wan smile and gave Louie his comb.
Louie inspected it closely. "You should really keep this comb a little cleaner," he admonished as he proceeded to wash it. He then combed his hair and again addressed his benefactor whose mouth was now drawn in a thin, tight line.
"Now, if you don't mind, I will have a little talcum powder, some after-shave lotion, some toothpaste and a toothbrush."
"By God, I never heard of such damn nerve in my life!" snarled the outraged stranger. "Hell, no! Nobody in the whole world can use my toothbrush."
He slammed his belongings into their leather case and stalked to the door, muttering, "I gotta draw the line some place!"
"Anti-Semite!" yelled Louie.

Enough for today.

The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 10

Chapter #5

Chapter title: The Buddha is your birthright
25 February 1980 am in Buddha Hall

QUIETEN YOUR MIND.
REFLECT.
WATCH.
NOTHING BINDS YOU.
YOU ARE FREE.

YOU ARE STRONG.
YOU HAVE COME TO THE END.
FREE FROM PASSION AND DESIRE,
YOU HAVE STRIPPED THE THORNS FROM THE STEM.
THIS IS YOUR LAST BODY.

YOU ARE WISE.
YOU ARE FREE FROM DESIRE
AND YOU UNDERSTAND WORDS
AND THE STITCHING TOGETHER OF WORDS.
AND YOU WANT NOTHING.

"VICTORY IS MINE,
KNOWLEDGE IS MINE,
AND ALL PURITY,
ALL SURRENDER.

"I WANT NOTHING.
I AM FREE.
I HAVE FOUND MY WAY.
WHOM SHALL I CALL TEACHER?"

THE GIFT OF TRUTH IS BEYOND GIVING.
THE TASTE BEYOND SWEETNESS,
THE JOY BEYOND JOY.

THE END OF DESIRE IS THE END OF SORROW.

The whole philosophy of Gautama the Buddha is contained in the first sutra. It is of uttermost importance. It is not only to be intellectually understood, it has to be lived; only then will you be able to understand it.

QUIETEN YOUR MIND.

Buddha does not preach any belief -- belief in God, heaven or hell. His whole emphasis is on creating a silent space within you. You are already full of knowledge; more knowledge you don't need. You need more innocence. You need an innocence like a small child. You need more wonder, more awe, more clarity.
And all these come to you when the mind is silent. When the mind is silent you are in communion with existence; when the mind is noisy you are disconnected. Your own noise functions like a wall around you. Silence is the bridge; knowledge, noise, is a barrier. And all knowledge creates noise in you. The more you know, the more you

become indoctrinated, the more you are full of rubbish, junk.

You need a spacious being within you, utterly empty, so empty that even YOU are not there, so silent that even the idea of 'I' has disappeared. Then there is no barrier between you and existence. You fall in harmony. You become part of this tremendous celebration that goes on and on. You dance with the stars, you dance with the wind, you dance with the clouds. Your whole being becomes a dance, a song. You burst forth into thousands of flowers. But a silent being is a must; in a noisy being, nothing is possible. The noisy mind is impotent; it is not fertile, it is not creative. The silent mind is the right soil for your being to grow -- to grow to its ultimate heights and depths.

Hence the first sutra: QUIETEN YOUR MIND.

One sometimes feels surprised the way Buddha starts. The way Buddha approaches reality is so unique. It is utterly revolutionary, radical. One would have thought he would start with a prayer to God -- but there is no God. In Buddha's vision God has no place. God is the invention of the ignorant people.

For Buddha there is no God as a person; there is no creator because the creation is eternal. Yes, there is creativity, but no creator. There is godliness, but no God. The whole existence is overflowing with godliness, but God is not a person so you cannot pray to him.

Remember, prayer is impossible with Buddha. Prayer presupposes a God, a personal God who can favor you if you praise him, who can be very disfavorable to you if you annoy him. This is childish -- the whole approach is

childish; it is not religious at all.

Buddha begins in a very scientific way. Rather than talking about God he talks about you and about your reality. As you are, you are nothing but noise. Look within and you will see the facticity of Buddha: you are just noise; not even a moment of silence happens to you. Hence your doors and windows remain closed. You are surrounded by your own garbage that you go on creating and accumulating, thinking that it is great treasure.
QUIETEN YOUR MIND.... And the statement is very significant, because the moment the mind is quiet the mind disappears. A quiet mind means a no-mind. A quiet mind is not anymore a mind at all. Negatively you can call it a no-mind. That's what Zen people have done, that's what mystics like Kabir, Nanak, have done. They call it AMANI -- a state of no-mind. But you can use a positive term also. Mahayana Buddhists call this state BODHICHITTA -- the universal Mind. Mind with a capital M, mind you, not YOUR mind, not MY mind, but simply THE Mind: the oceanic Mind, the Mind of the whole.
Both are good. If you love positive ways of saying things you can call it bodhichitta -- the Mind of the Buddha, the universal Mind. Or, if you love to be more accurate, then the negative way of saying it is far more correct; then call it no-mind, because as noise disappears, mind disappears. Just as when your disease disappears, health is left behind -- not that now you have a healthy disease. Disease is never healthy and mind is never silent. Disease is disease and mind is noise. When there is no disease then there is health; when there is no noise then there is no-mind.

But a new experience arises in your innermost core: the experience of a silent music, a soundless sound. The mystics have called it ANAHAT NAD, the soundless sound; or, as the Zen people say, the sound of one hand clapping. It is basically paradoxical; hence the expression, the sound of one hand clapping.
Buddha says: QUIETEN YOUR MIND. Really he is saying: Go beyond mind, drop the mind, be finished with it. And what is the way? How has it to be done?

REFLECT....

That is the first fundamental. Remember, by "reflect" he does not mean contemplate, think. No, by reflect he actually means reflect -- like a mirror. The mirror reflects; whatsoever comes in front of the mirror, it reflects it. It does not think about it, it does not contemplate it; it simply reflects. When it has moved, the reflection disappears. This should be the fundamental: reflect things, and when they have disappeared, let them disappear. Don't go on carrying the past. Don't become a photo-plate; remember to remain a mirror. The photo-plate also reflects, but it becomes attached to the reflection, it becomes obsessed with the reflection. It clings to it, it becomes imprinted with it. The mirror remains clean; it is not imprinted by what it reflects. It does not become beautiful when a beautiful face is reflected; it does not become ugly.
So should be the seeker. When success comes, reflect; don't become attached to it. When failure comes, reflect; don't be disturbed by it. When you are in a palace, reflect the palace, and when you are in a hut, reflect the hut. Don't become

attached either to the palace or to the hut. Let everything come and pass, and you simply be a mirror.
If you are a mirror you cannot carry the past with you, and if you don't carry the past you will remain fresh, you will remain young, you will remain in a continuous process of birth. Each moment you will be born anew. We become old... I am not talking about physiological age, I am talking about psychological age. We become very old for the simple reason that we collect the past.
You are still carrying something that happened thirty years ago. Somebody had insulted you and that wound is still there; you still hanker to take revenge. You were rich fifty years ago, you cannot forget that yet; or you were poor and you are still carrying that with you.
That's how you find the world full of miserly people. From where do they come? These are poor people who have become rich, but they are still clinging to their poverty. Only on the surface they have possessions, but deep down they are poor, very poor. They can't leave their poverty -- they can't depart from their past. They are carrying it; it has become a habit, it has become second nature to them. Hence the clinging to the money. They cannot spend, they cannot use their money.

I know a person who has at least ten buildings and earns a lot of money but lives in such a dirty house. All his buildings are beautiful, but those beautiful buildings have been rented and he lives in a dirty black hole. He has no wife, no children; he is alone.
The reason I became acquainted with him, was that whenever he would pass through the street where I used to

live, at least from one furlong I would know that he was coming, because he used a bicycle so old that it must have been used by Adam and Eve! It made so much noise that I became interested in the man.
I inquired, "Who is this man?" and they said, "He is one of the richest men of the town. His bicycle has no brakes, but one thing is good about his bicycle: if you tell him to purchase a new one he says no, he can leave it anywhere -- nobody ever steals it! Who will steal it? Anybody stealing it... it will be known all over the city who has stolen it, it makes so much noise!"
I told a common friend that I would like to meet the man, and I asked him, "Why are you living in such misery when you can live beautifully, in a beautiful house? You have enough money, more than you need, and once you are dead there is nobody else for whom you are collecting all this." He said, "I know it, but somehow I cannot spend. That is impossible. Once I get some money, the hardest thing for me is to spend it." Tears came into his eyes and he said, "I also feel, What am I doing to myself? But I lived in poverty -- my parents died when I was very young. I have been a beggar; slowly slowly I have earned money. I gambled, I did all kinds of things, and that poverty is still within me -- I am still an orphan. I am not a rich man -- I am the poorest in this town."
And I could see it in his eyes. This is what happens to people.

You just watch your mind and you will see a queue of past events going back, far back, to the age when you were three

or four. And all that has become collected; it is heavy on you.
Buddha says: If you want to quieten the mind, the first thing is to learn the art of reflecting. Just reflect and move on. Yes, live in the moment, live totally. Reflect whatsoever is and then let it move. Don't cling to it, so that you are again pure, again innocent, again available, again empty, ready to experience again.
It is because of your past that you cannot experience the present; your past distorts everything. It is because of your past that you go on desiring the future, because you don't want to repeat the mistakes of the past and you would like to have all the pleasures that you enjoyed in the past again and again in the future. So your future is nothing but a modified past: all the pains have been deleted and all the pleasures have been multiplied. And between your past and future is the small present -- which is real. Between two unrealities you are destroying that which is real. If you learn to reflect, then the past is irrelevant, the future is irrelevant; the only relevance is that of the present.
Be present to the present -- that is the meaning of reflecting.
And the second thing: to quieten the mind, Buddha says:

WATCH.

What will you do when you reflect? You are not a dead thing, you are not like a dead mirror. Be like a mirror, but you can't be dead -- you are alive. So what will you do?
WATCH.

You think, you imagine, but you never watch. Watching is a totally different process. It means you don't have any likes, any dislikes. You don't condemn anything, you don't appreciate either. You simply see and you are aware and you are alert -- not dead like a mirror. You are aware. You are watching what is happening.

You see a roseflower; you reflect it and you watch it. You don't say anything about the rose. You don't bring words between you and the rose because all those words are useless. When you are confronting a real rose why bring words in? Why destroy the reality of the rose by bringing interpretations of the past? You may be quoting great poets -- Shelley and Yeats -- but by quoting them you are bringing between you and the rose a barrier. Leave your eyes utterly empty -- but don't fall asleep. Watch, just look silently. Be a witness.

Watching means looking at things without any evaluation, neither saying it is good nor saying it is bad -- because nothing is good and nothing is bad. Things are simply what they are.

A rose is a rose and a thorn is a thorn; neither the thorn is bad nor the rose is good. If man disappears from the earth, roses will be there, thorns will be there, but there will be nobody to say that roses are good and thorns are bad. It is our mind that creates these values. And these go on changing.

Just a hundred years ago nobody would have ever thought to put a cactus in one's home. A cactus is all thorns. If you had brought a cactus into your home, people would have thought you were mad, something had gone wrong with you! But now to grow roses in your home is orthodox. The

avant-garde people grow cactuses; they are the really cultured people. They keep cactus plants in their bedrooms too -- poisonous, dangerous, but the cactus is "in" and the rose is "out." Fashions change.

In this century, ugly things have become beautiful and beautiful things have become ugly. Picasso is valuable -- one of the ugliest painters the world has ever known! Just two hundred or three hundred years ago he would have been forced to live in a mental asylum if he had painted things like this. He would have been thought insane, utterly insane, because the world of Michelangelo is a totally different world; a different valuation existed. The world of Leonardo da Vinci is a totally different world.

Fashions go on changing. Every day man goes on changing. Nothing is, in fact, good or bad, beautiful or ugly. It all depends on you. Whatsoever you start thinking is good, beautiful, becomes good and beautiful. A Jaina monk moving naked is thought to be great by the Jainas, but others think it a little obscene. Many times problems arise.

Just a few days ago in a village, there was a riot because one Jaina monk entered in the town and the non-Jainas objected that a naked man walking inside the town.... "This is bad for our children and our wives and our daughters."

I am not against nudity, but I am also not in favor of Jaina monks moving naked. My reason is totally different; my reason is that they look so ugly. Unless you have a beautiful body you don't have the right to be naked. I can accept Mahavira moving naked. It is said that he had one of the most beautiful bodies -- and it seems so because all his statues are so beautiful. He must have had a very beautiful

body, very proportionate. If he moved naked, that can be understood. To cover his beautiful body with clothes will not be right. But Jaina monks deliberately destroy their bodies. They are masochistic people: they cripple their bodies in many ways. They make them as ugly as they can, because the uglier your body is, the more respected you are. So they become caricatures. They are cartoons, not real people. It is better to cover them in beautiful clothes.

It depends what your criteria are, what your values are. But in reality, nothing is good and nothing is bad; things are simply what they are. If you witness then there is no question of choice. Then a choiceless awareness arises in you.

That's what J. Krishnamurti goes on saying; it is basically the message of Buddha. The followers of Krishnamurti think that he is teaching something very original. It has nothing original in it; it is essentially the message of Buddha. It is not J. Krishnamurti's invention. In a different sense it is original; it is original in the sense that it is his experience. He also knows it as much as Buddha knew, but it is not new -- not original in the sense of being new. It is original in the sense that it has originated in him. He is not repeating Buddha, that is true. He is not imitating Buddha, that is true. He is simply saying what HE has known. But whatsoever he has known is the same truth as Buddha's truth.

In fact, there are not two truths in the world, so all the awakened ones know the same truth again and again. Their language is different, their expression is different; it is bound to be so. Twenty-five centuries have passed since Buddha. How can I speak the same language? And how

could Buddha have spoken the language that I speak? That is impossible. But as the followers of Krishnamurti go on claiming that his teaching is absolutely original, new -- that is utter nonsense. It is basically the same teaching as Buddha's: choiceless awareness. That is the meaning of "reflect" and "watch."
Be aware, but don't choose. If you choose, you lose watching. If you start clinging -- because the moment you choose you will start clinging -- then reflection is lost. And once you have fulfilled these two simple things -- reflection and watchfulness....

NOTHING BINDS YOU.
YOU ARE FREE.

These simple sutras are enough. If you can practice only these two things -- reflection and watchfulness -- nothing else is needed. You ARE free, nothing binds you. You are really freedom; nothing can ever bind you. All bondage is imaginary. You think you are in bondage; hence you are in bondage. It is your thought.

Harvey Pincus, the passionate playboy of Prospect Park, oblivious of human limitations, speeded up when he should have slowed down. To his surprise and dismay, he awoke three days later in Bellevue Hospital where he was placed on a strict diet of raw eggs and oysters with wheat germ, garnished with ginseng and soybean sprouts.
A week later, his physical desires returned and, after having been rebuffed by Bellevue nurses of various shapes, sizes,

ages and national origins, he demanded to be released forthwith so that he might resume his "al fresco" prowling in the Prospect Park perimeter.

Pincus was soon confronted by Dr. Siegel, the hospital's staff psychiatrist. "Before we release you, you will have to take a Rohrschach test," explained the medic.

"What is that?" asked Pincus suspiciously.

"A kind of personality gauge. I will just show you some inkblots and you tell me what each one suggests to you."

"So go ahead and test."

Dr. Siegel handed him the first blot. "What does this bring to mind?"

"That's easy," replied Pincus instantly, his eyes lighting with pleasure. "It is a girl's hips."

"And this?" asked the psychiatrist, handing him another inkblot.

"A woman's breast. Very nice, too."

"Hmm -- how about this one?"

"Wow, Doctor, what a gorgeous pair of legs!"

Siegel had already reached an obvious conclusion about his patient's proclivities, but he continued with a half-dozen more inkblots just to make sure. When Pincus continued to respond as though all the "pictures" were sexual symbols, right up to the last blot, the doctor leaned back in his chair and rendered his diagnosis.

"My dear fellow," he began, somewhat severely, "in case nobody ever told you, you have an abnormal fixation on sex."

"What does that mean, if I may be so bold to inquire?"

"It means, sir," Siegel explained bluntly, "that you have a filthy mind."

"Well, look who's talking!" Pincus yelled, outraged. "YOU are showing me all those dirty pictures and I'VE got a filthy mind!"

What you are seeing in the world is not really there; it is your projection. What the world is like you will be able to see only when your mind has learned to be silent, to watch, to reflect. Then you will know that which is. Right now what you know is nothing but your own mind being projected on the screen of the world. Everything functions as a screen for you and you go on projecting your ideas; hence the insistence of Buddha on making the mind absolutely quiet.
When the mind is silent the projector stops, the screen becomes blank, and then for the first time you see the glory of existence. Then for the first time you become aware of the splendor and the blissfulness and the peace that surrounds everything. You become aware of godliness overflowing everywhere. Everything is known then in its authentic reality, undistorted by you.

The preacher was telling his congregation that there are over seven hundred different kinds of sin.
The next day he was besieged with mail and phone calls from people who wanted the list -- to make sure they were not missing anything.

If you talk about sin and you want people to stop, what they hear is totally different. They start feeling that they are missing something: "Seven hundred sins -- just think about it!" And you will also start feeling, "My God, how much I

am missing! Seven hundred, and I have not even committed seven! I go on committing only a few, two or three again and again -- and there are seven hundred sins! What a wastage of life!" You don't even know the names of them.

The night clerk at the Hotel Algonquin was surprised to see a battered-looking man, wearing nothing but his undershorts, enter the lobby from the street. The stranger staggered to the desk and paused there, weaving groggily.
"What can I do for you?" inquired the clerk.
"I would like to be escorted to the third floor, room 302," said the near-naked man.
"Room 302," repeated the clerk. He consulted the register. "I am sorry, sir, but that room is occupied by Mr. Oscar J. Levine of Toledo. It is pretty late to be rousing a guest!"
"I know what time it is, well as you do," retorted the inebriated one. "Just show me to room 302 without any further con-conver... any further talk."
"Well, what is your name?"
"My name is Oscar J. Levine, and for your information I just fell outa the window!"

People are almost asleep, drunk with a thousand and one desires. There is nothing more intoxicating than desire. And it is not only one desire that is intoxicating you, there are many many desires -- seven hundred desires at least! And they are all intoxicating you, and they don't allow you to see that which is. You can't see that which is unless you stop desiring.

Desiring disappears on its own accord if you become silent, because in a silent mind no desire can grow. Desire can grow only in a clouded mind, clumsy and confused.
Buddha says:

YOU ARE STRONG.
YOU HAVE COME TO THE END.
FREE FROM PASSION AND DESIRE,
YOU HAVE STRIPPED THE THORNS FROM THE STEM.
THIS IS YOUR LAST BODY.

If you can fulfill the requirement of being silent, reflecting, witnessing, then you are strong, you are no longer weak. The man who lives in desires always feels weak because thousands of desires are pulling him in different directions. He is almost falling apart. Somehow he is keeping himself together, managing, dragging. He is tired, but he does not know what else to do. Everybody else is doing the same. People are running after desires. Nobody seems to be fulfilled, nobody seems to reach anywhere, but what else to do? When everybody is running, you start running. It is a crowd psychology.
To be a sannyasin, to be a seeker of truth, means getting out of the world of crowd psychology, the mob mentality. Unless you become aware that the crowd is dragging you with itself and you step out of the power of the crowd, you will never be able to know what truth is, you will never become a buddha. And to be a buddha is your birthright.
YOU ARE STRONG... but your desires go on making you weak. Once you have become silent you will be able to see

it. A silent state of your being is so strong that you know you have come to the very end, you have come to fulfillment. One comes to fulfillment not by achieving something in the outside world but by reaching to one's own innermost core: what Jesus calls the kingdom of God, what Buddha calls nirvana, what Mahavira calls moksha. When you have reached to your innermost core suddenly you become aware that all that you have been desiring was useless and what you really needed, what was your real nourishment, has been waiting for you inside you. Your search has to be inner, not outer. You can become Alexander the Great, you can conquer the whole world, and yet you will die with empty hands. Don't be bothered with all that nonsense. Be a Buddha, not an Alexander!
Buddha means one who has seen his truth and is contented, utterly contented with it. FREE FROM PASSION AND DESIRE, YOU HAVE STRIPPED THE THORNS FROM THE STEM. THIS IS YOUR LAST BODY. If you can be free from passion and desire....
Passion is a state of fever, it is a hot state. We know only two states: either we are very hot -- that is passion -- or we are very cold -- that is anti-passion. If you love, you become very hot; if you hate, you become very cold. And exactly in the middle is the point where you should stop. That point is neither hot nor cold. It is transcendental to both, it is cool. And when you are really cool, silent, peaceful, mysteries open their doors for you. A feverish man, in a passionate state, is almost blind.

Feinberg came home from a business trip and his wife coolly informed him that she had been unfaithful during his absence.
"Who was it?" shouted Feinberg, "that rotten Goldberg?"
"No," his wife replied, "it was not Goldberg."
"Was it that crooked partner of mine -- that goniff, Levy?"
"No, not Levy."
"I know who it was -- it was that momzer, Shapiro!"
"No, it was not Shapiro, either."
Feinberg glowered at his wife. "What is the matter?" he barked. "None of my friends are good enough for you?"

People are living... not really living, just mechanically moving, victims of blind forces. When sex takes possession of you, you are not your own master. Or when greed takes possession, or anger, or jealousy, you are not your own master. You are being dragged. And it is very strange that you allow it to happen -- you don't feel insulted or humiliated! Each of your instincts makes you a slave. You not only tolerate this slavery; on the contrary, you enjoy it. On the contrary, you think this is what life is supposed to be. This is not life that you are living. It is biology, it is physiology, it is chemistry, but it is not life. To live under the influence of instincts is not to live at all.
Life begins only when you rise above your instincts. And the way to rise is: REFLECT, WATCH, and you will immediately know: NOTHING BINDS YOU. YOU ARE FREE. You are a master. In your watchfulness, slowly slowly, passions disappear, because a watchful person cannot be hot.

Desires are always leading you into the future. Desire means future; it can only happen tomorrow. So you go on looking at the tomorrow, and meanwhile the time is passing. And the tomorrow never comes; it can't come, in the very nature of things. So your whole life is just a waiting for nothing -- waiting for Godot! And Godot never comes. In fact, nobody knows who this Godot is.
But we go on waiting for something to happen some day, and we know that it has not happened to anybody. It didn't happen to your father, to your father's father. It has not happened to your neighbors. You can look around people's faces: it has not happened. You don't see the glow, you don't see in their eyes contentment, you don't see joy. You see only a desperate effort to achieve something which they are not really aware of, what exactly it is and whether it is possible or not. But they go on running in hot pursuit -- and they go on destroying their life.

"Grandma, how long have you and grandpa been married?" asked the romantic young granddaughter.
"Forty-nine years," replied the old lady.
"Ah, what a beautiful life you must have had," sighed the girl. "And I will bet you never even thought of a divorce."
"Well," said grandma, "divorce, no -- murder, yes!"

Just ask the old people what they have attained, what they have been doing. And if they are true and authentic, if they are sincere, they will tell you nothing but that "Life has been a tale told by an idiot, full of fury and noise, signifying nothing. And now comes death, and all is

finished." But to a meditator, death is not the end but the beginning of a new life.
Buddha says: THIS IS YOUR LAST BODY. If you have quietened the mind, if you have become free from desire and passion: THIS IS YOUR LAST BODY. Now you will be born into a bodiless existence. Now you will be part of the invisible life, the eternal life which knows no birth, no death.
The body is a limitation, the body confines you. You are unlimited consciousness, but your body forces you into a small, dark hole. You live in a dark hole, in a dark cave. Of course, it is going to be miserable. You are vast and somehow you have been forced to live in a small space. Nobody has done it to you; you yourself go on doing it. Each time you die, you die with desires. Those desires bring you back into new wombs. Those desires give you another body.
If you can die without desires, then there is no longer any birth. When there is no birth there is no old age, no death. And when there is no birth there is no time. You go beyond time. You live in eternity, you become divine. That's what Buddha means by godliness -- BHAGAVATA.

YOU ARE WISE.

Through silence you become wise, not through learning, not by becoming more informed but by becoming absolutely silent. YOU ARE WISE... otherwise you will know only words -- hollow words, meaningless words. Yes, you can accumulate much knowledge. You can know the Vedas and the Koran and the Bible and the Gita and

you can repeat them, but you will not understand anything. More is the possibility that you will misunderstand. From where will you get the right perspective to understand them? With all your passions and desires and all your confusion and clouded mind, how are you going to understand the Upanishads, the Koran? Impossible. They come from people who had gone beyond the body. Unless YOU go beyond the body you will not understand them. You can understand only that which you have experienced. But the knowledgeable people not only deceive others, they start deceiving themselves -- maybe not knowingly, not deliberately. If you go on deceiving others your whole life, pretending that you know, slowly slowly you start believing in your own pretensions. You forget that you don't know; you don't want to remember it. Who wants to know that "I am ignorant"? Everybody wants to feel that he knows.

Ask anybody about God and it is very rare to find a person who will say to you, "I don't know." Very rare... almost impossible. Many will say, "Yes, God is, God exists." And they are ready to fight, to argue, to kill you or be killed, for something that they know not, not at all. And there are a few who will say, "No, there is no God." But it is very rare to find a person who will say, "I don't know" -- and that is the real religious person.

The agnostic is the real religious person -- neither the theist nor the atheist. One believes without knowing, one disbelieves without knowing; both are deceiving. But I am not doubting their sincerity. They may be thinking... they may be absolutely convinced that they know. And then you ask other questions about God and then they have to invent

answers, because basically they have accepted that they know.
Ask them how many heads God has, and they will tell you three or four, and they will make much out of nonsense. They will say that God has four heads because there are four directions and he has to look in all directions, or three because there are three dimensions and he has to look into all dimensions. How many hands has he? And some say he has one thousand hands because he has to work so much and he is so alone, and he has to create the world and manage the whole show all alone. One thousand hands... two hands are not enough. Do you think one thousand hands will be enough to manage this vast universe? Do you think four heads will be enough to see everywhere?
But people go on inventing answers. You ask the question and they invent -- they have to invent because they cannot accept one thing, that they don't know.

A blonde took her dog to the vet who advised her to buy some Nair to remove the excess hair around the Schnauzer's eyes and ears.
The blonde entered a pharmacy and asked for the hair remover.
"Use it full strength for leg hair," said the druggist, "but dilute it one half for the underarms."
"Ah," said the girl, "but I want to use it on my Schnauzer."
"In that case," said the pharmacist, "you better use one quarter strength and I wouldn't ride a Honda for a couple of weeks."

The knowledgeable person cannot ask, "What is this Schnauzer?" That shows his ignorance and he cannot show that. Sometimes knowledgeable people commit such stupidities that no ignorant person can ever commit, because the ignorant person can always ask what it is -- "I don't know." But the knowledgeable person finds it impossible. He cannot say these three words: "I don't know." If you can say, "I don't know," you have taken one of the greatest steps towards real knowing, towards wisdom.

Buddha says: When mind is empty, silent, you are wise. By wisdom he does not mean knowledgeability; by wisdom he means innocence. Knowledge comes from the outside, wisdom arises within. Knowledge creates noise, wisdom brings more and more silence. The wise person slowly slowly becomes utterly silent. Even if he speaks, his words carry the flavor of silence, the music of silence.

By wisdom he means spontaneity, childlike spontaneity, eyes full of wonder. When your eyes are full of wonder you can see the beauty that surrounds you. When your eyes are full of knowledge you can't see the beauty because you have explanations for everything -- and explanations help you only to explain things away, nothing else.

But knowledgeable people have been doing good business. They have dominated humanity too long; that is their joy.

"I've got a problem, Doc," the new patient began.

"We all have problems," replied the doctor, smiling his assurance.

"My problem is this, Doc: I get migraine headaches every time I think of my wife. I break out in a rash every time I

think of my job. I get cold sweats every time I think of my bank account. Talk about problems! Boy, have I got them!"
"Every problem has its answer, of course, and I understand this one perfectly," said the psychiatrist, nodding. "You will need a hundred sessions on the couch, at twenty-five dollars per session."
The patient gulped. "Well, Doc," he said after a painful pause, "that solves your problem. Now, how about mine?"

The knowledgeable people are doing good business. The priests, the professors, the pundits, the scholars, the theologians, they have been doing good business. Without knowing a thing about God, without knowing a thing about themselves even, they go on talking about great problems and great solutions. They talk about metaphysics, about philosophy. They have ready-made answers for everything. Beware of these people! And they are all around, in the churches, in the mosques, in the temples, in the universities; you will find them everywhere. Beware of them. They are the people who will not allow humanity to ever become wise because once humanity becomes wise their profession is finished.

YOU ARE WISE.
YOU ARE FREE FROM DESIRE
AND YOU UNDERSTAND WORDS
AND THE STITCHING TOGETHER OF WORDS.
AND YOU WANT NOTHING.

Buddha says: When you are wise... not knowledgeable, not well informed, but when meditation has released your inner

fragrance, when your inner consciousness has become a fully open lotus, then you will be able to understand words -- the words of the buddhas -- not before that. Don't waste your time with the Gita and the Koran and the Gurugrantha -- unless you become meditative.

Once you know your own being, in deep silence you have encountered yourself, then, of course, scriptures are tremendously beautiful. Then you will be able to understand because you will be standing in the same position, you will be having the same vision. Now scriptures will become your witnesses, they will witness for you. When you have known something on your own, reading in the Gita or in the Koran suddenly you will come across a sentence that will say exactly the same that you have experienced, and suddenly now the meaning is revealed.

Meaning has to come first to you through experience; only then can you understand words -- particularly the words of buddhas. In the ordinary world we don't understand even the words of those who are not enlightened. You can see it happening everywhere. Talk to your wife and you will understand; you both speak the same language, but there is no conversation possible. You say one thing, she understands another. You try to explain it to her, she goes even farther away. She tried to explain something to you and you jump to some other conclusion. It seems conversation is impossible. Both are in a state of madness. Both are so full of their own ideas that before the other has said anything they have already concluded what he means. Nobody is listening to anybody else. Even when somebody is silent and pretending to listen to you, he is not listening.

He is thinking a thousand and one things. While you are talking, he is preparing, so when you stop he starts saying something to you.

Passing Beth Yisroel Synagogue in Staten Island, in the wee hours of the morning, a drunk noticed a sign that read: RING THE BELL FOR THE SHAMMES. He did just that, and a sleepy-eyed old man came to the door.
"What do you want at this hour?" the shammes demanded crossly.
The drunk looked the old man over for a full twenty seconds and then retorted, "I want to know why you can't ring that silly bell yourself!"

People are bound to understand according to their minds.

Tannenbaum the tailor had saved up his money for years so that he could fulfill a longtime dream -- to take a Caribbean cruise. But he had not reckoned with seasickness. On the second day out from port, the captain noticed him, green-faced, hanging on the ship's rail.
"Sorry, sir," said the captain politely, "but you can't be sick here."
"No?" said Tannenbaum. "Watch!"

Rabbi Longbleibt of Far Rockaway had a well-deserved reputation for being long-winded. On this Sabbath, he was in especially good form. His topic for the day was "Prophets of the Bible."
"Now then," he added, after speaking for half an hour, "we have disposed of the major prophets. Next we come to the

minor prophets. To what place, my dear friends, shall we assign them?"
From a seat in the rear of the temple, a bored-looking stranger arose. He waved an explanatory hand at the seat he had just vacated and said, "One of them can have my place!"

It is impossible to understand even the people who are just like you. What to say about buddhas? They speak from sunlit peaks and you live in dark valleys. By the time their words reach you they are no longer the same. By the time you hear them, great interpretation has happened. Your mind has colored them in its own color.
Buddha says: Now YOU ARE WISE. YOU ARE FREE FROM DESIRE. That is the sign of wisdom: freedom from desire. Only fools desire. Wise people live and live joyously, but without desire. Either you can desire or you can live, you can't do both. If you desire, you postpone living; if you live, who bothers about desiring? Today is enough unto itself.
... AND YOU UNDERSTAND WORDS AND THE STITCHING TOGETHER OF WORDS.
This is a very beautiful sutra. Buddha says: The words of the awakened ones have to be understood in a special way because they are stitched in a special way. Between two words there is silence; that is the stitching. You have to read between the lines. If you can just understand the lines you will miss the whole point. You have to read between the lines. You have to read between the words. You have to read the silences, the pauses. Hence it is more easy to understand a living buddha than to understand a dead one,

because with a living buddha you can experience his pauses, his periods, when between two words suddenly there is a gap, the interval, which is far more pregnant than the words themselves.
... AND THE STITCHING TOGETHER OF WORDS.
AND YOU WANT NOTHING. Once you have become silent and you have understood the words of the awakened ones, what is there to want? You have already got it. You have got the inexhaustible treasure. You have become a king.

"VICTORY IS MINE,
KNOWLEDGE IS MINE,
AND ALL PURITY,
ALL SURRENDER."

In silence, everything is yours: victory -- victory for which you have been struggling your whole life, maybe many lives, is suddenly yours. And without any fight it is yours because it has been yours from the very beginning. You simply never looked within. You are not a beggar, nobody is; everybody is born an emperor. But look within. If you look without you are a beggar. In fact, to look without means to become a beggar, and to look within means to become an emperor.
"VICTORY IS MINE, KNOWLEDGE IS MINE...." And now a totally different kind of knowledge happens to you. It is not coming from the outside; it is arising from your very depth, it is welling up within you. It is not borrowed; it is authentically yours.
"... AND ALL PURITY...."

Silence is virgin. The most innocent and the purest experience of life is to know a deep silence when everything stops. Time stops, space disappears, ego is nowhere to be found. Not a single thought on the mind, just silence from end to end. This is purity.
By "purity" Buddha does not mean any moral purity. Moral purity is never real purity. It is calculated, it is greed. It is greed for the other world, it is greed for heavenly pleasures. There are three persons in the world, three categories. First, the sinners: they have chosen to be immoral. Second, the saints: they have chosen to be moral. But both are half, nobody is whole. The sinner is half, the saint is half. The sinners are attracted towards the saints, the sinners go and bow down to the saints. And the saints are continuously thinking in their minds that maybe they are missing; maybe the sinners are enjoying life.

I have heard that one great saint and a prostitute who lived just in front of him died on the same day, and the messengers from the beyond came and started dragging the saint towards hell and the prostitute towards heaven.
The saint said, "Wait! There must be something wrong. You must have misunderstood the orders. I am the great saint and that woman is the greatest sinner. What are you doing?"
And the messengers said, "We have asked God. We also thought that there is some misunderstanding.... But God said, 'No, there is no misunderstanding. The prostitute was continuously thinking how bad she was, how ugly she was, and she was continuously thinking how pure the saint was. And whenever the saint would do his prayers, would chant

his sutras, she would sit silently by the door and listen. She never thought herself capable of entering into the temple. She would sit outside the door and listen from there, and tears would flow from her eyes. And she always thought that the saint was living the life of bliss.

"'And the saint? He was continuously thinking of the prostitute, how beautiful she was. And whenever visitors would come to the prostitute he would suffer very much. "They must be enjoying. She is enjoying her life, and what have I done to myself? I have become an ascetic. Who knows but maybe I have done something wrong." The saint was continuously obsessed with the prostitute. In his dreams he was making love to the prostitute. And in the prostitute's dreams there was a totally different flavor: she was always worshipping the saint, bowing down to the saint -- hence the decision.'"

God said, "Take the saint to hell; he has lived respectably long enough. And bring the prostitute to heaven; she has suffered enough in the world."

The sinner is half, the saint is half -- and they both are attached to each other, both are thinking of each other. I know many saints who have confessed to me in their privacy, "Sometimes the question happens in our minds that maybe the whole world is right and we are wrong. But now it is too late. We may have missed real joys to attain something abstract which may not exist at all. Who knows about God and who knows about paradise? We may prove to be fools finally."

That doubt lingers in your so-called saints; it is bound to linger. The more they feel this doubt, the more they

condemn the sinner. The more they condemn the sinner, so the sinner thinks they are great saints; he goes to worship them. The opposites attract each other.

But there is a third category also: the sage. He is neither a sinner nor a saint; he is beyond both. And he is the person who is always misunderstood in the world. You understand the sinner very well: he lives in immorality. You understand the saint: he lives in morality. The sage is a mystery; you cannot understand him. He seems to be beyond comprehension; hence Jesus is misunderstood, Socrates is misunderstood, Buddha is misunderstood. That has been the fate of all the sages. They have been misunderstood for the simple reason that you cannot put them in the ordinary categories; they are beyond the categories.

When Buddha says "purity" he means the purity of the sage who knows nothing of morality or immorality, who has become again a child, who is reborn.

"VICTORY IS MINE, KNOWLEDGE IS MINE, AND ALL PURITY, ALL SURRENDER." When you become absolutely silent, ego disappears; it is not found at all.

Just the other day Vedant Bharti asked, "Why should I drop the ego? That too is part of the divine play." You don't understand what divine play is, and you don't understand that no buddha has ever said to you, "Drop the ego." I am not saying to you, "Drop the ego," either. What I am saying is: Try to find it... and you will not find it at all! That is how it disappears, that's how it is dropped. When you can't find it, what can you do with it? It has never been found. It exists only when you don't search for it. It exists only like a shadow. If you look and search, then you come to

understand that a shadow is a shadow; it has no substance in it. There is no need to drop it; in understanding it and not finding it there, it is dropped.
This is surrender. In silence surrender happens because in silence you can't find the ego at all. Surrender is not something that you have to do. If you do it, it is not surrender, because if you are the doer how can it be surrender? One day you do, another day you can undo it. One day you can say, "I surrender"; another day you can come and you can say, "I withdraw it." Who can prevent you? It was your doing, you can withdraw it. But surrender cannot be withdrawn, you cannot undo it, because it is not your doing in the first place. It is a happening. When you are silent, suddenly you see there is no ego; ego disappears. This is surrender, this is purity, this is wisdom, this is freedom.

"I WANT NOTHING.
I AM FREE.
I FOUND MY WAY.
WHOM SHALL I CALL TEACHER?"

Buddha says: Now, whom should I call my teacher? The whole life has been a learning, the whole life has been my teacher. I have learned through failure, through success, through poverty, through richness. I have learned through pain, through pleasure. I have learned through agony, through ecstasy. Whom should I call my teacher?
It is impossible because the whole life, in fact, is a teaching device. Life exists so that you can grow up towards wisdom, so that you can grow up towards godliness.

And a very beautiful sutra:

THE GIFT OF TRUTH IS BEYOND GIVING.

Truth is always a gift. You cannot snatch it away, you cannot conquer truth. It is always a gift. When you are silent it simply descends in you. It fills your silence, overfills it, starts overflowing.
THE GIFT OF TRUTH IS BEYOND GIVING. But when you have it, the problem is you cannot give it to anybody else. You would like, you would love to share it, but how to share it? The other person has to be utterly silent, only then can it be shared. But when the other person is silent, he need not share YOUR truth; truth descends in him on its own accord. Hence it is beyond giving.

THE TASTE BEYOND SWEETNESS....

It is far sweeter than sweetness itself, it is beyond sweetness.

THE JOY BEYOND JOY.

We can call it blissfulness, but it is a blissfulness that goes far beyond our idea of blissfulness. In fact, it is incomprehensible for the mind. It is impossible to express it in adequate words. If we call it joy, yes, only a bit of it is expressed. If we call it sweet, only just a fragment of it is expressed; the total remains unexpressed. It has to be experienced, there is no other way.

THE END OF DESIRE IS THE END OF SORROW.

You do only one thing: let desire be gone. And how will desire go?

QUIETEN YOUR MIND.
REFLECT.
WATCH.
NOTHING BINDS YOU.
YOU ARE FREE.

Contemplate over these sutras. Try to experience them... because Buddha is not an ordinary religious person. He is not interested in miracles. He is not interested in anything occult, esoteric. He is interested in transforming you. He is very down to earth.

Moses and Jesus were playing a round of golf at the Celestial Country Club. First, Jesus teed up and made a hole in one. Then Moses also drove a hole in one.
"Well, Moe, we are even so far," said Jesus.
"Now look here, Jake," Moses protested. "We made our point. Now what do you say we cut out the miracles and play a little golf?"

Buddha never did any miracle -- that is the greatest miracle. He is not interested in mystifying you. His whole effort is to give you the key so you can open the doors of all the mysteries. He is very existential, nonphilosophical, nonintellectual in his approach. He is not heady -- but very practical, pragmatic. His whole approach is experimental,

experiential. So you will not be able to understand him if you only go on reading.
Try to experiment with what he is saying. Try to quieten your mind, reflect, watch, and see yourself what happens: freedom, bliss, truth, wisdom, innocence, purity... thousands of flowers start blooming in you. The spring suddenly bursts forth.
Enough for today.

The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 10

Chapter #6

Chapter title: Life transcends logic
26 February 1980 am in Buddha Hall

The first question:
Question 1
BELOVED MASTER,
IN WANTING TO KNOW WHO I AM I OFTEN FEEL IN A SPACE OF NOTHINGNESS. IN ONE WAY IT SCARES ME, IN THE OTHER IT FEELS FULFILLING. I FEEL BOTH ALL AND NOTHING. HOW TO FEEL ONE OR THE OTHER? AND WHERE DOES THE DISTINCTION LIE BETWEEN A VACUUM -- THAT SPACE OF NEITHER PAST, PRESENT OR FUTURE -- AND A DEAD SPACE?

Prabhato, the first indication of a right, positive nothingness is that it will be paradoxical. It will be felt as all and nothing, both simultaneously. Then it is alive. All that is

alive is paradoxical; only that which is dead is logical. Logic is applicable only to dead things; logic has nothing to say about life. Life transcends logic. Life is basically illogical. That's what I mean by calling it paradoxical: it contains its own opposite.

Hence it is a good indication that you feel both all and nothing. If you feel just nothing, then it is a dead space; if you just feel all, then it is all imagination. When you feel both, it is neither dead space nor pure projection; it is something authentically true.

Whenever you will feel all and nothing together, naturally, on the one hand you will feel scared because of nothingness, because nothingness looks like death.... It IS death; death of the ego, death of all that you have known up to now as yourself. It is a total discontinuity with the past; hence fear arises. You are losing your identity, and that is the greatest crisis in life. One wants to cling to one's identity; at least one knows who one is. Even though that identity was nothing but hell, still you would like to cling to it. At least it was something tangible. Now all tangibles are disappearing and all that you have known about yourself is evaporating. A great fear grips you. It seems as if you are going to die. It is natural to feel scared.

But you also feel, on the other hand, deeply fulfilled, because it is death and resurrection, crucifixion and resurrection. When you are ready to lose your old identity you are born anew. A new life starts pulsating, a new heart starts beating. As an ego you disappear, but you appear as part of the whole, of the immense vastness, of the totality. This is really the birth of the holy man, because one becomes part of the whole. This is the birth of a buddha, of

a christ. So in spite of all your fears, go into it, don't cling to your past. And remember, fear is very powerful because your whole past will support it, and you have a tremendously long past of millions of lives. Not only this life but many many lives are contained in your collective unconscious. They will all pull you back. They will say, "Where are you going? Are you going mad? Come back to the old shelter, to the old security!" The past is long; it has immense weight, great gravitation. And the new that is being born is just like a new sprout, very fragile. It can be crushed very easily, it can be destroyed very easily. Remember that unless you go on in spite of all your fears you will never go into the unknown. And to go into the unknown is to go into God. God is never known. He is not only unknown, he is also unknowable. And whatsoever you know about God is just your ideas about God, not your experience.

Those who have experienced God have kept mum, have kept completely silent. They have not uttered a single word about God. They have indicated the way. Buddha says: Buddhas point you the way, but they don't say anything about the ultimate experience. They show how to reach it, but they never say what exactly it is. It is indefinable, inexpressible. God is a mystery. In fact, God is another name for the mysterious universe in which we are living, breathing. We are part of this great mystery and there is no way to demystify it.

So you will have to go knowingly, deliberately. You will have to risk your past. You will have to listen to the call of the unknown. It is a faraway, distant call and there is no

guarantee for it. Nobody can give you the guarantee, only hints.

I can say to you: You have heard the right call. But it is risky because you will be risking all that you know about yourself for something which is far away, invisible, mysterious. One can never be certain. You can't be calculative about God, you can't be cunning and clever about God. You have to go into simple innocence, just like a small child holding the hand of his father can go into the deep forest without any fear. Lions may be roaring, but the child has no fear because he knows his hand is in his father's hand. The father himself may be trembling, but the child is enchanted with the whole journey, with the whole adventure. Such a simplicity is needed, such innocence is needed; only then can you take the risk.

The child is the most courageous being. As he grows in age, in experience, he starts becoming cowardly, he becomes calculating. He thinks twice before he takes any step, and when you think too much you never take any step. Very calculative people remain stuck their whole lives. They never move because each movement creates fear in them -- and this is the greatest movement.

Prabhato, go joyously into it. And don't be worried what is the distinction between an empty space, a negative space, and a space that is positive, fulfilling. Don't be bothered. This is how the mind starts calculating, this is how the mind starts functioning. There is no need -- you are on the right track.

Wherever you feel a paradox happening, remember, that is the criterion that you are on the right track. If you don't

come across a paradox you must have missed somewhere, you are moving in a wrong direction.

So don't ask me, "How to feel one or the other?" If you feel one or the other you will be wrong. When you feel both, then you feel the total. The total is bound to be both, the negative and the positive. It is bound to be both death and life, summer and winter.

And that's where mind feels baffled, puzzled. Mind would like clear-cut things, but nothing can be done about it. Mind's requirements and expectations cannot be fulfilled. Existence has no obligation to fulfill mind's requirements and demands. You have to accept existence as it is. It is paradoxical and mind is not paradoxical. Mind is linear, logical, not dialectical. As far as mind is concerned it is Aristotelian, and as far as life is concerned it is more Hegelian than Aristotelian. It is dialectics: it moves from thesis to antithesis, and so on, so forth. The whole movement depends on thesis and antithesis. The polar opposites are really not opposites but complementaries. Enjoy the polarity, the paradox. Rejoice that you are on the right track. And go on moving in spite of all the fears. They are natural. I cannot say that you should not feel those fears -- they are absolutely natural, but you can go on in spite of them.

Remember, the difference between a coward and a courageous man is not that the coward feels fear and the courageous man does not feel fear. No, that is not the difference between the coward and the courageous. Both feel fear. The difference is that the coward listens to the fear and stops his movement, and the courageous takes no notice of it, pushes it aside, and moves in spite of it.

The second question:
Question 2
BELOVED MASTER,
WHY DO YOU SAY THAT IT IS RIGHT TO MEDITATE BUT WRONG TO PRAY? IN MY OPINION, MEDITATION GIVES DEEP INNER CALM TO A PERSON FOR HIS OWN SAKE, BUT TO PRAY DEEPLY AND CALMLY GIVES YOU THE DIRECT AND INTENSE CONNECTION TO GOD, AND HIS HOLY SPIRIT COMES DOWN TO YOU.

Rosemary, I have not said what you have heard. You must be hearing through a thick layer of Christianity, a thick layer of rubbish.
In the first place, you say, "Why do you say that it is right to meditate but wrong to pray?" ... Because meditation is the only prayer there is, and prayer is possible only in meditation; any other prayer is going to be false, pseudo. If you have not been in deep meditation, how are you going to know that there is God? Then the idea of God is just a conditioning given by others to you.
Just think, Rosemary, if you were born in Soviet Russia, then you would not have talked about God at all. You would not be talking about the Bible; you would be talking about the COMMUNIST MANIFESTO or DAS KAPITAL. You would not be talking about the Holy Trinity of God the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost; you would be talking of the unholy trinity of Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels and V.I. Lenin, because you would have been told and conditioned by communist education.

If you had been born in a Jaina family you would have never thought of prayer, never -- because there is no God, so to whom to pray? If you were born in a Buddhist family, things would have been totally different because you would have been conditioned in a different way. It is not you, Rosemary, who is asking this question; it is your conditioning. And all conditionings are wrong.

Meditation means a state of unconditioned mind.

Meditation is the process of undoing the harm that every society goes on doing to every individual -- communist or Catholic, Jaina or Jew, it does not matter. I am not talking about any particular conditioning that is wrong; I am saying conditioning AS SUCH is wrong.

Conditioning is nothing but a process of hypnotizing people: go on repeating from the very childhood, in the church, in the Sunday school.... You have been told about God and prayer and you have been told by your parents and teachers and priests and all the authoritative people. And the small child has learned how to imitate those who are in power. Now you have completely forgotten the beginning of conditioning.

No child is born as a Christian or a Hindu. No child is born with any idea of God's existence -- whether God exists or does not exist, whether there is one hell or seven hells or seventy or seven hundred. No child is born with any theology.

Meditation means a process of removing all that has been forced upon you so that you can become again a child. That's what Jesus says. He says: Unless you are like a child you will not enter into my kingdom of God. He is talking about deconditioning, dehypnotizing. He is not using these

words 'deconditioning', 'dehypnotizing', because these words did not exist in his days, but that's what actually he is saying. He is saying: Unless you become a child again.... Again and again he says: Unless you are BORN again... because this birth has been contaminated by the people; they have poisoned your minds. You need a new spiritual birth. And it is possible only through meditation; there is no other way.

Prayer will mean you will be continuing the conditioning. If you are Christian, your prayer will be Christian. Your very question says... it has the stink of Christianity! A Hindu will not say this, he will not use such words: "And his holy spirit comes down to you." A Jaina will never use such terminology -- impossible, because for a Jaina, nothing comes down, everything goes up! He believes in growing up into a god. God is not someone there high above who comes down to you; there is no God. You have the seed of divineness in you; it grows upwards. The holy spirit descending on you is simply something that has been taught to you.

You say, "In my opinion...."

Opinions mean nothing! If you have some experience, then it is important. Opinion is just opinion. Opinion means something of the mind. You have not experienced anything; it is just a thought. People have all kinds of opinions.

I have heard:

Two camels were passing through a desert. Both were looking very tired and both wanted to say something to the other, but somehow they were keeping control.

Finally one exploded and he said, "Whatsoever people say, whatsoever their opinion, I want to say that I am thirsty!"

Thirst is not an opinion, it is your experience. Is it your experience? If it is your experience, the question cannot arise, because then you would have understood exactly what I was saying.

Meditation is the process that cleanses you, and when you are utterly clean a fragrance arises in you. That is prayer. Prayer is a consequence of meditation. I am not against prayer; I am against YOUR prayer, but not against prayer itself. Your prayer is false. Your prayer is only a part of your conditioning. The Hindu prays in the Hindu way and the Mohammedan prays in the Mohammedan way, but a real prayer is neither Hindu nor Mohammedan. It comes out of an unconditioned being. How can it be Hindu or Mohammedan?

A real prayer is simply prayer. It has no words; it is pure silence. It is a surrender in deep silence. In fact, it is not addressed to any God; it is bowing down to the whole existence. It is not an address. God is everywhere, all is God, so you simply bow down in tremendous gratitude, in ecstasy, in joy, in love. But first your love, your ecstasy, your joy have to be released. You are just a seed, and talking about fragrance will be only an opinion heard from others, borrowed. And anything borrowed is ugly. Anything borrowed is going to be only verbal.

And that's what has happened: when you heard me you only understood the literal meaning of the words. You missed the significance.

A gentile friend... a Christian friend cajoled Rabbi Berkowitz into attending Saint Joseph's in the city that made Schlitz famous. The old rabbi, long since retired, finally agreed when it was explained that a visiting dignitary would speak about the Jewish influence on the formation of the church.
In the front row, Rabbi Berkowitz's eyes widened as the visiting lecturer announced his topic: "My Name is Joseph, Father of Jesus."
At the conclusion of the talk, when they had been introduced, the rabbi said dryly, "My friend, you have had a most unusual experience!"

He misunderstood the whole thing. He took the title of the lecture literally: My Name Is Joseph, Father of Jesus. That was just going to be the subject. The man is not saying that he is Joseph, the father of Jesus. The rabbi said, "My friend, you have had a most unusual experience" -- being the father of Jesus, after two thousand years. And Jesus was the son of a virgin woman; it was certainly an unusual experience for the father!
That's what has happened to you, Rosemary. I have not said anything against prayer, but I have said that meditation prepares the way. It cleanses you -- it cleanses you of all thoughts given by others. It creates the space in which prayer can flower. Meditation brings the spring -- and there is no other way. If you pray without meditation, then your flowers will be plastic flowers. Real flowers of prayer grow only in meditation. And then prayer is not addressed to God; in fact, then there is no God.

The whole idea of God the Father is childish, and Sigmund Freud is right that it is a projection of our deep desire to cling to the parents. It is a projection of your idea of the father, because your father cannot be with you forever. One day he dies and you miss the protection, the security, the safety. And you project a father in heaven who is forever and forever, who will never die and who will always take care of you. And you pray on your knees to the father in heaven. The idea is YOUR creation, the prayer is your creation. And you go on doing this stupid thing for your whole life, thinking that you are doing something religious. And sometimes it can happen that certain of your prayers may be fulfilled. That is just coincidence. If you go on praying for thousands of things, once in a while it is bound to happen.

One man came to me and he said, "I never believed in God, but now I believe."
I said, "What happened?"
He said, "I gave an ultimatum to God that if within fifteen days my son does not get employment, I will become a confirmed atheist forever. And the threatening worked: within fifteen days my son got the employment. Now I am a firm believer."
I said, "It is perfectly good, but never give the ultimatum again because it may not work always. It was just coincidence."
But he did not listen to me. After two years he met me and he said, "You were right. I again gave the ultimatum. My wife was very ill and I told him that he has to save her, otherwise I will become an atheist." He thought that once

the trick had worked; now he knows how to force God into his service.
That's what people who are praying are doing; they are trying to use God. They are trying to use God as a means for certain ends.
And the wife died. Certainly he became an atheist.

Prayers sometimes will be fulfilled -- not that there is somebody who is there listening to your prayers and fulfilling them -- and sometimes they will not be fulfilled. And priests are very clever. They will say, "Whenever your prayer is fulfilled you prayed deeply, truly, sincerely." And whenever your prayer is not fulfilled they say, "Your prayer was superficial." And the argument has much appeal because, in fact, ALL your prayers are superficial so you know perfectly well that your prayers are superficial. The priest can always say that you prayed, but deep down there was doubt.
There is ALWAYS doubt because your belief in God cannot destroy doubt; it can only repress doubt. And the repressed doubt is always there boiling within you, ready to explode.
So don't be deceived if sometimes a coincidence happens. That's how many things continue in the world, many things CAN continue in the world. All hocus-pocus!
For example, there are so many "pathies" in the world: homeopathy, naturopathy, ayurvedic, and so many others. They all claim to cure -- and their claims are not false; they cure many people. You try. Just go on giving sugar pills to people and you will be surprised; many are cured, so you have invented a new therapy. Seventy percent of people are

only falsely ill, they are not truly ill. Seventy percent of illnesses are psychological, so all that is needed is somebody to convince them that "This is going to help." And people go to homeopathy and to other exotic medicines only when nothing else helps them.

The trouble with allopathy is that it can help only if your illness is real. If your illness is not real, then a real medicine will do harm instead of helping you. So you have to search for some quack, somebody who can give you a false medicine to cure you of a false disease.

Your prayers are false, your diseases are false. Sometimes they do help, and when they help, you become more and more convinced. And in despair, in deep helplessness, you don't know where else to go. When all human efforts fail you start looking towards the sky. That has been always so; nothing much has changed.

In the Vedas it is said: When there is lightning in the clouds, it is God who is angry; it is his anger. Pray to God. Now we know it is not God or his anger; now we know it is electricity, natural electricity. Now we are using God's anger in running our fans and machines. Now nobody prays. In India, still, when you put the light on in the evening, orthodox Hindus will immediately bow down their head with folded hands -- to an electric bulb! Just an old conditioning.

God used to do many things; now science is doing all those things. God is being deprived every day! In fact, soon he will be out of employment; you will find him standing before some employment office in a queue! Your God is your invention. Friedrich Nietzsche is right about your God -- that that God is dead. So don't be too much surprised or

convinced when some coincidence happens. Coincidences are always happening.

On board an El-Al jet flight to Israel, a young mother and her two children were just getting settled when the youngsters began to clamor that they had to go to the "bafroom." Two priests on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, seated in front of the little family group, smiled in amusement while the embarrassed mother quickly took the children to the rest rooms on the plane. After a moment's hesitation, she put the small boy in the compartment marked "Gentlemen," while she entered the ladies' room with her little daughter.
The boy left quickly and one of the two priests went in, forgetting to lock the door. A few seconds later, the mother emerged from the ladies' lavatory and opened the other door a mere slit, thinking her boy was still there. "Don't forget to slide up your zipper," she whispered.
When the priest returned to his seat he was full of praise for the airline. "You have to hand it to these Jewish stewardesses," he said to his fellow priest. "They think of everything!"

Beware of coincidences!
You say, Rosemary, "Why do you say that it is right to meditate but wrong to pray?"
To pray is not right; to be in prayer is right. To pray means you will be saying something to God. Your God is your invention, your prayer is your invention. And what are you going to say? Just something trivial: Do this, do that, don't do that. Or: You are great. He has been hearing that for so

long, he must be fed up! He must be using ear plugs just to avoid these so-called religious people! Millions of people praying and saying all kinds of things to God. He must be getting tired, utterly tired.
But to be in prayer is a totally different phenomenon. To pray is one thing; that is childish, out of a conditioned mind. But to be in prayer means to be in love with existence, to be in a dance with existence, to dance with the stars, to sing with the birds, to flow with the river. That is prayer. But that prayer arises only when meditation has created the right space for it. Hence my emphasis is on meditation and I don't talk much about prayer, because when meditation is complete, prayer comes on its own accord. There is no need to talk about it -- because if I talk about prayer there is every danger you will misunderstand, because prayer is easy and meditation is difficult.
Prayer is easy, very cheap. You can go to the church, kneel down on your knees, fold your hands, talk to God. It costs nothing. Or every night before you go to sleep you pray to God....

I have heard about a very very intelligent man who had put his prayer on the wall just by the side of his bed. And before he used to go to bed he would say to God, "Please read it."

What is the point of saying the same thing every day? And one hopes that God must be at least able to read it! That seems to be far more clear, intelligent. Why go on repeating it like a parrot every day?

I don't say to you to pray because I know that whatsoever you do right now will be wrong. I teach meditation -- and prayer comes inevitably; it can't be avoided, but a totally different kind of prayer, with a different fragrance, a different texture to it. It is just a joyousness, a cheerfulness, a gratitude. You feel so fulfilled, so blessed, that your whole heart says thank you -- not in so many words -- your whole heart says yes. Your whole heart becomes the yes. You are surrendered. Your life is a prayer. Then you need not go to a church or a temple or a mosque. You LIVE your prayer. You breathe, you drink, you move... and all that is prayer.

You say, "In my opinion, meditation gives deep inner calm to a person for his own sake...." Rosemary, have you ever meditated? A mere opinion has no value -- and it is a mere opinion. You may have read, you may have heard about it, but don't give much importance to opinions.

You say, "Meditation gives deep inner calm to a person for his own sake...." You don't have any experience, any taste of meditation. In meditation, the self disappears, the ego disappears. There is no question of "for one's own sake." One is no more an island; one becomes part of the vast continent of existence. Meditation means you disappear, evaporate. You are no longer there, just a pure nothingness. How can it be for one's own sake? There is no SELF left. In meditation, no self is ever found so how can it be selfish? People come to me and they ask me -- particularly Christian missionaries -- they write letters to me: "You are teaching people meditation; that is a kind of selfishness." They don't know what they are talking about.

Meditation is the only way to get rid of the self. Meditation is the only possibility to create unselfishness in the world. Everything else is selfish. The Christian missionary serving the poor people, the crippled -- this is all selfish. Mother Teresa of Calcutta and all her work is absolutely selfish. Why do I call these works selfish? They are doing great service to humanity, but they are doing service to humanity as a means to reach to heaven. They are using the poor people and the blind people and the crippled and the lepers as ladders to reach to heaven.

Just think of a world where there is nobody poor, nobody crippled, nobody is a leper, nobody is blind. Then what will Mother Teresa do? Will you still give her a Nobel Prize? For what? The basic requirement is that blind people should be there, poor people should be there, lepers should be there, widows should be there, orphans should be there. Thousands of orphans are needed for one woman to become a great servant of humanity.

One of the Hindu priests, the head of the Hindu priests, Karpatri, has written a book, AGAINST SOCIALISM. He gives many reasons against socialism, but the most hilarious reason that he gives is that in Hindu scriptures it is said: Unless you donate to the poor people you will never enter into heaven. And socialism is trying to destroy classes so there will be no poor, no rich. Once there is nobody rich and nobody poor, who is going to donate unto whom? And what will happen to heaven? Very logical! And these people are great servants of humanity! These stupid people are thought to be saints!

In meditation, you disappear; in prayer, you are very much there. You have to be there to pray; otherwise who is going to pray and to whom?
Martin Buber has written one of the greatest books of this time, I AND THOU. He says that prayer is a relationship between I and thou; both are needed. "I" is needed -- the one who is going to pray -- and "thou," a concept of God. Then prayer is possible. Prayer is a dialogue between I and thou. Prayer is basically selfish, self-centered.
But meditation is not a dialogue at all. Neither I is needed nor thou is needed. No I, no thou. The whole idea of I-and-thou disappears. A silence prevails, a virgin silence, undisturbed with any dialogue. It is not for one's own sake. One disappears; only then meditation happens.
Meditation is like a flower opening, and prayer is the fragrance of the flower that is released to the winds. I don't talk about the fragrance, I only teach how to cultivate roses, Rosemary, remember!

The third question:
Question 3
BELOVED MASTER,
WHAT ARE THE ESSENTIAL THINGS TO KEEP ONE'S WIFE HAPPY?

Satyam, I don't know much about wives. I am an unmarried man. You are asking a question to a wrong person. But I have been observing many wives and many husbands. So this is not my EXPERIENCE -- just my opinion!

There are two things necessary to keep one's wife happy. First: let her think she is having her own way. And second: let her have it.

The fourth question:
Question 4
BELOVED MASTER,
WHY DOES TRUTH HURT?

Prem Patipada, truth hurts because we live in lies. Our whole life consists of lies.
Friedrich Nietzsche has said: Don't take lies away from man; otherwise it will be impossible for him to live.
Sigmund Freud also says exactly the same thing: that man cannot live without lies; he needs many lies -- religious, metaphysical, philosophical, political.
Just watch yourself -- how many lies you need to support yourself, to go on nourishing your ego.
Why does man need so many lies? -- because the basic lie is the ego, and the ego can exist only surrounded by many lies to support it. Any truth hurts because it takes away a few lies, a few props, a few supports, and your ego starts falling down. And that is all that you know about yourself. You don't know that you are something transcendental to the ego.
Somebody says to you, "How beautiful you are!" and you believe it immediately. Nobody ever objects. I have told it to many people; nobody ever objects. I have never come across a person who will object, "No, you are wrong because I know my face. I see it in the mirror every day." You say it to anybody, even the ugliest. Say it to a camel,

and he will nod his head. He will say, "Right. I had always known it. You are the first intelligent person who has given it recognition." Even the ugliest person deep down thinks he is beautiful. He believes, otherwise it will be difficult to exist, to live. The most stupid thinks that he is very intelligent. Hence you go on giving compliments to each other. All those compliments are lies -- and everybody is ready to believe. And it is not only in the ordinary life. When you enter into your inner journey, there also you expect recognition.

Just the other day Somendra asked, "Why don't you give me recognition?" Everybody wants to be recognized, told that "You are enlightened," that "You have attained," that "You have realized" -- and you will be so happy! But that happiness will be only momentary because it is not true.

I cannot give you any lie; hence I am, many times, offensive to you, outrageous. I hurt you -- not that I want to hurt you, but to take any lie away from you is like taking a teddy bear from a child who can't sleep without the teddy bear. He goes on carrying the teddy bear -- dirty, but he will carry it everywhere. That is his life; you can't take it away from him. And you are carrying many teddy bears, Patipada; that's why it hurts.

Now Somendra is very angry because I said that he can be a good candidate for Judas. Soon there is going to be a notice: "Wanted: a Judas." And there are many people eligible. Somendra can do the work. He is so angry because I had said that he sits behind keeping his back towards me, so the next day he came to his old place.

Today he has disappeared, because today he has asked a very ugly question out of sheer anger. That's why he has

disappeared from here. Even though he has been sitting here for two or three days he does not look at me; he keeps his eyes down. He has not been coming to his group therapy darshan many times. Last night he appeared, but he did not look at me... boiling within. Today he has disappeared because of the question. He must have been afraid. He has put the question in somebody else's name -- but you can't deceive me! And the moment I saw that he is not there my suspicion became absolutely certain that it is his question.

In his question he says, "Are you not a lazy person? And still, what chutzpah you have to tell other people to work and be creative." I am not a lazy person -- I am the laziest! And naturally, the laziest person can live only if others work; otherwise how am I going to live? So I go on teaching, "Work, be creative! Clean the floor meditatively! Clean the toilets!" That is simple. It is not a question of chutzpah, it is simple logic! A man like me needs at least ten thousand people to work for him!

And he asks, "How can you tell others to work?" For a man who has never done anything, everything seems to be possible. Even the impossible seems to be possible. I have never worked, not for a single day. That's why I can say to you to do ANYTHING, because I don't know the trouble. I have no experience about it.

Truth hurts. And then it comes in many ways, it expresses itself in many ways.

Patipada, remember, if anything hurts then meditate over it. There must be something of truth in it, something true. If anything hurts, respect it, go deep into it. Find out why it

hurts, and you will be rewarded. You will grow through that.

Lies are sweet; they don't hurt. So beware of sweet lies. When something does not hurt you it cannot become an impetus for growth; it is useless, not to be bothered about at all. But pay your total attention to anything that hurts, and don't get angry. You are to understand here, to be aware, not to be angry.

Just a few months ago I told Somendra that he had attained his first satori. He was just joy. You should have seen his face that time -- all laughter, all smiles, bubbling with ecstasy! That was easy for him to accept because although it was true, the ego jumped upon it, grabbed it, felt very good -- and that is how he missed it.

When truth -- any truth -- becomes an ego trip, you miss it, you lose track of it. And remember: before samadhi happens, before enlightenment happens, you may attain thousands of satoris -- and you may miss them. If one remains very alert when a satori happens, only then he will not miss it. If you become very gratified about it and you start bragging about it in subtle ways, you are bound to miss it. And many people are doing the same.

Sometimes it is very difficult for me; even if I see that something beautiful is happening to you I have to control myself not to say it, because there is every danger that just by saying it your ego may feel puffed up. And that will be the point when you will lose it.

There are many people who are coming closer and closer to the ultimate, but it is better for me not to say it to them. I go on blessing them as much as I can, I go on loving them as much as I can, but I don't say it. Saying can be a

distraction; it can take them on a different route, it can distract them.
So lies are dangerous; sometimes even truth can be dangerous. If it does not hurt, then it can be dangerous; if it hurts, there is no danger. If it hurts, it will wake you up; if it becomes a lullaby, then it is dangerous; it may take you in a deeper dream. You may start dreaming about satoris and enlightenment and becoming a buddha. And all that is possible -- it is within your capacity, it is within your reach -- but you can lose the thread many times.
Hence, don't ask for recognition. If I feel that the time is ripe and by recognizing something you will not slip back, I will give the recognition. But why hanker for the recognition? The real thing is happening to you. The recognition does not matter at all, it is irrelevant. If you are becoming a buddha, you are becoming a buddha whether I say so or not. Sometimes it may be needed that I will go on saying, "No, you are not becoming," just to help you go on in the right direction.
Patipada, anything that hurts, meditate over it and you will be immensely enriched.

The fifth question:
Question 5
BELOVED MASTER,
WHY DO YOU HAVE SO MANY ENEMIES?

Gayan, remember two fundamental laws. One is: No good deed goes unpunished. And second: Friends may come and go, but enemies accumulate.

The sixth question:
Question 6
BELOVED MASTER,
I VERY MUCH DOUBT MY WIFE. WHAT SHOULD I DO?

Narayan, the wife is not your God. You need not doubt, you need not trust. It is a game -- don't make it so serious! But you have been told to trust your wife, to trust your husband. And because of this very teaching, distrust arises. In fact, you have been told to trust. For centuries it has been known that it is very difficult to trust your own wife, very difficult to trust your own husband; it is next to impossible. If your wife is interested in you, how can you trust her? If she is still interested in men -- and you are only a man, and there are many many men who are far more beautiful -- how can you trust your wife? If she is interested in you she must be interested in others too. She can be trusted only when she loses all interest in you too; then, of course, you can trust her. She has lost all interest in men -- she is almost dead.
You can trust your husband only if he is no longer interested in your body. If he is interested in your face, your body, your proportion, your beauty, how can he avoid being interested in other women's bodies, other women's faces, other women's beauty? It is impossible. You are asking something inhuman or something superhuman. And your poor husband is neither -- neither inhuman nor superhuman. He is just a poor husband, a poor human being... or a poor wife.

Don't demand such impossible things. It is natural; your wife is bound to fantasize about other men. It is impossible for her to dream about you, remember. I have never heard of a wife dreaming about her own husband. Who dreams about one's own husband or one's own wife? For what? Is the day not enough? Do you have to devote your night and your dreams also to the same woman, to the same man?
In dreams you are free; that is the only freedom left. In dreams you have a private world of your own. Your wife cannot peep in your dreams and say, "What are you doing? Stop!" In dreams you can have a few parties with the neighbors' wives. And nothing is wrong in it, nobody is harmed. Just, you have a good sleep and in the morning you have a smile on your face.
Don't ask the impossible.

Mulla Nasruddin was saying to me, "For the whole ten years of our married life I always trusted my wife. And then we moved from Calcutta to Poona -- and I discovered we still had the same milkman!"

There is no need, Narayan, to trust or not to trust. Why bring in the question of trust? It is just a game! Play it joyfully. You make it too serious. And when you start demanding, "Be faithful to me!" you are creating a situation in which it will become impossible for the poor woman to be faithful to you. Give her total freedom; then she may be faithful to you.
Life functions in a very strange way. If you give her total freedom you are WORTH trusting. A great faith may arise in her. If a wife gives total freedom to the husband, that

shows she loves him so much that she would like him to be happy in every possible way. Even if sometimes he is happy with some other woman she will feel happy because he is happy. And then a totally different quality of trust may arise. I am not saying that it is bound to arise -- it is not an inevitability. I am saying perhaps, because about human beings nothing can be predicted.
The relationship between wife and husband is a very strange relationship because these are two different worlds. The woman functions in a different way, from a different center. She is more intuitive and the man is more intellectual. That's why they are attracted to each other. Not only physiologically they are polarities, but psychologically also they are polar opposites. They are intimate enemies. There is bound to be a little conflict, and that is not bad; it keeps the relationship alive. Whenever you see that the husband and wife have stopped fighting completely, that means the marriage is really finished; nothing is left now. Even fight is not left... all is finished.

The butcher and the milkman were discussing the pros and cons of married life. "Do you really believe it is better than being single?" demanded Weiss, the butcher.
"In a way," said the milkman, who was fond of philosophizing. "After all, if it were not for marriage, we would have to do all our fighting with strangers."

Yes, that is true. It is good to fight with your own wife; at least the fight is with the friend. Otherwise you will have to do your fighting with strangers.

There is no need to demand these things -- trust, faith. Live together joyously. Make as much out of your being together as possible. Rather than doing that, people create such problems, useless problems, and destroy all their joys. The wife has no obligation to be faithful to you, neither do you have any obligation to be faithful to her. You love her, she loves you; that's enough. Don't bring faith into it. If love cannot keep you together, nothing else can keep you together. And if love cannot keep you together, then anything that can keep you together is dangerous.

The last question:
Question 7
BELOVED MASTER,
ARE ALL WORDS REALLY USELESS?

Dharmendra, not all words. The words of the buddhas are immensely significant. They are the same words as your words, but they come from a deeper experience. Let your words come from deep experience; then they will have significance, then they will have some perfume of the unknown, of the beyond. But leaving the buddhas aside, then too all words are not useless. Otherwise, how are you going to communicate? You cannot communicate through silence, you cannot communicate without words.
To communicate without words you will have to become a total meditator. And then, too, you can communicate only with another total meditator, not with everybody else. The whole of humanity is not going to be in meditation, not at least in your life, and you will have to talk to people who are not meditators.

I am using words, Buddha used words, Jesus used words. You have to use words. Just make one effort; don't use unnecessary words. Be more telegraphic, be more condensed. Make your words more meaningful. When you use them, don't just go on using them so that you remain occupied.

Little Alma, a pupil in the first grade, arrived home from school all out of breath.
"Daddy, Daddy," she cried, her eyes sparkling with excitement, "we had our very first drill today!"
"That's good, shayneh," he said, smiling. "I believe in fire drills. Why I once almost died in a fire."
"Ooh, tell me."
"Well, it was like this: I fell into a great big vat of chicken soup. So I climbed on top of the knaidlach to keep from drowning and I hollered 'Fire' at the top of my lungs."
"Fire?" exclaimed Alma, "Was there a fire, too?"
"No," grinned the father, patting her curls, "but who would have helped me if I had yelled 'chicken soup'?"

Words are significant.

For their first date, the boy takes the girl to a carnival. After walking around for a while the girl says to her date, "I want to get weighed."
So the boy finds a man who guesses people's weight. The man accurately guesses the girl's weight.
After visiting some other attractions the boy again hears the girl say the same thing, "I want to get weighed." Again he

finds another stall where she again has her weight judged correctly.
After some ice cream and taffy, she again says, "I want to get weighed."
The boy replies, "No, this is too much. I am taking you home."
After being deposited on her doorstep, the girl goes inside and seeing her mother, starts to cry and blurts out, "Oh, mother, I had such a wousy time!"

Enough for today.

The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 10

Chapter #7

Chapter title: The fool is his own enemy
27 February 1980 am in Buddha Hall

THE FOOL IS HIS OWN ENEMY.
SEEKING WEALTH, HE DESTROYS HIMSELF.

SEEK RATHER THE OTHER SHORE.

WEEDS CHOKE THE FIELD.
PASSION POISONS THE NATURE OF MAN,
AND HATRED, ILLUSION AND DESIRE.

HONOR THE MAN WHO IS WITHOUT PASSION,
HATRED, ILLUSION AND DESIRE.

WHAT YOU GIVE TO HIM
WILL BE GIVEN BACK TO YOU,
AND MORE.

Man is born intelligent, but the society does not allow intelligence to flower; it destroys it. In a thousand and one ways it makes every effort to make every intelligent being unintelligent. The unintelligent person seems to be more obedient -- obedient to the state, to the church, to the society. He is less rebellious -- he CANNOT rebel. Rebellion needs intelligence. The greater the intelligence, the greater the rebellion. The unintelligent person seeks security and safety with the crowd. He cannot be an individual. He is always hankering to become part of a crowd -- Christian, Hindu, Mohammedan. These are all crowds. They depend on those people who have become victims of the social strategy of destroying intelligence. An intelligent person will not go to the church in search of God, or to the temple. An intelligent person will go within. He will not go to Kaaba or to Kashi, because if God is not here he cannot be anywhere else -- and if he is ANYWHERE else, why not here? If God is not in me, he cannot be anywhere else; and if he is anywhere else, he is bound to be in me too.

The intelligent person is an individual; he is not part of a crowd, mob psychology. He is not a sheep, he is a man. And all the vested interests are against the individual -- against the man. They want machines. They don't like people who are intelligent, who decide on their own. They want people who depend on others, on authoritative figures

-- on the leaders, on the priests, on the saints, but always on others, never on themselves.

The society has lived up to now in a very destructive way. It destroys the very possibility of your ever being a buddha or a christ. It has always been against the wise; it respects the fool. The fool fits with the society perfectly. The fool is cut out to fit with the society.

No child is born foolish, and every child, sooner or later, turns out to be idiotic. The powers are so big, so great, that it is almost impossible for the child to resist. The child cannot survive if he resists too much. It is really a miracle that a few people have escaped from being machines. These few people are the salt of the earth; they are the only flowers. Because of them, humanity has a little perfume, a little fragrance; otherwise, all others are walking dead, corpses, somehow dragging towards the grave.

The way of the fool has to be understood because only if you understand it you can go beyond it. The fool also has a way of life. His way of life is the way of the crowd. Whatsoever others say, he repeats. The way others live, he imitates. He is always looking around for clues how to be, how to behave, what is right, what is wrong. He has no insight into anything. He depends on commandments from others. For thousands of years he goes on following commandments that were given in different situations, to a different kind of people, for different purposes, but he goes on following.

He is never spontaneous; that is the first thing to be remembered about the fool. He is repetitive: he repeats the past, but he is never spontaneous. He is never responsible -- he never responds to the situation. He has ready-made

answers. He never listens to the question; he is not concerned with the question at all. The question simply triggers in him a process of memory, and a ready-made answer comes up. He is like a computer.

To be responsible means to be aware. Unless you are aware you will not be able to see the situation that is confronting you. And the situation is changing every moment, it is never the same -- not even for two consecutive moments is it the same. Hence one has to be very aware, then only can one respond to reality. And to respond to reality is to commune with God.

The fool knows nothing of God; he never comes across anything divine. He remains part of the stupid collectivity. Remember, the society, the collective has no soul; the soul belongs to the individual. Hence, those who belong to the collective are destroying every possibility of being souls. George Gurdjieff used to say that it is very rare to find a person who has a soul -- and he was right. To have a soul means to have awareness, to have individuality, to have freedom, to be able to respond -- and to be able to respond on your own accord, not following dictums from others, directions from others.

The fool is never spontaneous; that is the first thing to be understood about the fool. If you become spontaneous you start becoming intelligent. The fool never learns; he is very stubborn about learning. He thinks he already knows.

The fool is not necessarily the ignorant person, mind you. The fool may be a great scholar; the fool may be a famous pundit; the fool may be a well-known professor; the fool may have a Ph.D., a D.Litt. In fact, who else bothers about

Ph.D.s? The fool can be very well-informed, but that makes no difference to his foolishness.

Information does not transform you. Transformation is a totally different phenomenon than information.

Transformation comes through awareness, through being open: open to life, open to people, open to everything possible. The fool lives in a closed world; he is dumb and deaf.

That's exactly the meaning of the English word 'idiot': closed. He lives in his own private world. He knows nothing of the reality. He lives in his own dreams -- and he thinks that's what reality is. He lives in beliefs. He lives what tradition, what convention has taught him -- whatsoever he has been conditioned for.

In a Catholic country he will be a Catholic. In a communist country he will be a communist -- the same person; there is no difference at all. Whether he quotes from the Bible or from DAS KAPITAL, it is all the same: he quotes mechanically. He cannot understand because he is not ready to learn.

He remains utterly closed. He is afraid of opening his windows, his doors. He is afraid to be open to the wind, to the sun, to the rain, because who knows? -- if he opens to life, his ready-made answers may not be adequate. He is very much afraid to lose his ready-made answers; he depends on them. They may be right or wrong, that is not important for him. As long as he believes they are right, they are right for him.

Hence the second characteristic of the foolish man: he is dumb and deaf. He is unlearning. He never listens. He may be able to hear, but he is not able to listen. Hearing is a

physiological phenomenon; listening is something deeper. You hear through the ears; when your heart is also joined with your ears, listening happens. And the fool's heart is never joined with his ears. He is not able to see; he goes on seeing whatsoever HE wants to see. He never allows the reality to be reflected in him; he is incapable of reflection. He is not a mirror.

After a day at the seaside, a bus full of deaf and dumb people stopped at a country pub. The bus driver went in to explain to the barman: "You see those people over there? They are all deaf and dumb. They have a special sign language. Two fingers means a pint of bitter. Three fingers means a lager; four, a light ale; five, a guinness; a shake of the head, a whisky; a nod to the left, a brandy; and a nod to the right, a vodka."
The barman, having taken in all this information, agreed he could handle the situation.
Things went well for the first hour or so, and then the barman noticed three of the party standing at the bar, opening and shutting their mouths. He tried to figure out what they wanted, then gave up and forgot all about them. But ten minutes later, a dozen of the deaf and dumb people were at the bar, opening and shutting their mouths like goldfish in a bowl. He started to feel a bit uneasy and pretended not to notice. But soon the whole crowd from the bus was at the bar, all of them opening and shutting their mouths.
Not knowing what to do, he rushed outside, ran over to where the bus was parked and hammered on the window. "Hey, what's up?" asked the driver.

"Well, you know all those people in there? Well, it was okay for the first hour or so -- three fingers, two fingers, shake of the head, nod to the left -- but now the whole crowd of them is up at the bar, all opening and shutting their mouths!"
"Ah, no," said the driver, "they are not singing again! Now we will never get them home!"

The fool lives in a totally closed world. Neither is he available to reality, nor is he capable of expressing anything. He is uncreative because he cannot express. Hence the third characteristic: the fool is uncreative. Imitative he is, but absolutely uncreative. He may be able to compose a few things, he may be able to put a few things together, but it is never creativity. Never is a new thing born through his being -- he himself is still unborn. He can become a great technician, but he is never a great artist. He can know how to paint -- and he can know perfectly well how to paint -- but he will not be able to paint anything genuinely new, authentically novel, original. He is absolutely unoriginal. He lives like a robot; he has been reduced to a machine.
If man is reduced to his lowest, he becomes a machine; if he is raised to his highest, he becomes a god. Man is a ladder: at the lowest rung, he is a machine; at the highest rung, he is a god. Either you can be a machine or you can be a god. If you remain unintelligent, unaware, you will remain a machine.
Conscience cannot change you. You have been told, "This is right and that is wrong," but that has not changed you. Nobody can change you from the outside. Any change from

the outside is going to be only superficial; deep down you will remain the same -- and you will persist in your foolishness.
I have seen sinners who are foolish, I have seen saints who are foolish in the same way. There is a great difference between the sinner and the saint from the outside, but both may be fools. The sinner may have fallen in a wrong company, that's all, and the saint has fallen in a right company; that is the only difference. The sinner is following the wrong crowd; it is accidental. And the saint is following the right crowd, but that too is accidental. Deep down, both are the same.
Foolishness has a quality of persisting. It persists because for lives together you have lived through it, you have remained identified with it. It has been safe to be a fool. It has been safe to pretend that you know without knowing, because you know perfectly well that the world has not behaved well with the knowers. It has not poisoned any fool, but it has poisoned Socrates -- one of the most wise men ever born. It has not crucified any fool, but it has crucified Jesus.

Two hippies, short of cash, hit on a way of making money. With their long hair and beards, a couple of nightshirts and a makeshift cross, they headed one Sunday morning for the local Baptist church, arriving in the middle of the service. The first hippie entered, proclaiming aloud, "Make way for the Lord!"
The second staggered behind, wielding the cross.
The worshippers cried out aloud. Some fell flat on their faces. Coins and bills were showered on them as they

paraded up the aisle and back out again into the street. That Sunday they made over forty dollars.
The following week they hit the local Catholic church. "Make way for the Lord!" The parishioners tore out their hair and shrieked up to heaven in paroxysms of divine ecstasy. That morning they made over a hundred dollars.
The following week, just for a laugh, they tried the synagogue. The first hippie entered crying, "Make way for the Lord!" and the second lumbered in with his load.
The old rabbi turned to his neighbor and whispered, "Moishe, get the hammer and nails out. He is back!"

To be a fool is safer. To be a Jesus is dangerous. To be a buddha is to live in insecurity. It is going against the crowd, and the crowd is vast; it is going against the current. Hence your experience of centuries tells you, "Remain a fool. Pretend that you are not foolish." That is part of foolishness. The moment a person stops pretending, he starts becoming wise.
The beginning of wisdom is to know that you are a fool -- and then you are not a fool at all; you have stopped being a fool. It is very rare to accept the fact that "I am a fool." They say that if a madman knows that he is mad, he is no longer mad; sanity has come back. But no madman ever agrees that he is mad; he thinks he is the sanest man in the world. Everybody else may be mad, HE is not. That is also part of remaining foolish. The foolish person pretends in every possible way. He will pretend that he knows what he knows not. He will pretend he is somebody he is not. His life becomes an acting. His life becomes a superficial show. He is always in a kind of exhibition; he becomes a

showcase. He has many faces. He wears masks and he forgets his original face completely.
Hence, the Zen Buddhists say: Unless you discover your original face you will not know who you are and you will not know what this reality is all about, and you will not know the blessing and the benediction of being alive. Discover the original face. Your original face is lost in so many masks. You have been pretending to others and, slowly slowly, you have become convinced of your own pretensions.

Now that Jack and Irma were rich they decided to add a little culture to their hitherto shallow lives. At their first opportunity they went to the Metropolitan Museum of Art and took a guided tour of the exhibits.
"Say, this is a fine bust of Michelangelo," said Jack admiringly.
"That is not Michelangelo," explained the guide. "That is Leonardo da Vinci."
"Jack," she hissed, "why do you have to open your big mouth when you don't know a single thing about the New Testament?"

You will find these pretenders everywhere. You will find these pretenders inside you, outside you. You are living with them -- you are one of them. Recognize that "I am a pretender," and that is a great beginning.
The fool may try to be good, but he cannot be good because there is nothing like mechanical goodness. Goodness can only be out of consciousness. All that is mechanical is bad. In my definition and in the definition of Gautama the

Buddha, to do anything unconsciously is bad, is evil, and to do anything consciously is good, is virtuous. It is not a question of what you are doing, it is not a question about your actions in particular; everything depends on what source it is coming from. If it is coming from your deep awareness, then whatsoever it is....

For example, Mohammed fought in many wars with a sword in his hand, but I will not call his wars evil. No, his wars are not evil because they are coming out of a deep awareness, a deep meditativeness. He is simply responding to the situation. Of course, what he is doing is violence -- but violence, too, in the hands of a conscious, alert person, transforms its quality.

Adolf Hitler was a vegetarian, but his vegetarianism was not good. His vegetarianism was evil, because it was coming out of a totally unconscious mind. He never smoked, he never drank alcohol, he lived the life of a celibate. He was almost a monk -- a Jaina monk. If you look at his life, he lived it in a very disciplined way. He was not in any way an evil person -- never gambled, never even played cards. But he was not good, he was not virtuous. All that was coming out of an unconscious mind.

If you find Jesus drinking... yes, he used to drink, he enjoyed drinking. And I don't think there is anything wrong in drinking if you can drink the way Jesus drank, with absolute awareness; then there is nothing wrong in drinking. Then drinking, too, is good. But you may be a nondrinker like Adolf Hitler, and it is not good. So the question is not WHAT you do, but HOW you do it, from where comes the action.

Molly O'Brien went to visit the parish priest. "Father," she said, "I feel so bad! Last night I called a man a bastard."
"Now, why," said the priest, "would you want to do a thing like that?"
"Well, Father, you see... he put his arm around me."
"What -- like this?"
"Yes, just like that."
"Well, that is no reason to call him a bastard."
"Yes, but then, Father, he kissed me!"
"What -- like this?"
"Yes."
"Well, that's no reason to call him a bastard."
"I know, but then you see, he put me down on the sofa and lifted my dress up."
"You mean... like this?"
"Yes, Father."
"Well, still that is no reason to call him a bastard."
"Yes, but then he pulled his trousers down."
"Like this?"
"Yes."
"Well, that is still no reason to call him a bastard."
"But Father... then he made love to me."
"Like this?"
"Yes."
"And you called him a bastard just for that?"
"But Father -- you see -- then he told me he had the clap."
"Why, the dirty bastard!"

The fool can be found in the sinners, in the priests, in the saints. The fool is a very subtle phenomenon; it is not so gross as you think. You cannot judge from the outside

whether a man is wise or foolish because sometimes their acts may be the same.

Krishna says in the Gita to Arjuna, "Fight, but fight with absolute surrender to God. Become a vehicle." Now, to surrender means absolute awareness, otherwise you cannot surrender. Surrender means dropping the ego, and ego IS your unconsciousness. Krishna says, "Drop the ego and then leave it to God. Then let his will be done. Then whatsoever happens is good."
Arjuna argues. Again and again he brings new arguments and he says, "But to kill these people -- innocent people, they have not done anything wrong -- just for the kingdom to kill so many people, so much violence, so much murder, so much bloodshed... how can it be right? Rather than killing these people for the kingdom I would like to renounce and go to the forest and become a monk."
Now, if you just look from the outside, Arjuna seems to be more religious than Krishna. Arjuna seems to be more a Gandhian than Krishna. Krishna seems to be very dangerous. He is saying, "Drop all this nonsense of being a monk and escaping to the Himalayan caves. That is not for you. You leave everything to God. You don't decide, you drop this deciding. You simply relax, be in a let-go, and let him descend in you and let him flow through you. Then, whatsoever happens.... If he wants to become a monk through you, he will become a monk. If he wants to become a warrior through you, he will become a warrior."
Arjuna seems to be more moralistic, puritanistic. Krishna seems to be totally different. Krishna is a buddha, an awakened being. He is saying, "Don't YOU decide. Out of

your unconsciousness, whatsoever you decide is going to be wrong, because unconsciousness is wrong."

And the foolish person lives in unconsciousness. Even if he tries to do good, in fact he succeeds only in doing bad.

Paddy NcNaughty went to confession: "Bless me, Father, for I have sinned."
"And what is it that you have done, my son?"
"I made love to one of the girls in the village."
"My God!" said the priest, "and which of the village girls did you commit sin with?"
"Ah, Father, that I cannot tell."
"And if you will not tell me, then I shall not give you absolution."
"Ah dear!" said Paddy.
"Was it Molly O'Flaherty?" asked the priest.
"No, it was not Molly O'Flaherty."
"Then was it Flora Fitzgibbons?"
"Ah no," said Paddy, "it was not Flora Fitzgibbons."
"Was it Maggie Muldoon, then?" persisted the priest.
"Ah, sure no, it was not Maggie Muldoon."
"Then who in heaven's name was it?"
"Ah, sure, Father -- that I cannot tell."
"And if you don't tell me I shall not give ya absolution."
"Ah, Father, that's too bad!" said Paddy and walked out of the confessional.
His friend, Michael, was waiting outside. "Well, Paddy, did ya get yar sins forgiven?"
"No," said Paddy, "but I got the names of a few good broads!"

If you are unconscious you may go to get forgiven, you may go to confession, but it is not going to help -- you will remain the same. Foolishness tends to persist. Beware of these characteristics of foolishness. Foolishness is very egoistic. In fact, the more intelligent you are, the less egoistic you are. When intelligence blooms in perfection, ego disappears. Hence, foolishness is very argumentative; it always tries to defend itself. In a thousand and one ways it will convince you that this is the right course, this is what is to be done.
One has to be very aware of all these deep tendencies; they go on forcing you to go astray, they go on forcing you to go off center. They make you eccentric. Consciousness centers you; unconsciousness takes you off your center.

A man walked into a cafeteria and ordered coffee and a cream bun. "Sorry," said the attendant, "but we're out of buns. Why not have a doughnut instead?"
"In that case," said the man, "I'll have a cup of tea and a cream bun."
"I just told you, sir, we're out of buns. Why don't you have a doughnut?"
"Hmm... so in that case, I'll have a toasted bun with butter and a cup of tea."
"Look! How many times do I have to tell you? We don't have any buns -- cream buns or toasted buns, or any other kind of buns!"
"Okay then," said the man. "Then give me a currant bun and a hot chocolate."

"Look here, you!" said the attendant, seizing the man by the collar and shaking him violently, "We DON'T HAVE NO BUNS! We don't have no cream buns, we don't have no currant buns, nor hot cross buns, or toasted buns with butter -- or any other kind of buns. Get it?"
"Okay, okay!" said the man. "No need to shout -- I'll just have a bun!"

Buddha says:

THE FOOL IS HIS OWN ENEMY.
SEEKING WEALTH, HE DESTROYS HIMSELF.

THE FOOL IS HIS OWN ENEMY... for many reasons. First: he will die without being born. He will die as a seed. He will never bloom, he will never come to flowers and to fruits. He will never know what fulfillment is. His life will be a sheer wastage. His life will be a desert without any oasis. He will not know any blessing, any benediction, any ecstasy -- which was his birthright. He will be self-destructive. Not to grow into consciousness is the most suicidal act one can commit; hence Buddha says: THE FOOL IS HIS OWN ENEMY. He misses a great opportunity.
Life is such a precious opportunity to know, to be, but the fool misses. He will not even be aware what he has missed. He will pass through life like a zombie. His whole life is mechanical. He gets up early in the morning, takes his breakfast, goes to the office, does his work, drives back home... and he is doing everything, but still he is a robot. He is not yet inwardly full of light; deep inside him there is

only darkness. He is doing all these things because he has practiced doing them. He has become skillful.
Scientists have been working for centuries to create robots. I don't see why they should be so much concerned about creating robots -- there are so many, millions of them! And there is no need to make robots at all; all these millions of robots go on producing more robots! In fact, the question is how to stop them from producing more!
Each fool leaves at least a dozen fools -- particularly in India -- behind him. When he dies he makes the world twelve times more foolish; he leaves a dozen fools as a proof that he has been here. What is the need of creating robots?

I was reading a story that robots have been created -- it is a twenty-first century story -- and they are so exactly like human beings that it is very difficult to distinguish. If you meet a robot on the way driving his car you will not be able to distinguish whether he is a robot or not. He will look exactly like a man. Only one difference will be there: he will be more efficient. Less accidents will be there on the road. He will finish his work in time. He will not go on piling up files on his table; his table will be clean.
So a few indications so you can judge whether the man is really a robot or a man. Once in a while only you will know who is a robot -- when his battery runs down. Then only... if he was talking to you and he was giving you great argument, philosophical arguments for God's existence, and then he suddenly says, "Grrr, grrrr, grrr-rr-rrr...!" and immediately runs towards the electric plug and connects himself to the electricity to recharge himself -- then you

will know that this is not a real man; otherwise there will not be any difference.
And that, too, is possible to overcome sooner or later: we can fix two batteries. Why one battery? I was worried: why fix one battery in the poor man? -- you can fix two batteries so that while one is being used, the other is being charged automatically. If you can create a robot, can't you create an automatic battery? Why make him look foolish: "Grrr, grrr, grrr"? And this can happen any time. He is making love to his woman, and "Grrr, grrr, grrr!" And he has to say, "Excuse me, I have run out of gas!" Either electricity... or he will need petrol.

THE FOOL IS HIS OWN ENEMY. His first inimical act towards himself is his mechanicalness.

"Look what I got today! A brand-new car, and it only cost eight hundred pounds."
"Eight hundred pounds? But that's impossible -- a brand-new car?"
"Ah well, you see, it's got no engine."
"Got no engine?"
"That's right. You talk to it, see... you just talk to it and it goes."
"Is that so?"
"Yep, that's right. Wanna come for a ride? Only one thing, though, before we start. This car only understands a few words. Like, to make it go forward you say, 'Bloody hell'; to make it stop you say, 'Bastard.'"
"Oh... is that so?"

"Yep. Sure is. Come on, I will show ya. 'Bloody hell' -- she goes, see, and all you have to do is turn the steering wheel, blow the horn, flash the indicators.... 'Bastard' -- see, she stops when you want, too."
"Wow! I've never seen a car like that before!"
"Let's take her out into the country. Maybe we can go out towards the cliffs by the sea. See, on a straight road she'll go up to ninety, no problem -- ninety-four, ninety-five...."
"Uh... ahem... I say, aren't we getting a bit close to the edge of the cliffs?"
"Come on now, don't worry. Just watch how she brakes."
"Hey! Hey, careful! That sign says, 'Road ends in fifty yards,' and you're going ninety-five!"
"Right! Watch this: Bastard.... Hey, come on now -- she doesn't want to stop! Bastard! Bastard! Bastard! We made it! See, she stopped."
"Phew, bloody hell, that was close...!"

THE FOOL IS HIS OWN ENEMY. SEEKING WEALTH, HE DESTROYS HIMSELF. By "wealth" Buddha means everything that is outside you: power, prestige, money, sex -- anything that is outside you. The fool is extrovert; he never looks in. He accumulates everything on the outside. His whole life is devoted to money, power, prestige, and then one day death comes, but then it is too late. When death comes, he realizes that all that he has been doing has been simply stupid because all is slipping out of his fingers. All that he has been doing was making sandcastles. Just a blow of death, and everything disappears like a dream. Buddha says: SEEKING WEALTH, HE DESTROYS HIMSELF. He remains constantly extrovert; hence he

never becomes aware who he is, why he is, from where he comes, to where he is going, what is his destiny, what is his significance, why this existence needs him, what purpose he is supposed to fulfill, what fragrance has to be released by him. He never looks in. He goes on rushing faster and faster. As death comes closer he runs faster so that he can accumulate a little more wealth, a little more respect, respectability, so that he can become a president or a prime minister.

But death destroys everything -- your presidents, your prime ministers. You may be rich; death is not going to favor you. Before death, everybody is the same -- rich or poor, knowledgeable or not knowledgeable, famous or not famous.

Buddha says: If you are putting your energies into such projects which can be destroyed by death, then you are destroying yourself. Attain something that is imperishable. Attain to something that death cannot snatch away from you. Realize something that will go beyond death with you. Realize something that even fire cannot burn, swords cannot cut, atom bombs, hydrogen bombs cannot destroy. Then only you have been a friend to yourself; otherwise you are an enemy.

Three couples were killed in a car crash. Saint Peter was waiting for them at the Pearly Gates, his big book under his arm. The first couple was summoned forth.

"Name?" shouted Saint Peter.

"Jones," replied the husband.

Saint Peter opened his big book and started thumbing through the pages.

"Hmmm... Jackson... Johnson... ah yes, Jones! Hmm... Jones, hey? Well now, Jones, this is not a very good record, is it? Drink, drink, drink -- that's all you've ever been after -- even married a woman called Sherry. Well, Jones, this isn't good enough, you know. I'm afraid it is downstairs to hell for you."

The Joneses broke into sobs and hugged each other, but two guardian angels pulled them apart and dragged the man towards the gates of hell. The wife followed shortly.

"Next!" called Saint Peter and the second couple shuffled forward. "Name!"

"Smith," they both replied shakily.

"Hmm... Sutherland... Spencer... ah yes, Smith! Hmm... well, Mr. and Mrs. Smith, this one doesn't look too good either. Money, money, money -- that's all you two have ever been after -- even called your sons Buck, Frank and Mark, and your daughter, Penny. Now what kind of a life is that! Well, there's only one place for people like you. You'll have to go downstairs -- down to hell!"

The Smiths wept and fell at his feet, but the verdict was final.

"Next!" shouted Saint Peter, as the guardian angels were hauling the Smiths away.

The next husband turned to his wife and said, "Come on, Fanny... I'm not gonna stand here and be insulted!"

SEEK RATHER THE OTHER SHORE.

Buddha says: Don't be too much concerned with this shore; it is momentary. Tomorrow you have to go. Even seventy years is not a long time; compared to eternity it is just a

moment. Your life lasts only as long as a soap bubble. You THINK it is long enough -- seventy years -- because you compare your life with the life of flies or mosquitoes; then it looks long enough. But ask the mosquitoes and they think they are doing perfectly well: they are doing everything that you are doing and in a short span. They are born, they fall in love, they get married, they have children -- and many more than you can ever have -- and they sing and they dance. Maybe they have their own religion and priests and politicians. And then they become old and then they die. Maybe it lasts only for a few weeks, but in those few weeks they have done everything!

There are insects that will live only for a few hours, but in those few hours is condensed your whole life: boyfriends and girlfriends, husbands and wives, and all the fights.... I have heard they go even to marriage counselors, they consult sexologists!

One woman had a cat and the cat was creating much trouble in the neighborhood. He was a playboy and the whole night he was going from this house to that, and they were making so much noise -- because cats don't believe in making love silently. They are not Hindus, not Indians! They are all hippies!

So the whole neighborhood told the woman, "Do something. It's too much -- we can't sleep! This lovemaking of your cat -- he's driving us mad!"

Finally the woman took her cat to the vet and he was operated on. But the neighborhood was in as much trouble as before.

People asked the woman, "What is the matter? What kind of operation is this? Your cat has been operated on, you say, but we still see him coming."
The woman said, "Yes, he still goes -- now as a consultant."

Time does not matter. In a few hours you can live seventy years or seven hundred years in a condensed way. Into seven minutes seventy years can be condensed. And seven minutes look very small compared to seventy years, but what are seventy years compared to the age of the sun or the moon or the earth or the stars? And what are seventy years compared to eternity?
This shore consists of momentary phenomena. Don't waste your total energy in that which is momentary. Go on remembering the other shore. By "the other shore" Buddha means that which is beyond time and beyond space. This shore is outside you and the other shore is within you. This shore consists of money, sex, power, prestige, and that shore consists only of awareness, silence, peace, prayer.
SEEK RATHER THE OTHER SHORE.

WEEDS CHOKE THE FIELD.
PASSION POISONS THE NATURE OF MAN,
AND HATRED, ILLUSION AND DESIRE.

But you are full of weeds, hence you cannot grow roses. Before you can grow roses you will have to remove all the weeds, you will have to prepare the ground, you will have to prepare the soil. You will have to remove the weeds, the

stones, and all that can be a hindrance for the roses.
WEEDS CHOKE THE FIELD.
And about weeds, one thing has to be understood: you need not grow them, they grow on their own accord. Even if you pull them out they will grow again.

Mulla Nasruddin has a very beautiful lawn. A new neighbor moved recently next door to Mulla's house and he became very interested in Mulla's garden, particularly his lawn. He also wanted to make a beautiful lawn and a garden. He planted seeds, he planted plants, but so many weeds started growing.
He asked Mulla, "How to distinguish which is grass and which are weeds?"
Mulla said, "Simple. You pull them both out. The grass will not grow again and the weeds will grow again. That's how one knows, that's how one can distinguish."

Weeds have a quality -- the same quality as the fools: they persist, they insist, they don't want to be removed. Everything great in this life is fragile and everything ugly is rocklike, very strong. Weeds grow on their own accord. You have not cultivated anger and you have not cultivated lust. There are no schools where you are taught how to be jealous and how to be greedy. No teachers, no masters are needed to teach you how to be unconscious. These things grow on their own accord.
Falling downwards is easy; rising upwards is difficult -- it goes against gravitation.
You have to remove the weeds, otherwise they choke the field. You are so full of anger, greed, lust, that they are

choking your energies. It will be impossible for you to grow -- they won't allow you to grow. They will suck all your energy; they are suckers, they are parasites.
Buddha says: WEEDS CHOKE THE FIELD. PASSION POISONS THE NATURE OF MAN, AND HATRED, ILLUSION AND DESIRE.
Passion creates many things in you. It creates fever, it makes you more unconscious -- more unconscious than you already are. It drags you deeper into the mud. And with passion come hatred, illusion and desire -- and then you are distracted from your nature. Your nature is poisoned, your innocence is poisoned. You lose all simplicity, all humbleness.
Beware of the poisoning by passion. Be warm, be loving -- that is a totally different phenomenon -- but don't be full of lust. Warmth is possible with your consciousness. A Buddha is very warm, a Jesus is very warm, very loving. Passion has disappeared. Passion has become transformed into compassion. Their compassion showers on you like flowers. Just as passion poisons you, compassion purifies you. Compassion is nectar if passion is poison. The energy that is involved in passion can be released into compassion. And the way to release the energy, the way to rechannel it towards compassion, is what Buddha calls SAMMASATI -- right awareness, right remembering; what Gurdjieff calls self-remembering, what Krishnamurti calls simply awareness, what I call meditation. They are all the same, different names indicating the same energy. You have to become alert, conscious of what you are doing.
Try, when you are angry, to be conscious, and you will be surprised -- you are in for a great surprise. If you become

conscious, anger disappears. And suddenly you have found a key, you have stumbled upon a secret. When sex dominates you and you are full of lust, close your eyes, sit silently and meditate on this energy that is surrounding you, this lust that is surrounding you like a cloud. Just watch it, see it. I am not saying be against it, because if you are against it you have already taken a standpoint. Now you cannot watch.

For watching, the necessary step, the most necessary, is not to take any prejudice, not to conclude beforehand. Just remain silently watchful, neither for nor against. And within minutes you will be surprised that that great storm of lust is over. And when the storm is over, the silence that is left behind is so profound, is so great, such a blessing that you may not have felt it ever. No sexual experience can give you that beauty that will come if you watch your lust and through watchfulness the lust disappears. Then a silence comes to you which is virgin, which belongs to the beyond, which belongs to the other shore.

HONOR THE MAN WHO IS WITHOUT PASSION....

Hence Buddha says: If you can find a man who is without passion -- if you can find a christ or a buddha -- honor the man... for the simple reason that he has done almost the impossible: he has escaped from the ordinary bondage of humanity. He is no longer a prisoner, no longer a slave. He has asserted his individuality, his intelligence. He is no longer a fool. Wisdom has happened in his being. He is full of light; darkness has disappeared.

HONOR THE MAN WHO IS WITHOUT PASSION, HATRED, ILLUSION AND DESIRE.

And the moment passion disappears, hatred disappears, illusion disappears, desire disappears, because one feels so contented, one feels so utterly fulfilled. One feels one has come home. There is nowhere to go, nothing else to ask for or desire.
Just think of those moments when there is no desire, when there is no tension, when your mind is absolutely quiet. Only then will you know God exists -- or it will be more right to say, godliness exists.
WHAT YOU GIVE TO HIM.... If you give anything to Buddha... what can you give to him? You can give him your respect, you can give him your trust, you can give him your self, your surrender.

WHAT YOU GIVE TO HIM
WILL BE GIVEN BACK TO YOU,
AND MORE.

Whenever a disciple surrenders himself to an awakened master he becomes the richest person in the world. In his very surrender is victory. In his dropping of the ego he attains to beinghood. For the first time he is -- and in a very strange way, because he has dropped himself. But the one he has dropped was a false self, and when the false disappears, the real appears. When the false ceases to be, the real starts shining in all its glory, in all its splendor. Whatsoever you give to a buddha comes back to you a thousandfold.
The disciple surrenders, the disciple opens his heart, and the buddha starts flowing into the heart of the disciple. The

buddha is like a raincloud, so full of love, so full of truth, so full of ecstasy, that if you open your heart, if you are ready to drink out of him, you will, for the first time, feel a deep satisfaction. Your thirst will be quenched.
That's why Jesus says: Eat me, drink me. He is not telling you to become cannibals! He is saying to you, "I am available. Just open your heart and let me in."
When the awakened one knocks on your door, please open the door, because you may miss the opportunity and you may miss it for many many lives. It is very rare to come across a Buddha, a Christ, a Krishna, a Mahavira, a Mohammed. If you are fortunate enough to come across an awakened person, then don't be miserly. Then drop yourself totally, then be committed totally.
Just the other day somebody has asked, "You say: I am the gate. I have come here, I love you. I have come from far away, but I am not a sannyasin and I am not being allowed to see you. Then why do you say: I am the gate if I am not allowed to come through you?"
You are allowed to come through me, but a few things you will have to leave at the gate: your shoes, your heads. That's what sannyas is. These are your two extremes, the two polarities: the shoes and the head. Leave both the extremes outside, then you are balanced. The very word 'sannyas' means a state of equilibrium, of balance, of absolute balance.
I am the gate, but I am the gate only for those who are ready to pass through me. You have to pay the price -- and sannyas is the price. And if you love me, then love is always ready to sacrifice. And I am not asking for your money, I am not asking for your house; I am not asking

anything of this shore from you. I am asking only for that which you don't have but you believe that you have. I am asking only for the false things: your beliefs, your ego, your hatred, your passion, your desires, your lust, your greed. I am asking for all your diseases! Give all your diseases to me; that's what sannyas is all about. Then I am the gate and I am ready. Come through me and you will find that which you have been seeking for lives together.

But you can miss the gate if you are so miserly or so cowardly that you cannot take the jump into sannyas. Then what kind of love are you talking about? Love knows how to be committed, how to be involved. Love knows how to die and how to be reborn. Love is ready to pass through any fire because love knows, "Nothing can destroy me, not even fire can burn me." Love knows its eternity. Hence love is always courageous.

Sannyas is courage, it is adventure.

Buddha says: WHAT YOU GIVE TO HIM WILL BE GIVEN BACK TO YOU, AND MORE.

Don't be worried and don't be miserly. Be open with me, be vulnerable, be receptive, so that I can pour myself totally in you. I am ready to be a guest in your heart, but you will have to be ready to be a host and you will have to cleanse your heart of all the weeds. You will have to empty your heart of all the junk that you have collected: of all the past, of all the memories, of all the belief systems, of all the philosophies, ideologies -- political, religious, social.

When you are absolutely empty you can come in me, I can come in you. The meeting can happen. And that meeting is the greatest orgasmic experience of life.

Enough for today.

The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 10

Chapter #8

Chapter title: Not gospels but gossips
28 February 1980 am in Buddha Hall

The first question:
Question 1
BELOVED MASTER,
I FEEL LIKE SUCH A NO-SAYER. IS THERE ANY HOPE FOR NO-SAYERS?

Prem Jinesh, no-saying is a good beginning, but not a good end. No-saying is the seed; yes-saying is the flowering of it. The yes has to come through the no -- the no is the womb of the yes. If you cannot say no, your yes will be impotent. It won't have any meaning at all, it won't transform your life. It will be just on your lips, not in your heart.
That's what has happened to the whole of humanity. People have been forced to become yea-sayers, theists, God-believers, without ever knowing the taste of no. The yes has been forced upon them. They have not arrived at the yes, the yes has been handed over to them, it is borrowed.
It is a mere belief, and all beliefs are blind. They keep you blind, they keep you in darkness. They keep you stuck and stagnant.
There is nothing wrong in saying no. No has as much beauty as yes. No is the way to arrive at yes. Use the no as a stepping-stone. Don't let it become a habit; be conscious

about it, that's all. I cannot say to you to start saying yes, because that will be not yet ripe for you. Go on saying no as long as the no remains significant to you. The no will destroy all that is false, borrowed. It will negate all beliefs. It will create an empty space in you.
In the East we call the whole process NETI, NETI -- neither this nor that. We have never condemned it.
It cleans you of all rubbish, it purifies you. It is a fire. Passing through it is a necessary step you cannot avoid. Those who avoid passing through it, their yes is just parrotlike. You can teach the parrot anything and he will go on repeating it. He does not mean it. He has no heart within it, he simply says the words -- empty words, hollow words.

A man was purchasing a parrot. He went to the pet shop. He liked one parrot -- very beautiful. He asked the price. The price appeared to be a little too much: the man was asking one thousand dollars.
The purchaser asked, "Is that parrot worth that much?"
The shopkeeper said, "You can ask the parrot himself."
He asked the parrot, and the parrot said, "There is no doubt about it."
He said it so convincingly. It appeared so natural. The man purchased the parrot, and he was very excited to show it to his wife, to his children. He brought the parrot home.
He asked the parrot, "What is your name?"
He said, "There is no doubt about it."
The man said, "What?"
He said, "There is no doubt about it!"
The man asked, "Do you know anything else or not?"
He said, "There is no doubt about it."

The man said, "My God, I must have been a fool to purchase you!"
The parrot said, "There is no doubt about it!"

That was all that the parrot knew. You ask any question, the answer is the same. It has nothing to do with the questions, it has nothing to do with the reality, it is not a response. It is just like a gramophone record. It goes on repeating meaninglessly.

The people who have been conditioned to say yes -- yes to God, yes to the religion, yes to the society, yes to the parents -- their yes is bogus, it has no substance. It is not even a shadow. Even shadows have something in them, but this yes is absolutely a nonentity. Parents teach you to respect the parents, say yes to them, be obedient. Of course, that is THEIR vested interest. And the priest says: Respect the priest, respect the Bible, the Koran, the Gita, respect the tradition, respect convention. That is HIS vested interest. And so on, so forth.
Somebody asked George Gurdjieff, "Why has respect for parents been emphasized, in every religion, in every country, in every society? Is there something divine in it?"
Gurdjieff laughed and said, "Yes. God knows perfectly well that if people are trained to say yes to the parents only then will they say yes to God. He has a vested interest in it" -- because God is the father figure, the ultimate father. And Gurdjieff also said, "Parents are sooner or later going to die, and then there will be a vacuum. You respected your parents, you were obedient to your parents, you were always following, imitating whatsoever they said. You

were just a carbon copy. You will feel very empty -- so much so that you would like to fill your emptiness with something. And that is the place which God will start filling in you."

He was joking. It is not God's vested interest. Of course it is the vested interest of the priests. God has no vested interest in anything. In fact there is no God as a person; God is only godliness.

One need not believe in God, one need not be a yea-sayer. One should learn the process of saying no.

So Jinesh, don't be worried. Say no boldly, courageously. Risk everything for the no. Slowly slowly, you will become aware that the no has limits. There are points when you cannot say no. When you explore the possibilities of saying no, you will come across certain spaces where no-saying is impossible and yes arises within your heart on its own accord, not as a conditioning, not because somebody has told you. Now it is your own flowering. And then that yes has beauty, then that yes has truth, that yes makes you a religious person. Otherwise you remain just imitators. You can imitate Christianity or Hinduism or Mohammedanism -- it does not matter whom you imitate.

I have seen Christians becoming Hindus, Hindus becoming Christians -- they are the same people. Not only that, I have seen Catholics become communists -- they still remain the same people. I have seen communists become religious -- but still they are the same people. Just the object of worship changes. Gods go on changing. One God fails, another God is replaced -- but the worshipper is the same. Whether you worship Mohammed or Marx, Mahavira or Moses, it is not going to make any difference.

If your yes has not come as a growth to you, then it is absolutely useless. Pass through this fire of no-saying, but remember only one thing: don't let it become a habit. It can become a habit, that is the danger. The danger is not in no-saying. The danger is that your no-saying may become mechanical. So say it consciously, that's all I can advise you -- say it consciously! Just don't go on saying it because you have become accustomed. That is as foolish as saying yes meaninglessly. If you say it as a habit, it is meaningless.

There are theists and there are atheists, and they are all in the same boat. Somebody has been told from the very beginning that God is -- say yes and you will be saved. And somebody has been told there is no God -- say no and you are saved. And they both are repeating. Whom you are imitating is irrelevant.

A man entered into a restaurant and ordered a cup of tea.
He said, "P-p-please b-bring a cup of tea."
Another man who was sitting across the table also repeated the same, "P-p-please b-bring a cup of tea."
The first man looked at the second man in anger but didn't say anything. Then a third man entered and he asked that he should be brought a cup of tea.
And the second man said, "Yes, bring another cup of tea for me too."
Now the first man was really angry. He said, "Y-y-y-you have been imitating me!"
And the second man said, "N-n-no. I am imitating HIM."

But whom are you imitating? Does it matter? Imitation is imitation.
People are imitators. The whole world is full of those imitators. You think those imitators are yea-sayers? You think those imitators are no-sayers? They are not saying anything, they are simply repeating whatsoever they have been told to repeat.
So Jinesh, just remember one thing: don't let it become a habit. Be conscious of it and you will be immensely benefited.

I have heard:
One ex-Nazi was trying to hide the fact that he had been a stormtrooper. He decided to become an opera singer. When the night for his big debut came he walked on stage, looked at his audience and announced, "I am going to sing -- and you are going to listen!"

Things become unconscious. You cannot hide them. Everybody else will be able to see them except you. If you can also see your habits, you start becoming a little detached, unidentified from them, a little aloof. And that very aloofness is a transcendence. Then you will be able to say when no is needed -- you will say no. And you will be able to say yes when yes is needed. You will not be fixated. To be fixated is insane. I don't want you to become yea-sayers; I want you to be conscious, alert, watchful, responsive. There are moments when your total being would like to say no. Then say no. If everything has to be risked, risk, but don't be false to your own being. And there will be moments when your whole being says, "Say yes."

And then too, maybe there is great danger in saying yes, but say it. That's the way of the sannyasin, the really religious person.
Don't become fixated. You can move from no-saying to yes-saying, and you can still remain unconscious and fixated. Then nothing has happened. Your disbelief has become belief, but you are the same person.

Ira Schwartzbaum thought he was God. His worried parents, unable to convince him otherwise, finally took him to see a world-famous psychiatrist.
Ira lay on the couch and closed his eyes.
"Tell me," the psychiatrist asked him in an encouraging, sympathetic voice, "how did it all start?"
"Well," Ira said, "on the first day I created the earth, then...."

You can be fixated. And once you are fixated on a certain thing, when you cannot have a detached view of it, when you cannot create a distance between it and you -- you are insane. What your fixation is is not important. You may be a communist or a Catholic, Hindu or a Mohammedan, believer/disbeliever, no-sayer/yes-sayer -- it is all the same. Hence, Jinesh, don't be worried about your no-saying. Be conscious of it. Next time you say no, don't just say it out of habit, out of a past pattern. Reflect, watch, wait... and let a response arise in you. And you may be surprised -- a yes is born. And it will be born in you, it will not be imposed from the outside.
Your freedom is a supreme value. Nothing is higher than that. But your freedom is possible only if you are not

encaged in your habits, unconscious patterns of living. Change your gestalt from unconsciousness to consciousness. And I know that as you become conscious you will be able to say more yes than no.
Ultimately a moment comes when life becomes just yes. But it is not fixation. You are still capable of saying no, not that you have become incapable of saying no. In fact, the greater is your yes, in the same proportion is your capacity to say no. You may not say... it may not be needed. Your understanding of life, your love affair with life may have brought you such tremendous joy that you may not like to say no. You may see the childishness of it, the stupidity of it, the stubbornness of it. You may see its poison and you may not say no, but that does not mean that you have become incapable of saying it. The more capable you are of saying yes, in the same proportion you will be capable of saying no too. But now everything will be decided by your conscious response.
Ultimately the awakened person stops saying no. Not that he deliberately decides not to say no... it simply withers away just as dead leaves fall from the trees.

The second question:
Question 2
BELOVED MASTER,
WHY IS IT SO DIFFICULT AND SCARY TO SHOW YOUR FEELINGS AND JUST TO BE YOURSELF?

Prem Deven, it is difficult to show your feelings and just to be yourself because for thousands of years you have been told to repress your feelings. It has become part of your

collective unconscious. For thousands of years you have been told NOT to be yourself. Be Jesus, be Buddha, be Krishna, but never be yourself. Be somebody else. Down the ages you have been taught so continuously, so persistently that it has gone into your blood, into your bones, into your very marrow.

A deep self-rejection has become part of you. All the priests have been condemning you. They have been telling you you are sinners, you are born in sin. Your only hope is that Jesus can save you, or Krishna can save you, but there is no hope as far as you are concerned -- you cannot save yourself, somebody else will save you. You are doomed, you can only pray to Jesus, to Krishna, to save you. As far as you are concerned you are just worthless, you are just dust and nothing more. You have no value, you have been reduced to ugly things, to disgusting beings. It is because of this, Deven, that one finds it very difficult and scary to show one's true feelings. You have been taught to be hypocrites.

Hypocrisy pays, and whatsoever pays seems to be valuable. They say honesty is the best policy -- but remember, the best POLICY. Even honesty has become only a policy because it pays. If it does not pay, then? -- then DIShonesty is the best policy. The whole thing depends on what works, what pays, what makes you richer, more respectable, what makes you more comfortable, more safe, more secure, what gives you more nourishment for the ego -- that's the best policy. It may be honesty, it may be dishonesty... whatsoever it is, use it as a means; it is not an end.

Religion also has become a good policy. It is a kind of insurance for the other world. You are preparing by being

virtuous, by going to the church, by donating to the poor, for the other world. You are opening a bank account in paradise, so when you go there you will be received with great joy, angels shouting "Alleluia!", dancing, playing on their harps. How big a bank account you have there will depend on how many virtuous deeds you have done. Religion too has become business, and your reality is repressed. And the repressed people have been respected so much. You call them saints; they are really schizophrenic. They should be treated, they need therapy -- and you worship them. Out of your hundred saints, even if one turns out to be a real saint that will be a miracle. Ninety-nine are just hocus-pocus, pretenders, deceivers. And I am not saying they are deceiving you... they are deceiving themselves too. They are repressed people.

I have known many mahatmas in this country, respected by the masses like anything. I have been very intimate with these people, and in their privacy they have opened their hearts to me. They are more ugly than you will find the ordinary people.

I used to visit prisoners, to teach them how to meditate, and my observation was.... I was surprised in the beginning that prisoners -- even those who have been sentenced for their whole lives -- are far more innocent than your saints, are far better people than your saints, far simpler, far more innocent. Your saints are cunning, clever, and your saints have only one quality: that they are able to repress themselves. They go on repressing. Then naturally, they become split. Then they have two kinds of lives: one that they live at the front door, and the other that they live at the back door; one that they live as a showpiece, and the other -

- the real one -- that they don't show to anybody. They are afraid even to see it themselves.
And that's the case with you too, on a smaller scale, of course, because, Deven, you are not a saint. Your illness is not yet incurable, it can be cured. It is not yet so acute, it is not yet chronic. Your illness is just like the common cold: it can disappear easily.
But everybody is influenced by these so-called saints, who are really insane people. They are repressed so much -- they have repressed their sex, they have repressed their greed, they have repressed their anger -- and they are boiling within themselves. Their inner life is very nightmarish. There is no peace, no silence. All their smiles are painted.

I have heard of a beautiful woman who came from the West in search of peace. She went to the Himalayas. She had heard about a great saint who used to live in the caves. It was hard to reach to those caves, but you know Americans: the harder a thing is, the more they become interested; it becomes a challenge.
So the American lady reached to that peak where the saint lived. He had lived there for thirty years absolutely alone. Not a single human being had visited him all this time, because Indians are very lazy; they don't bother to go that far. They have managed in a different way: every twelve years they gather in Allahabad and all the saints from all the caves come down so they can have all the saints together. They don't bother much to go to the Himalayas. Those who want to be worshipped come on their own.

But the American lady reached with arduous effort, and she told the saint -- he was very old, ancient -- she told the saint, "I have come here in search of peace. I want peace of mind and peace of heart."
The saint said, "Yes, you have come to the right place. You will be given both. Don't be worried, my daughter. It is not difficult. You will have peace of mind and peace of heart."
She was very happy. At last somebody is so certain. She has seen many psychiatrists and therapists; they all said that it will take seven years, ten years of analysis, and then too there is no guarantee. This man is so certain, and he looks so silent, so happy... a man from a totally different world, so unearthly.
But in the middle of the night the saint jumped into the bed of the woman. She was so shocked, for a few seconds she could not utter a single word. And the saint started making love, wild love, to the woman.
And the woman said, "What are you doing? You had promised me peace of the mind and peace of the heart! And what are you doing?"
He said, "First things first: piece of ass! We will take care of other things later on. One has to begin from the beginning."

If you repress.... That was his problem. Peace of mind and peace of heart was not his problem; he must have been repressing for thirty years, and he had not seen even a single woman. And I don't know whether the woman was really beautiful or not, because if you don't see a woman for thirty years, any woman looks beautiful! Any woman looks like she is coming from the gods.

Hindu scriptures are full of the stories that whenever a great saint reaches very close to attaining enlightenment, beautiful women come from the gods to disturb him. I have not been yet able to find out why the gods should be interested in disturbing these poor fellows. Some ascetic, fasting for years, repressing, standing on his head, torturing himself... he has not done any harm to anybody else except himself. Why should the gods be so interested in distracting him? They should really help him! And they send beautiful women... naked... and those women dance around and make obscene gestures to the poor fellow. Naturally he becomes a victim, he is seduced, falls from grace -- as if the gods are against anyone who is reaching closer to enlightenment. This seems so ridiculous. They should help. Rather than helping they come to destroy.

But those stories should not be understood literally; they are symbolical, they are metaphors. They are very meaningful. Had Sigmund Freud come across those stories, he would have utterly enjoyed them. It would have been a treasure for him. It would have supported his psychoanalysis as nothing else. Nobody was coming; those repressed people were projecting. These were their desires, repressed desires -- so long repressed that now they have become so powerful that even with open eyes they were dreaming.

So I don't know whether this woman was really beautiful, but she must have appeared beautiful to the so-called saint. In India, if a woman is sitting in one place, the saints are taught not to sit in the same place after the woman has left for a certain length of time, because that space vibrates with danger. Do you see the foolishness of it all? And these

have been the teachers of humanity. And these are the people who have made you, Deven, scared of your own feelings -- because you cannot accept your own feelings. You reject them, hence the fear.

Accept them, nothing is wrong, nothing is wrong with you! All that is needed is not repression or destruction. You have to learn the art of creating harmony in your energies. You have to become an orchestra. Yes, if you don't know how to play on musical instruments, you will create noise, you will drive your neighbors mad. But if you know the art of playing on the instruments you can create beautiful music, you can create celestial music. You can bring something of the beyond on the earth.

Life is also a great instrument. You have to learn how to play upon it. Nothing has to be cut, destroyed, repressed, rejected. All that God has given to you is beautiful. If you have not been able to use it beautifully, it simply shows that you are not yet artful enough. We have all taken our lives for granted, and that is wrong. We are given only a raw possibility. We have been given only a POTENTIAL for life; we have to learn how to actualize it.

That's what sannyas is all about, Deven. That's what all the devices are: meditation, therapies -- all possible sources have to be used so that you can know how to use your anger in such a way that it becomes compassion, how to use your sex in such a way that it becomes love, how to use your greed in such a way that it becomes sharing. EVERY energy that you have can become its polar opposite, because the polar opposite is ALWAYS contained in it. Your body contains the soul, matter contains mind. The world contains God. Dust contains divineness. You have to

discover it, and the first step towards discovery is to accept yourself, rejoice in being yourself. You are not to be a Jesus, no, you are not to be a Buddha. You are not to be me or anybody else. You have to be just yourself. God does not want carbon copies; he loves your uniqueness. And you can offer yourself to God only as a unique phenomenon. You can be accepted as an offering but only as a unique phenomenon. An imitation Jesus, Krishna, Christ, Buddha, Mohammed -- these won't do. Imitators are bound to be rejected.

Be yourself, authentically yourself. Respect yourself. If God has given you life he respects you. And do you have higher standards than God himself? Love yourself. God loves you. And then start watching all kinds of energies in you -- you are a vast universe!

And slowly slowly, as you become more conscious, you will be able to put things right, into right places. You are topsy-turvy, that is true, but nothing is wrong with you. You are not a sinner -- just a little rearrangement and you will become a beautiful phenomenon.

The third question:

Question 3

BELOVED MASTER,

AM I WASTING ENERGY BY LOOKING TO OCCULTISM AS A WAY TO EXPLORE INNER SPACE?

Mark, occultism is for stupid people. God is not hidden; God is very much manifested. He is all over the place: singing in the birds, flowering in the flowers. He is green in

the trees, red in the roses. He is breathing in you. He is talking through me and listening through you right this very moment. But you don't want to see the obvious.
Man has a very pathological interest in the occult. Occult means that which is hidden. Man wants to be interested in the hidden -- and there is nothing hidden! As far as God is concerned nothing is hidden. Just open your eyes and he is standing before you. Be silent and you will hear the still, small voice within yourself. Why go into occultism to explore inner space? Why not go directly into inner space? Occultism is so much nonsense, and there is no end to it because it is all invention. It is religious fiction. Just as there is science fiction, occultism is religious fiction. If you love fictions, it is perfectly okay. But then don't think that by reading science fiction you are studying science. And don't believe in science fiction, and don't act out of that belief; otherwise you will end up in a madhouse.
Occultism is exactly like science fiction. People love fiction; there is nothing wrong in it, but you should know that it is fiction. Enjoy, but don't take it seriously.
In Buddha's time there were eight great masters. Mahavira is well-known -- he was the last enlightened master of the tradition of the Jainas. He used to say there are three hells. One of his disciples became a renegade, betrayed him, declared himself to be a master, and he started talking about seven hells. He used to say to people, "Mahavira does not know much; he knows only about three hells and I know about seven." And naturally people were impressed. Mahavira talks only of three hells and he talks about seven!
One great master was Sanjay Belattiputta, another contemporary of Buddha. He must have been a man

something like me -- nonserious. He started talking about seven hundred hells. He said, "What is this Gosalak talking about? -- only seven? There are seven hundred, and there are seven hundred heavens too."
He was joking, but people were very interested. This seems to be the right man, who has gone so deep into occultism.

Once a follower of Radhaswami, a small sect which is confined to an area near Agra, came to see me. I was in Agra. He was some kind of a priest, and he said, "Do you know? -- our master has said there are fourteen planes of existence."
I said, "Just fourteen?"
He said, "What do you mean, 'Just fourteen'? Are there more?"
I said, "Certainly."
He said, "But our master has said there are only fourteen. Mohammed has reached only up to the third," he said -- he had brought a map -- "Kabir and Nanak have reached up to the fifth. And Mahavira and Buddha up to the seventh," and so on, so forth. But there has never been another who has reached up to the fourteenth except his so-called master.
I said, "I know your master. I have seen him struggling in the fourteenth. He is trying hard, but he cannot get out of it. I know it because I exist at the fifteenth. There are fifteen planes of existence."
He said, "But you are the first man...." And he was much impressed. When he was leaving he touched my feet and he said, "You have revealed a new secret."
I said, "Don't be foolish. I was just joking! There are only two categories of people: the people who are not aware and

the people who are aware. The people who are aware have no hierarchy that one is more aware than the other, that somebody is at the fifth, somebody at the seventh, somebody at the ninth, somebody at the fourteenth. There is no higher and lower in awareness. Awareness is simply awareness."
But he was not much interested in that. He was more interested in my being on the fifteenth plane.

People are interested in religious fictions.
Mark, don't waste your time in occultism, unless you are interested in novels, fictions. Then it is okay, then there is no problem....

The lecturer on the occult was warming to his subject of supernatural manifestations.
"Ah, my friends," he exclaimed, a look of dedicated zeal animating his face. "If you could but be made to believe! If only the world would cease its scoffing and come to realize that visitations from the Mystic Shore happen all the time."
The lecturer searched the faces in his audience to find those sympathetic souls who agreed with his philosophy.
"I have told you about my own experiences," he continued, "but surely one of you has also had direct communication with a departed spirit. If there is any such person here in this audience who has been in touch with a ghost, I would appreciate it if he or she would stand up."
From her seat in the front row, Mrs. Faigel Frume got to her feet. "Me," she said loudly. "Such a experience I had you would not believe."

"This is very gratifying," said the delighted speaker when the applause died down. "Behold, a volunteer witness; one who is a total stranger to me, arises to give her testimony. My dear lady, do I understand you to say that you have been in touch with a ghost?"
"In touch with him?" echoed Mrs. Frume. "Better even than that. When I was a little girl in Russia one of them butted me till I was black and blue."
"A ghost BUTTED you?"
"A GHOST, you said? Gosh! I thought you said a GOAT!"

Don't waste your time in ghosts and goats. If you want to explore inner space, explore inner space. How does occultism come in? That's a way of escaping from inner space, not exploring it. That's a way of keeping yourself engaged in sheer nonsense! And theosophy, particularly in this age, has released so much nonsense: hundreds of books and all kinds of foolish things. People are so gullible that they are ready to believe anything.
Man today exists in a kind of vacuum. Old religions have died or are almost dying. Either they have died or they are on the deathbed; hence new creeds are cropping up everywhere, and all the new creeds need new fictions to allure you.
I cannot give you any occult fiction. I am not interested in anything esoteric. I am a very down-to-earth man. I am simply stating the facts. I don't want to decorate them. I don't want to create illusions in your mind; I don't want to create projections in your mind. My effort here is to help you to go beyond the mind and all your occultism and esotericism, theology, anthroposophy -- and there are so

many schools. You can create your own; there is no need to believe in anybody else's, you can create your own. All that you need is a pencil and paper; you can just go on writing your own fiction. That will be far more enlightening. At least it will be something creative. Then give your copy to somebody, and you will find a few believers. Then you will know how people go on believing in any kind of thing.

J. Krishnamurti was brought up by theosophists. He was fed, spoon-fed with all kinds of occultism. He became so fed up that when the theosophists were going to declare him to be the world teacher.... The day they had gathered from all over the world -- six thousand leading theosophists -- when they asked Krishnamurti to declare, he stood up and said, "I dissolve this organization. I am nobody's teacher. I am finished with it all, and I don't want to say anything more!"

They were shocked, but as far as I see it, it is a logical conclusion. For years he was taught all kinds of nonsense by all kinds of stupid people. He was getting fed up with the whole thing. But old ladies, and particularly retired old people, were very interested. They were the majority of the theosophists -- retired people and old ladies who now had nothing else to do -- and they would gather and talk nonsense about ghosts and about Tibetan masters who come flying in the air, and about letters that Master K.H.... Now nobody knows who this K.H. is. His full name is Koot Humi. That too, nobody knows what it means. The less you understand, the better.

Koot Humi -- in short K.H. -- used to write letters, until finally it was found that those letters were written by Blavatsky herself. A servant used to hide on the roof -- just

think, just on the roof of Buddha Hall! -- and there was a small hole from where, when the theosophists would be sitting with closed eyes waiting for Koot Humi, he would drop a letter.
Now, people are so foolish.... Just ordinary paper -- they could have seen what brand it was, in what factory it had been made -- ordinary ink, and the handwriting was Blavatsky's. Then the letter would be read, and those letters were collected, and they were great treasures. But in the High Court there was a case against one of the great theosophists, Leadbeater. He was a colleague of Annie Besant, and he was suspected of homosexuality. Just a dirty old man, that's all!
So there was a case in the High Court against him, and in that case his servant confessed that he was the man who used to hide on the roof. He went and showed the hole and the place where he used to hide, and everything was discovered. Still, people go on reading those letters believing that Koot Humi wrote them.
When people WANT to believe, when they are feeling empty, some belief is needed. They cling to anything, they don't listen... they don't listen to their own heart. They just need belief; so anybody is ready to supply it. Wherever there is demand there is supply. People need fictions, so there are other people -- clever, cunning people -- who go on supplying fictions.

In a Catholic school, little Hans was asked to give an example of a dependent clause.
"Our cat has a litter of ten kittens," he replied, "all of which are good Catholics."

"That's excellent," said the teacher. "You have a good grasp on grammar as well as on our religion."
The following week the bishop visited the school and the teacher called on Hans.
"Our cat has a litter of ten kittens," said Hans, "all of which are good sannyasins."
"That is not what you said a week ago!" snapped the teacher.
"Yes," replied Hans, "but my kittens' eyes are open now."

Be a little alert, be a little watchful. There are deceiving people all around; you can be easily deceived.

Morrissey, the ventriloquist, was on his way down to a bar for a drink when a big shaggy dog fell in at his side.
They went in, the ventriloquist ordered a scotch, and for a laugh he looked at the dog and said, "Well, are you having the usual?"
"No, thanks, I have had enough this morning," said the dog.
The barman was flabbergasted. He offered fifty dollars for the animal.
"No, sir!" said Morrissey. "I have had him since he was a pup."
"I'll make it a hundred dollars!" said the bartender.
Morrissey shook his head. When the offer went to five hundred dollars the ventriloquist grabbed the money and headed for the door.
"Alright," he added, "take good care of him." And with a last look at the dog, "Farewell, old pal!" he exclaimed.

"Old pal, my foot!" said the dog. "After what you have just done I will never speak to another human being as long as I live!"

Be aware of the cunning people, they are all around. Don't be exploited. Long enough humanity has been exploited by the cunning and the clever; it is time to put a full stop to it. Be a little more mature.
If you want to explore inner space, meditate. Listen to what Buddha says: Quieten the mind, reflect, watch, and all darkness will disappear on its own accord, and you will be full of light.

The fourth question:
Question 4
BELOVED MASTER,
YOUR JOKES ARE FAR OUT! EASE UP A LITTLE ON THE PRIESTS.
BELOVED MASTER, I REJOICE WITH EXISTENCE BECAUSE OF YOUR ENLIGHTENMENT! I FEEL GOOD TO BE HERE, TO BE HOME AFTER YEARS OF SEARCHING.

Deva Chintana, I am sorry if it hurts you. I know.... Deva Chintana has been a nun. She has been courageous. She dropped out of the monastery and became a sannyasin. And my jokes about the priests must be looking a little hard to her, naturally. I should have thought of her. I will be more careful in the future, Chintana.
A joke for you:

The pope died... and naturally assumed that he would go to heaven. So, dressed in all his papal finery, he went striding up towards the Pearly Gates, brushed past Saint Peter, and made straight for the entrance.
"Hey, you! Where are you going?" shouted Saint Peter, and two guardian angels stepped forward to bar the way.
"Look-a here," said the pope. "I am-a da popa and I...."
"Who?"
"Da Popa!!! I am-a da popa of da Catholic-a Church-a and I wanna go to heaven."
"The pope?" said Saint Peter. "Never heard of you. We don't have anyone of that name in our books, do we, Gabriel? No, sorry sir, you cannot come in."
"Hey, come on! I am-a da popa! You gotta let me in. Ask-a God da Father -- he knows me!"
Saint Peter calls God the Father: "Hey, God, this is Saint Peter -- gate duty. Sorry to disturb you but there is a guy here who calls himself the popa and wants to come inside -- says you know him."
"Who?" asks God the Father.
"The popa."
"Who?"
"I think that's what he said."
"No, never heard of him."
"Sorry, Pope -- God the Father says he doesn't know you."
"What? But leesten, I am-a da popa. He must know me! Look-a here, you ask God da Son. For sure he knows me -- I am-a his representative on da earth-a -- he must-a know me!"
Saint Peter calls God the Son, but the answer is the same: "The pope? No, I've never heard of him!"

The pope is in despair: "Look-a, you gotta help me. Ring-a the Holy Ghost -- for sure he knows me! I am da popa -- da popa of the Catholic-a Church-a, the spiritual representative of Jesus Christ-a on da earth-a!! He has just gotta know me!"
Saint Peter calls the Holy Ghost. "Hmmm, the pope, you say!" answers the Holy Ghost. "Hmm, yes, I've heard that name before somewhere.... Wait a minute! He's that bastard who goes on spreading rumors about me and Virgin Mary. Tell him to go to hell!"

Chintana, I will try my best. But the priests are the priests; they are the most ugly people on the earth, the most cunning and the most mean, although their appearance is totally different.
And I am not saying that there are not some good people. Some good people are also caught in the net, but those good people are childish. Those good people are gullible, those good people are easily exploitable.
Humanity has to get rid of priesthood, only then can there be religion. They have been very destructive. It is because of them that the world is not religious yet. They have divided humanity instead of making humanity one whole. Much more blood has been shed in the name of religion than in the name of anything else. In fact, I am not really hard on them, I am very soft with them. They need to be hit harder. And when I am hitting them, I am not really hitting them, but simply hitting your conditioning.
What do I have to do with the pope or the shankaracharya or the imam or Ayatollah Khomeiniac? I have nothing to do with these people. But when I hit them I am simply hitting

the chains inside you that keep you in a bondage. My jokes about the priests are just to help you to come out of the prison, laughing. I don't want it to become a serious affair for you to come out of the prison, because if it becomes a serious affair you will be affected by your seriousness and you will carry that load with you. And there is every danger that you will start projecting your seriousness on me.
I can free you from the priest very easily, but the danger is that you may start projecting all that you have been projecting on the priest, on me. That is not freedom at all; only your chains are changed.

Someone else has asked me:
Question 5
BELOVED MASTER,
I AM A COWARD AND I CANNOT TAKE SANNYAS.
WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO ME?

Jesus was on the cross, a thief on either side of him. Suddenly the guards disappeared and they were alone. Seeing that there was no one around, Jesus addressed the two thieves.
"Repent, my brethren!" he said. "Repent, and the Kingdom of God will be opened unto you. I will take you with me to the House of my Father. REPENT!"
One of the thieves bowed down to Jesus, saying, "I repent, my Lord! Take me with you into the Kingdom of God!"
The other thief turned his head away in disdain. "Stop all this crap!" he exclaimed.
Jesus insisted, "Repent! Come to my feet!"
"Fuck you!" replied the thief.

Jesus looked at him compassionately, and said, "Tough luck, old bean! You won't be in the souvenir picture, that's all!"

So don't be worried if you are not a sannyasin. If you cannot gather courage to be a sannyasin, you won't be in the souvenir picture, that's all. Don't take it seriously.
My whole effort here is to make sannyas as nonserious as possible. I don't want to become a pope or a shankaracharya. I don't want to become a replacement for you, a substitute for you. I don't want to become a father figure to you. I want simply to be a friend.
Hence my discourses are not ordinarily religious sermons. I am just chitchatting. They are not gospels, but gossips!
Enough for today.

The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 10

Chapter #9

Chapter title: Delight in meditation
29 February 1980 am in Buddha Hall

MASTER YOUR SENSES,
WHAT YOU TASTE AND SMELL,
WHAT YOU SEE, WHAT YOU HEAR.

IN ALL THINGS BE A MASTER
OF WHAT YOU DO AND WHAT YOU SAY AND THINK.
BE FREE.

YOU ARE A SEEKER.
DELIGHT IN THE MASTERY
OF YOUR HANDS AND YOUR FEET,
OF YOUR WORDS AND YOUR THOUGHTS.

DELIGHT IN MEDITATION
AND IN SOLITUDE.
COMPOSE YOURSELF, BE HAPPY.
YOU ARE A SEEKER.

Freedom is the ultimate goal of true religion -- not God, not paradise, not even truth, but freedom. This has to be understood because this is Gautam Buddha's essential message to the world. Freedom is the highest value according to him, the SUMMUM BONUM; there is nothing higher than that. But by freedom he does not mean political freedom, social freedom, economic freedom. By freedom he means the freedom of consciousness.
Our consciousness is in a deep bondage; we are chained. Inside is our prison, not outside. The walls of the prison are not outside us; it exists deep in our unconscious. It exists in our instincts, it exists in our desires, it exists in our unawareness.
Freedom is the goal.
Awareness is the method to reach that goal.
And when you are really free you are a master; the slavery disappears. Ordinarily we may appear free, but we are not free. It may appear that we are the choosers, but we are not the choosers. We are being pulled, pushed by unconscious forces.

When you fall in love with a woman or a man, do you think you have decided it, it is your choice? You know perfectly well you cannot choose to love, you cannot force yourself to love somebody. You are not the master, you are just a slave of a biological force. That's why in all the languages the expression is 'falling in love' -- you FALL in love: you fall from your freedom, you fall from your selfhood. If love were your choice you would rise in love, not fall in love. Then love would be out of your consciousness, and it would have a totally different quality, a different beauty, a different fragrance.

The ordinary love stinks -- stinks of jealousy, anger, hatred, possessiveness. It is not love at all. Nature is forcing you towards something which is not of your choice; you are just a victim. This is our slavery. Even in love we are slaves, what to say about other things? Love seems to be our greatest experience; even that consists only of slavery, even in that we only suffer.

People suffer more in love than in anything else. The greatest suffering is that it deludes you -- it creates the illusion that you are the chooser, and soon you know that you are not the chooser; nature has played a trick upon you. Unconscious forces have taken possession of you, you are possessed. You are acting not on your own; you are just a vehicle. That is the first misery that one starts feeling in love, and one misery triggers a whole chain of misery. Soon you become aware that you have become dependent on the other, that without the other you cannot exist, that without the other you start losing all sense of meaning, significance. The other has become your life, you are utterly dependent; hence lovers continuously fight, because

nobody likes to be dependent, everybody hates dependence. Nobody likes to be possessed by somebody else because to be possessed means to be reduced to a thing. The whole humanity suffers for the simple reason that every relationship goes on reducing you, goes on making your prison smaller and smaller.
Buddha says: This life is not true life. You are being lived, you are not really living. You are being lived by unconscious forces. Unless you become conscious, unless you take possession of your own life, unless you become independent of your instincts, you will not be a master. And without being a master there is no bliss, no benediction; life remains a hell.

The first sutra:

MASTER YOUR SENSES,
WHAT YOU TASTE AND SMELL,
WHAT YOU SEE, WHAT YOU HEAR.

This sutra has been very misunderstood, misinterpreted, so much so that the Buddhists have taken exactly the opposite meaning of it. MASTER YOUR SENSES does not mean destroy your senses. If you destroy them, whom are you going to master? And that's what has been done for twenty-five centuries: Buddhists have been destroying the senses. That is easier, hence the mistake. It is difficult, arduous to master your senses. It needs great consciousness to master your senses; to destroy them needs nothing.
If you want to make a beautiful house you will have to learn many things, but if you want to demolish it you need

not learn anything. Anybody can demolish it, any madman can do that. In fact, a madman can do it faster than anybody else, quicker. You need not know architecture to demolish a building. Destruction needs no art, no intelligence.
And that's how this sutra has been interpreted down the ages, for the simple reason that destruction is easier; any stupid person can do it. And your so-called saints are almost always stupid. It is very rare to come across a real saint who is a creative person. They are worshipped as saints because they have been successfully committing suicide -- slow suicide, of course -- destroying themselves slowly, poisoning themselves slowly. We have worshipped death, destruction. We should learn -- it is time now -- we should learn to love life and to love creativity, creation.
MY understanding of this sutra is totally different. "Master your senses" means become more conscious of your senses, become more sensitive. Don't destroy them; otherwise you will be left without the doors and windows into creation, into God, into truth.

There is a story of a Hindu mystic. I don't believe that it is true because I have been deeply impressed by that mystic's great sayings; they are so beautiful that it is impossible for me to conceive that he could have done such a thing.
Surdas is his name. He was a blind man, not born blind; that's how the story goes. He destroyed his eyes himself because he saw a beautiful woman and became fascinated by her. She took his fancy, he started thinking of her -- and he was a monk. He destroyed his eyes because he thought it was these two eyes that had made him aware of her beauty.

If these eyes were not there, he would not have been infatuated.

I don't believe the story, but it is true of thousands of other people. My own experience is that Surdas must have been blind from the very beginning because his insight in his poetry is such that it is inconceivable that such a man will do such a stupid act.
By destroying your eyes you cannot get freedom from women or from men. You can close your eyes, that will not make much difference. In fact with closed eyes women appear more beautiful than they are!
That's why whenever you make love to a woman she closes her eyes; you appear more beautiful. Otherwise, looking at you she will become afraid, because on your face the expression of passion and lust can't be described as beautiful; it is ugly, it is animal. A man full of lust is nothing but an animal. Women must have learned the art of closing their eyes seeing again and again that the man turns into an animal.

I love a famous Zen anecdote:
Two monks were coming back to the monastery; they had gone into the village to preach. It was evening, the sun was setting; soon it would be night. They came across a river. A young woman, a beautiful woman, was standing there on the bank hesitating whether to enter the river or not: it may be too deep, it appears very deep.
The first monk -- the older one -- followed the Buddhist rule not to look at a woman. But that is a very strange rule: first you have to look, then only will you be able to see

whether she is a woman or not. You can follow the rule only by breaking it! So he must have looked -- of course a stolen look -- and then he must have looked down. The Buddhist rule is: Don't look more than four feet ahead. Such fear... and he must have been trembling inside. And he crossed the river.

When he was crossing the river and was reaching the other shore, suddenly he remembered his younger fellow monk, who was also coming behind. What has happened to him? He looked back. The younger monk was carrying the woman on his shoulders! The older one was really enraged; in his rage there must have been jealousy also; otherwise why be angry?

The younger one brought the girl to the other shore, left her there, and both the monks moved towards the monastery. For one mile the old man didn't say a single word. Then, when they reached to the gate of the monastery, the old man turned to the younger monk and said, "Listen, I will have to report it to the abbot. This is against the rules. Buddha has said: Don't touch a woman, don't look at a woman. You have not only seen her, you have not only touched her, you have carried her on your shoulders. This is too much! This is going against the law."

I don't think that Buddha has said that. A man like Buddha cannot say such nonsense things. But twenty-five centuries of stupid interpreters have done as much harm as they can do.

The young monk said, "But I have left the woman on the bank, far behind. Are you still carrying her on your shoulders?"

It has a great truth in it: the old man was really still carrying her. You can see without seeing, you can carry without carrying, you can touch without touching. Man has great imagination.

Hence I cannot believe that Surdas destroyed his eyes; otherwise it would be impossible for him to give such beautiful insights. He must have been a man of inner vision, of inner eyes, of great understanding. So I don't believe in the story, but the story is significant. It is true about so many so-called saints. It may not be true about Surdas but it is true about almost all so-called saints -- Hindu, Mohammedan, Christian.

In Christianity there has been a sect which used to cut off their genital organs -- just in order to transcend sex. If just by cutting off your genital organs you can transcend sex, things will be very easy. You can just go to the Sassoon Hospital and they will really do a butchery on you! They are official butchers, government butchers, recognized, authorized. But by removing your sexual organs you will not transcend sex; you may become more obsessed with sex than ever before.

That's what happens to old people -- hence the expression, 'the dirty old man'. You don't say 'the dirty young man' -- why? The old man is called dirty for the simple reason that now all his sexuality has entered into his mind. His sex center has moved into his mind; it has become cerebral. Now he thinks about it only, he continually thinks about it. Physiologically he has become incapable; that does not mean that psychologically he has transcended it, that he has mastery of his sexuality -- no.

By destroying your senses you don't, you can't become masters. Then what is the way to become the master? Buddha says: MASTER YOUR SENSES.... He could have simply said: Destroy your senses. But mastery is a totally different phenomenon; it needs great art, skill, awareness, meditativeness, watchfulness, alertness. Only then the senses will remain there. In fact, the master is more sensitive than the slave.

My own understanding is that Buddha smells more deeply; his sense of smell is far deeper than yours. Your sense of smell is repressed, very much repressed. For centuries you have been repressing sex, and the sense of smell is very much connected with your sexuality. You have been repressing your sense of smell. You use so many perfumes just to hide the smell of your sexuality. Otherwise, when a woman has her period she smells differently; you can smell that she has her period. When a woman is sexually aroused she starts smelling differently; you can know just by her smell that she is sexually aroused. And the same is true about man: sexually aroused, his body starts smelling because there are great chemical changes happening inside him. They affect his body, his perspiration, his breathing, his blood.

Man has been so much afraid of his sexuality: somebody may become aware, somebody may note what is happening to him. He has used clothes to hide his body, he has used perfumes to hide his natural smells. He has tried in every possible way to appear as nonsexual as possible. And we have had to repress our noses very much....

You know the animals. They know through their noses whether the female is willing or not. Just the nose is enough

to know whether the female is saying yes. Unless the nose says the female is saying yes, the male won't approach the female. That is aggression, that is rape. No animal ever rapes, remember, except man. Man is the only rapist animal in the world. I am not including the animals who live in the zoos because they have become more like human beings. Living in the company of human beings they have been distorted; otherwise no animal rapes. Love happens only when both the parties are absolutely willing. But man has lost his sensitivity of smell. It is because of the so-called religious teaching down the centuries.

My understanding is that Buddha's sense of smell is far more clear than yours because there is no repression in him. His eyes see better than you can see because his eyes are not clouded by any prejudice, by any a priori conceptions. He hears perfectly well because his ears are not full of noise, his mind is silent.

When the mind is utterly silent you are capable of listening. Then you are capable of listening to the song of the birds, a distant call of the cuckoo. Then you are able to listen even to the silence. Just now, listen to the silence... not only sound but soundlessness can be listened to. But you have to be noiseless.

And you can start smelling people not only in their sexuality, you can start smelling their anger because anger also changes their body chemistry. You can start smelling their greed, their jealousy, their hatred. You can start smelling all kinds of emotions. The moment a person comes to you, if your mind is silent and your senses are clear, unclouded, without any fog, you can smell everything that the man is carrying. He may be smiling on

the surface, but deep down you can see that he is angry, a hypocrite. Try smelling people -- their greed, their anger, their cruelty.

And if you can learn to smell cruelty, anger, greed, slowly slowly you will be able to smell more subtle things: their compassion, their love, their prayer. Yes, even their meditativeness, their silence has its own fragrance. When a person is full of greed, he stinks of greed; when a person is full of silence, he exudes something of the beyond, something of the unknown.

Buddha is not saying destroy your senses. He is saying master your senses, become more aware of your senses. Bring awareness to your senses so that they become more sensitive. They are doors, windows, bridges with existence. Without them you will be just a closed phenomenon, a Leibnizian monad, windowless. You will not see the light of the sun, moon, stars. You will not feel anything. Destroying your senses will simply mean you are killing yourself. You have five senses. Destroy your eyes and eighty percent of your life is destroyed -- eighty percent, because your eyes contain eighty percent of your life; eighty percent of your sensibility depends on your eyes. Hence we feel so much sympathy for the blind man. You don't feel that much sympathy for the dumb or for the deaf. Why, all over the world, do we feel so much sympathy for the blind man? -- because he is really suffering much. He can't see colors, he can't see the light -- and life consists of light and life consists of colors. It is a rainbow. He will remain utterly in the dark. He will not know what colorful existence was available. He will not know the butterflies and the roses and the marigolds. He will not know the

green and the red and the gold of the trees. He will not know the faces of the people, he will not be able to look into the eyes of the people. His main bridge is broken. Destroy your ears, and something more dies in you. Destroy your tongue, and something more dies in you. When you have destroyed all your senses you are just a corpse, you are no longer alive. Life means sensitivity: more sensitivity and you have more life. So I cannot say destroy your senses -- you have already destroyed them. Revive them, rejuvenate them, pour energy into them. And the method to pour energy into them is by becoming aware. Sometimes just become aware of your ears, as if you are just the ears and nothing else, as if your whole body has become the ears. Just be ears, and you will be surprised that you become aware of such subtle noises, such subtle happenings around you that you have never been aware of. You may start hearing your own breathing, your own heartbeat. You may start hearing many things -- and you have lived always amongst these things, but you were never aware; you were so occupied into yourself.

Buddha says: WHAT YOU TASTE AND SMELL, WHAT YOU SEE, WHAT YOU HEAR -- MASTER YOUR SENSES. Bring your awareness to taste. When you are eating, forget everything else; just become your tongue, just your taste buds. Exist there in your totality. Taste your food as deeply as possible, and you will be in for a great surprise -- not one but many surprises.

First you will become aware that you cannot eat more than is needed. You need not diet -- only foolish people diet. And you can diet for a few days, and then you jump upon the food with a vengeance, and you gain more weight than

you have lost! If you are intelligent, bring your awareness to your taste. Why do you eat more? The simple reason is that you don't taste, and your hunger for taste remains, so you go on stuffing more. If you really taste, soon you will be satisfied, contented. Soon the body will say, "Stop!" And if you are alert you will be able to listen when the body says stop.

Right now you are not there at all. You are eating, but you are not there, present. You may be in your office or you may have gone somewhere else, doing a thousand and one things. One thing is certain: that you are not at the table where you are sitting, you are always somewhere else. You are never where you are; you can't be found where you are. If you are really there, totally absorbed in eating, you will be surprised. The first thing will be that for the first time, food becomes something divine.

The Upanishads say: ANNAM BRAHMA -- food is God. Such a beautiful statement: Food is God. These people must have tasted. Without tasting you cannot see God in food. These people can't be against food, they can't be for fasting, they can't teach you to starve your body. The people who have said: Annam Brahma -- food is God -- cannot be in favor of starving. Starvation cannot be anything spiritual.

Eat, but eat meditatively, silently. When you are eating you are talking. Don't talk, because if you are talking you will miss the joy of absorbing God into yourself. You will miss the joy of eating, and when you miss the joy of eating, your hunger for taste goes on asking for more, so you go on stuffing. And that seems to be nonending. People are stuffing the whole day and still it seems they are not

satisfied. Eating twice may be enough or at the most thrice, but people are eating the whole day -- particularly Americans! If they are not eating they won't know what else to do. Just doing something with the mouth keeps them occupied. If they are not eating they are talking, if they are not talking they are smoking, if they are not smoking they are chewing gum -- as if the mouth has to remain continuously occupied.

Stan and Sid, both on the road with noncompeting merchandise, usually traveled together, sharing the same car and hotel rooms to save money.
One evening the two friends registered at a small hotel in Schenectady, and Stan immediately sat down to write his wife a letter.
Sid happened to notice his buddy's unusual salutation. "Tell me something, Stan," he said curiously. "How come you always address your wife as 'Dear AT&T'? Is she a big investor?"
"No, nothing like that," answered Stan. "AT&T does not stand for American Telephone & Telegraph. It means 'Always Talking & Talking'."

People are continuously talking, particularly women more so -- for the simple reason that man has taken every other avenue from them. They are left only with one thing -- talking; they are not allowed anything else. Every other door has been closed, so their whole energy is turned into talking. They are talking because their minds are too noisy and they have to pour them out: it is a kind of catharsis.

Even when you are eating you are talking. How can you taste food and how can you be sensitive to taste?
When you go into the garden you are talking. If you are not talking with somebody else you are in a constant dialogue within yourself. You divide yourself into many persons, you make a crowd inside yourself. You are questioning and answering within yourself. You don't look at the flowers. You don't feel the fragrance, the joy of the birds, the celebration of the trees. You don't allow yourself any sensitivity, any opportunity to be more sensitive, to be more available to existence, to be more vulnerable. Sensitivity means openness, vulnerability, availability.
Buddha says: MASTER YOUR SENSES, WHAT YOU TASTE AND SMELL, WHAT YOU SEE, WHAT YOU HEAR.
People are either talking or reading newspapers or listening to the radio or watching the television -- even five hours, six hours per day, watching television, destroying your eyes! And there is so much to see, and you are sitting before a box, glued to your chair!

In his heavenly abode, the patriarch Abraham lit the shabbes candles and then, over a glass of tea and lemon, he settled back to read the 'Forvetz'.
Suddenly, from down below on Earth, he heard a raucous tumult.
"Now, who could be desecrating the Sabbath like that?" he wondered.
With his new laser telescope, he looked down and there he saw a crowd of at least eighty thousand people in the Houston Astrodome watching a baseball game. A quick

count showed him that over thirty thousand Jews were among the spectators. Outraged, he picked up the phone and dialed G-O-D. After a few rings, the boss picked up the receiver.
"Hello," said Father Abraham, "that you, Joe?"
"Now look here, Abe -- the name is Jehovah! Show a little respect!"
"Alright, Jehovah, then. I have a complaint."
"What is it this time? Those people from the New Testament picking on you again?"
"Nothing like that. But you really must do something about all that goyishe conduct back on Earth. Did you know that at this very minute thirty thousand Jews are watching a baseball game at the Astrodome?"
"You got something against baseball?"
"No, of course not. But that is not the point. This is Friday evening and it seems to me our people ought to be a little more observant of the holy day."
"What is the big attraction they are all watching the game?"
"Hank Aaron is coming to bat and he is about to break Babe Ruth's record."
"You are absolutely right, Abe. That is no excuse for them to act like a bunch of wild Republicans. Call me back after the game and I will do something about it.... And by the way, what channel is it on?"

Not only man but even God is glued to his chair, looking at the television!
Buddha says: Whatsoever you are doing... small things -- eating, walking, drinking water, taking a bath, swimming in a river -- whatsoever you are doing -- lying down in the sun

-- be utterly there, be totally there. Become your senses. Come down from the mind to the senses, come back to the senses.

And what the Buddhists have done for twenty-five centuries is just the opposite: they have gone more and more into the head, they have destroyed their senses completely. They have become dead as far as their bodies are concerned. Only their heads are continuously working, occupied day and night in great interpretations. And they have created so many absurd laws in the name of Buddha that you will not believe it. Thirty-three thousand laws and rules to be followed; even to remember them is impossible. Thirty-three thousand laws and rules to be followed! Buddha knows only one law and that is awareness -- and that's enough; it takes care of everything. He gives you the master key; you need not carry thirty-three thousand keys with you. Otherwise, whenever the time arises to open a lock you will be at a loss, searching into those thirty-three thousand keys! I don't think you will be able to find the right key. It is impossible to find the right key, because that's how things work. If you are supposed to take two pills, open the bottle and they will always come in threes, never twos! If you are supposed to take three pills, they will come in twos, they will never come in threes. Life is very mysterious!

Thirty-three thousand keys... and you think you will be able to find the right key when you come across a lock? Impossible... or it will take thirty-three thousand lives for you to find it; by that time the lock will be gone. Either you will have the key or you will have the lock, but never both

at the same time. In your unconsciousness how can you carry thirty-three thousand laws?

Mulla Nasruddin came home one night late, utterly drunk. He was trying... and he had only one key, but it wouldn't go in the lock because he was trembling and shaking.
The policeman came to see because for half an hour Mulla was trying and trying. And he said, "Wait! Give me the key, I will open it."
He said, "No need to bother with the key. You just hold the house in place and I can open it!"

In your unconsciousness, thirty-three thousand keys! You will be burdened. That's what has happened to Buddhism. That's what has happened to all the religions. So many laws and so many rules that people have become burdened so much with them, they have forgotten all about them. Religion is very simple. It consists of a single law -- awareness -- and that is the master key. Make each act of your life full of awareness. Focus your awareness on each act, and that very focusing transforms it, because when you give your awareness to anything it becomes alive; you are pouring your life into it. Your senses will become totally sensitive, and because you are aware you will remain the master. Slavery means unawareness.

Karl the Knaidel, King of Kansas City, had everything in life that a man could ask for, except for one thing: he wanted a grandson to carry on the family name, to say nothing of the family business. So he was understandably

happy when his bachelor son told him one evening that he had fallen in love and was planning to marry.
"It is a smart thing you are doing," advised Karl. "Until a man marries he is incomplete."
He pondered the wisdom of his own statement for a moment or two and then added solemnly, "He is not only complete -- he is finished!"

And you are not falling in one thing -- in love -- you are falling in a thousand things -- in anger, in greed. You are continuously falling, falling victims of some unconscious forces within you that you have carried from your animal heritage.
We have to make our unconscious full of light. No nook or corner should be left without light inside you. Only one tenth of our mind is conscious; nine tenths is in darkness, deep darkness. We are like an iceberg: one tenth shows up, nine tenths is hidden underneath -- and that nine tenths is nine times more powerful.
So you may decide something, but you will not be able to follow it; that nine tenths will destroy it any moment. You may decide to get up tomorrow early at five o'clock, but this decision is only by the one tenth of your mind; nine tenths is completely unaware of your decision, absolutely unaware of your decision. So when in the morning the alarm goes, nine tenths of the mind says, "What is the hurry? And it is so beautiful and so cozy and so warm. And that Dynamic Meditation can wait! Tomorrow we can meditate." And of course, the tomorrow never comes. And when you wake up you will feel guilty -- but this is again not the mind that stopped you from waking up which is

feeling guilty; that is another one tenth which is feeling guilty.

And this goes on your whole life, this hide-and-seek. One part decides, another part cancels. And the part that cancels is nine times more powerful. You have decided many times not to be angry again, but all your decisions are impotent because that nine times more powerful unconscious is always there and it won't allow the one tenth to take possession, to be powerful.

Hence the transformation is not through decisions, through taking vows; the transformation needs a totally different approach. You have to change your unconscious slowly slowly into consciousness. That's what meditation is all about: it is making your light grow bigger, spreading it deeper, slowly slowly diving deeper into your own being. As more and more of your unconscious is reclaimed by the consciousness your decisions will start becoming great fulfillments. Then you can promise yourself something. Right now all your promises are false; you know they are not going to work. You know you have failed so many times and you know you will fail again; but you go on hoping -- hoping against hope.

The ordinary religion taught in the temples and the churches by the priests teaches you character. The real religion -- the religion of the buddhas, the awakened ones -- teaches you consciousness, not character. Character is a by-product; when you are conscious, character comes on its own accord. The ordinary religion teaches you conscience; it is cheap. The buddhas teach you consciousness, not conscience.

Buddha says:

IN ALL THINGS BE A MASTER
OF WHAT YOU DO AND WHAT YOU SAY AND THINK.
BE FREE.

Man can be divided into four parts. The outermost circumference consists of action, what you do. The second layer, a little deeper than your action, consists of your saying, what you say. A little deeper, the third layer consists of your thinking, what you constantly think. And the fourth is not a layer; the fourth is your reality, your being. That is your center, the center of the cyclone. Your center, your being is surrounded by three concentric circles: thinking, saying, doing.

Buddha says: IN ALL THINGS BE A MASTER OF WHAT YOU DO.... Are you aware of what you are doing? Are you doing it consciously or just because others are doing it? Are you an imitator, just following the crowd like a sheep? Be a man, don't be a sheep! Don't follow the crowd, be individual. Only then can you be a master; only individuals can be masters. In the crowd you have to be a slave; the crowd consists of slaves. The crowd wants you to remain a slave; only then the crowd remains powerful. All the politicians and all the priests of the world want you to remain slaves; only then can they be priests and can they be great leaders. Otherwise who will follow your stupid leaders? Who is going to follow your so-called religious priests?

If you are a little alert, aware, you will be able to see perfectly well that your leaders are hocus-pocus, that your

priests are pseudo, that you need not follow them, that following them you have been falling in ditches. Who is going to follow Adolf Hitler or Joseph Stalin or Ayatollah Khomeini? Who is going to follow these people? Only slaves, only people who don't know what they are doing.

A young sports car enthusiast saved up enough money to buy the latest model of sports car.
After trying out the car, he went to his favorite pub to brag to all his friends about it. "Shit, man -- my new car is so fantastic! I just went from London to Liverpool in one hour!"
The next day he was back at the pub again, bragging to his friends. "Today," he said, "I made it from London to Liverpool in forty minutes!"
The day after, the young sports car enthusiast was again at the pub. "Today," he said, "would you believe it? London to Liverpool in twenty-eight minutes!"
After an absence of two days, to the astonishment of his friends, the young man arrived at the pub on foot.
"Where is your car?" asked his friends.
"I've sold it," he replied sadly.
"But why?" they asked incredulously.
"I could not help it," he told them. "What the fuck was I supposed to do in Liverpool every day?!"

But people go on doing it! This man must have been a little intelligent. They go on going to Liverpool, never thinking why. Why do you go to the church? Why do you go to the synagogue -- or to the mosque, or to the temple? Why do

you go on following stupid ideologies, ridiculous politicians? Why? You have never asked.

I have heard about a man who went to the court and wanted his name changed. The magistrate was a little puzzled, but he could not object. He was puzzled because the new name that he had chosen was very strange. His new name was 'None of the above'.
The magistrate said, "What kind of name is this?"
He said, "But this is what I want." So he was allowed. He changed his name; he became 'None of the above'.
Then he stood for president. Then the secret was known. All other candidates who had stood for president objected because this man is dangerous: his name is 'None of the above'. Anybody marking his name on the vote list, on the vote, means canceling everybody! They objected. The man was called back to the court.
The court said, "Your name is a little deceptive."
He said, "Whatsoever it is, it is my name and I want to change the president. I want to give people a chance to cancel everybody else. I am not interested in being the president myself; my whole interest is to cancel all the others, because everybody knows they are all fools, but you have to choose somebody. So I simply want to give them a chance: if they want to reject all, they can reject. They can simply mark on my name: 'None of the above'."

If you look at the situation of the world you will be able to see what these politicians and the priests have done to humanity: they have made it a hell. There is no need to ask for any proof. Now there is no need to ask whether hell

exists or not. Politicians and priests, in a deep conspiracy, have made it a reality on the earth. Who is going to follow them? That's why they don't want you to be intelligent, they don't want you to think, they don't want you to be alert. They want you to live in a kind of deep sleep. They want you to be machines, not men.
Buddha says: IN ALL THINGS BE A MASTER -- so that you are not reduced to a machine -- OF WHAT YOU DO....
Watch what you are doing and why. Is it worth doing? Is it worth wasting your life and your breath? Are you just doing it because you don't know what else to do? It is better to do nothing than to do something without knowing why, without knowing what. ... OF WHAT YOU DO AND SAY AND THINK.
You go on saying things and you suffer much because of your sayings. And many times you have decided not to say such things because unnecessarily you get into trouble; you say something and you are in trouble. But still you will go on saying the same things and getting into the same troubles, as if you never watch yourself, what you are doing. You are moving like a somnambulist in your sleep. And have you ever looked at what you think? Have you ever looked inside? You will be surprised: you are carrying many many mad people inside you. But nobody looks inside; people are continuously occupied on the outside. Nobody thinks what he is doing, what he is saying, what he is thinking.

Rabbi Isaacs was quite fond of the Shapiro family whose members were long-time congregants of his temple. So it

was understandable that he would react sympathetically when they asked him to have a serious talk with their daughter, Rachel, who was unmarried but pregnant again for the third time.
He confronted the young lady on the following evening. "I can't understand how a nice Jewish girl could allow such a disgraceful thing to happen," he began severely. "Three times yet! I suppose the babies all have different fathers!"
"Ah no!" said Rachel. "It is the same fellow."
"He is single, this man?"
"Certainly. You think I would go with a married man?"
"Then why don't you marry him?" demanded the rabbi.
"Well, frankly," Rachel answered with complete candor, "he does not appeal to me."

Just look at yourself and you will not laugh at Rachel. People are living with each other not knowing why.
So many people come to me, they write letters to me. They say, "I am living with a man for fifteen years. I don't know why because all that he gives me is misery, suffering!" Maybe that's why -- because you are a masochist. You love being miserable, you want to suffer. That man is giving you good service! And people write to me, "I am living with a woman and my life is hell." But why are you living with that woman? Nobody is forcing you. People say to me, "I am working in a job that I hate" -- but why? Get out of it immediately! Walk out of it!

I was a professor in the university. One day I was talking to the vice-chancellor and I told him, "This whole thing is

nonsense. Just give me a piece of paper so I can write my resignation."
He said, "What are you doing? Are you mad? Such a good job, so little work!" He said, "I know perfectly well that you don't do even that!" And that was true! "Why are you leaving?"
I said, "It is just nonsense. Enough is enough!"
He said, "But wait! I have been in this business for thirty years -- I also know it is all nonsense. But how can you leave like this? I have not been able to leave this. Many times I have decided, but now look -- I have succeeded. I have become the vice-chancellor. One day you may become the vice-chancellor."
I said, "Forget all about it!"
He rushed... when he saw me leaving his office, he rushed out. He pulled me back inside. He said, "What are you doing? Think it over!"
I said, "Finished is finished! I don't think twice!"
He thought I was ill or something, or I had taken some drug. He said, "Wait! I don't think you are in a state to drive back home. I will come with you."
I said, "You don't be worried. In fact, this is the first time I am perfectly sane! I was insane when I joined this university!"
But he came with me just to see whether I could drive back home. For two or three days he continued to come. He said, "You think. I am still keeping your resignation, I have not sent it. I have not told anybody."
I said, "That's up to you. I am not coming back."
The fourth day he said, "You are really a man! I have also thought many times to divorce my wife -- I could not. And

now I have seven children!" Seven children from a wife you always wanted to divorce.... So what were you doing with her?
I asked him, "Are those children really yours? If you wanted to divorce the woman, why were you making love to her?"
He said, "You are right, but what else to do?"
And for thirty years he had been thinking to drop out of the job, because he always wanted to be a musician. And now the poor fellow is dead -- just two years ago he died. He could never become a musician; he died a vice-chancellor. What a failure! What frustration! But that's how things are.

Watch your life. Buddha is all for watchfulness. IN ALL THINGS BE A MASTER OF WHAT YOU DO AND SAY AND THINK. BE FREE. If you can be a master, if you can be watchful, freedom comes on its own accord. Freedom is the shadow of being a master of your life.

YOU ARE A SEEKER.

Remember, always remember. Buddha insisted again and again: Remember you are a seeker. You are seeking your true home; you have not yet found it. Many lives you have been seeking, this life also you are seeking. Have you found it? Don't waste your time, don't go astray. Pour your whole energy into seeking, because nobody knows about tomorrow. This may be your last day. Find it so that you can live joyously and you can die joyously. YOU ARE A SEEKER.

DELIGHT IN THE MASTERY....

The only delight in life is when you master something. And when a man has mastered all his being -- his action, his saying, his thinking -- his delight is infinite. DELIGHT IN THE MASTERY....

OF YOUR HANDS AND YOUR FEET,
OF YOUR WORDS AND YOUR THOUGHTS.

Buddha never divides your bodymind. He says: Be a master of both because you are psychosomatic, you are bodymind. So be a master of your body and be a master of your mind. Then you will know who you are. Then you will know the master is you beyond bodymind. Then you will know you are pure consciousness.

DELIGHT IN MEDITATION....

Delight in silence, stillness; that is meditation.

AND IN SOLITUDE.

Delight in being alone. Enjoy being alone as much as feasible, as much as practical. Delight in solitude.

Sitting silently, doing nothing,
The spring comes and the grass grows by itself.

If you can sit silently doing nothing, the spring is not far away, the spring is bound to come. It always comes in

silence. It always comes when you know how to delight in your aloneness because only then are you independent. If you delight in others' company you are dependent. If you feel lonely when you are alone you don't know aloneness yet.
Loneliness and aloneness are two different things, notwithstanding what the dictionaries say. In dictionaries they are synonymous, but in existence they are totally different. Loneliness is negative. It means you are dependent, you are hankering for the other, you are suffering. Your being alone is not a joy, it is a misery. You want to be occupied.

The zookeeper guided the visitors to the next cage. "Now here, ladies and gentlemen, we have the laughing hyena. Now, the laughing hyena has sex on only one night in the year."
"Well, what has he got to laugh about then?" asked a young lad in the group.
"Aha! Well, tonight's the night!"

People are happy with others, but that happiness is dependent; it can be taken away. It WILL be taken away, it is bound to disappear. It can't be permanent, it is momentary.

Raleigh Rosenblum, the romantic young bachelor of Palm Beach who was also a big spender, telephoned the girl he had just met the night before. She was not only gorgeous but had also proved to be a real swinger. He wanted another date. To his surprise, however, she turned him down.

"How come you are refusing to go out with me tonight?" he demanded. "Only yesterday you said there was something about me you adored."
"There was, baby," she crooned in a husky voice, "but you spent it."

All happiness that is dependent on others is bound to disappear sooner or later. It is temporary, it is momentary, it is illusory. Only that joy is yours which wells up within your own being. Hence Buddha says: DELIGHT IN MEDITATION, delight IN SOLITUDE.
Aloneness is the joy of being just yourself. It is being joyous with yourself, it is enjoying your own company. There are very few people who enjoy their own company. And it is a very strange world: nobody enjoys his company and everybody wants others to enjoy his company! If they don't enjoy he feels insulted -- and alone he feels disgusted with himself. In fact, if YOU cannot enjoy your own company, who else is going to enjoy it?
Aloneness, solitude is positive. It is overflowing joy for no reason. It is our very nature to be joyous; hence there is no need to depend on anybody else. There is no other motive in it, it is simply there. Just as the water flows downwards, your being rises upwards. Just give it a chance -- give it solitude. And remember again, solitude is not solitariness, just as aloneness is not loneliness.

COMPOSE YOURSELF, BE HAPPY.
YOU ARE A SEEKER.

Buddha reminds you again: YOU ARE A SEEKER. COMPOSE YOURSELF.... Be harmonious, be graceful. Learn the art of being alone and yet utterly happy. Then one day, in that solitude, something starts happening which you had never expected. Something immense, something vast descends in you. Something of the beyond penetrates you. A great uplift, a great feeling of levitation arises in you. You are being uplifted, you start rising towards the ultimate. Call that ultimate God, truth, whatsoever you prefer to call it. Buddha calls it freedom, nirvana: cessation of the ego, freedom from the ego, freedom from all bondage, freedom from all dependence on others. And you become unbounded, you become as vast as the sky: even the sky is not your limit.

MASTER YOUR SENSES,
WHAT YOU TASTE AND SMELL,
WHAT YOU SEE, WHAT YOU HEAR.

IN ALL THINGS BE A MASTER
OF WHAT YOU DO AND WHAT YOU SAY AND THINK.
BE FREE.

YOU ARE A SEEKER.
DELIGHT IN THE MASTERY
OF YOUR HANDS AND YOUR FEET,
OF YOUR WORDS AND YOUR THOUGHTS.

DELIGHT IN MEDITATION
AND IN SOLITUDE.

COMPOSE YOURSELF, BE HAPPY.
YOU ARE A SEEKER.

Enough for today.

The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 10

Chapter #10

Chapter title: Love is its own reward

1 March 1980 am in Buddha Hall

Q2 on video

The first question:

Question 1

BELOVED MASTER,

WHY DO I TAKE MYSELF AND EVERYTHING SO SERIOUSLY?

Prembodhi, the ego can exist only if you take yourself and everything seriously. Nothing kills the ego like playfulness, like laughter. When you start taking life as fun, the ego has to die, it cannot exist anymore. Ego is illness; it needs an atmosphere of sadness to exist. Seriousness creates the sadness in you. Sadness is a necessary soil for the ego. Hence your saints are so serious, for the simple reason that they are the most egoistic people on the earth. They may be trying to be humble, but they are very proud of their humbleness. They take their humbleness very seriously.

The real saint cannot be serious. The really religious person has to be a celebrant. Just look around... look at the trees -- are they serious? Look at the birds, listen to them -- are they serious? Look at the stars, the moon, the sun -- are they serious? Existence is utterly nonserious; it goes on dancing. It is an eternal celebration, it is a festivity.

Only man is serious, because only man has been trying to create a separation between himself and existence. He doesn't want to be part of the whole, because then he disappears. He wants his own identity, his own name, his own form, his definition. Even if it creates misery it is okay, even if he has to live in hell he is ready for it.

Once George Bernard Shaw was asked where he would like to go after he dies -- to hell or to heaven. He said, "Wherever I can be the first, I don't want to be the second" -- and in heaven there is no chance to be the first, because so many saints have already reached there: Jesus and Zarathustra and Mahavira and Buddha. Who will take note of poor George Bernard Shaw? He is willing to go to hell if he can be the first there.

Ego wants to be the first, ego wants to put everybody below itself; hence it takes itself seriously. Hence it is perfectionist: it demands perfection, which is impossible. Nobody is perfect; nobody can exist for a single moment if he is perfect. Imperfection is the way of life, because it is possible to grow only if you are imperfect. If you are perfect there is no more growth, no more evolution. If you are perfect you are stuck. Perfection means death; imperfection means flow, growth, movement, dynamism.

The ego demands perfection of oneself and of others too. It asks for the impossible, and because the impossible cannot

be achieved it can go on living. It is not happy with the ordinary; it wants the extraordinary, and life consists only of the ordinary. But the ordinary is beautiful, the ordinary is exquisite. There is no need of anything extraordinary. The ordinary life is sacred, but the ego condemns it as mundane. It demands extraordinary life. Hence all the religions go on inventing stories about their founders which are all untrue: Moses separating the sea, Jesus walking on the water... all these stories are inventions, lies, created by the followers just to prove that their master is extraordinary; he is not an ordinary human being.

In fact, the truth is that you cannot find a more ordinary human being than Buddha, Mahavira, Jesus, Moses, Zarathustra, Lao Tzu. They are so simple! They have accepted themselves as they are. They live in suchness, in TATHATA. They don't hanker for any perfection. They are perfectly at ease with the imperfect world, utterly contented with it. And they don't take themselves so seriously that they have to attain to great heights, great peaks, that they have to surpass everybody. They are not insane! They are beautiful people, and their beauty consists in having accepted the ordinary as the extraordinary, the mundane as sacred.

Prembodhi, you ask, "Why do I take myself and everything so seriously?"

Everybody takes himself and others seriously. That's the way of the ego to exist. Start being a little more playful and you will see ego evaporating. Take life nonseriously, as a joke -- yes, as a cosmic joke. Laugh a little more.

Laughter is far more significant than prayer. Prayer may not destroy your ego; on the contrary, it may make it holy,

pious, but laughter certainly destroys your ego. When you are really in a state of laughter, have you observed? -- the ego disappears for a moment. You are again a child, giggling. Again you have forgotten that you are special. You are no longer serious; for a moment you have removed your fixation.
That's why I love jokes -- they are poison to your ego! You would like me to talk about serious things: astral planes and how many bodies men have, seven or nine, and how many chakras. And every day there are questions -- esoteric, occult. These are the serious people. They have fallen in a wrong company!
I am not serious at all. I don't laugh with you because that is part of telling a joke: the person who tells it has to be very serious, he cannot laugh with you. All my laughter I have to do alone. But my approach towards life is utterly nonserious, playful, because in my experience this is how the ego disappears.
Watch when you laugh: where is the ego? Suddenly you have melted, suddenly you are liquid, no more solid, but flowing. You are not old, experienced, knowledgeable. Listen to this joke and try to find out whether the ego remains or not.

Shortly after arriving at their honeymoon suite, the still nervous groom became worried about the state of his bride's innocence. Deciding on the direct approach, he quickly undressed, pointed at his exposed manhood, and asked his mate, "Do you know what that is?"
Without hesitating, she blushed and answered, "That's a wee-wee."

Delighted at the idea of instructing his naive wife, the husband whispered, "From now on, dearest, this will be called a prick."
"Ah, come now," the girl chided, "I've seen lots of pricks, and I assure you, that's a wee-wee."

The second question:
Question 2
BELOVED MASTER,
WHAT IS HAPPINESS?

Jayananda, it depends. It depends on you, on your state of consciousness or unconsciousness, whether you are asleep or awake.

There is one famous maxim of Murphy. He says there are two types of people: One, who always divide humanity in two types, and the other, who don't divide humanity at all.

I belong to the first type.... Humanity can be divided in two types: the sleeping ones and the awakened ones -- and, of course, a small part in between.
Happiness will depend on where you are in your consciousness. If you are asleep, then pleasure is happiness. Pleasure means sensation, trying to achieve something through the body which is not possible to achieve through the body, forcing the body to achieve something it is not capable of. People are trying, in every possible way, to achieve happiness through the body. The body can give you only momentary pleasures, and each pleasure is balanced by pain in the same amount, in the same degree. Each

pleasure is followed by its opposite because body exists in the world of duality, just as the day is followed by night and death is followed by life and life is followed by death. It is a vicious circle. Your pleasure will be followed by pain, your pain will be followed by pleasure.

But you will never be at ease. When you will be in a state of pleasure you will be afraid that you are going to lose it, and that fear will poison it. And when you will be lost in pain, of course, you will be in suffering, and you will try every possible effort to get out of it -- just to fall again back into it.

Buddha calls this the wheel of birth and death. We go on moving in this wheel, clinging to the wheel... and the wheel moves on. Sometimes pleasure comes up and sometimes pain comes up, but we are crushed between these two rocks.

But the sleepy person knows nothing else. He knows only a few sensations of the body -- food, sex. This is his world; he goes on moving between these two. These are the two ends of his body: food and sex. If he represses sex he becomes addicted to food: if he represses food he becomes addicted to sex. Energy goes on moving like a pendulum. And whatsoever you call pleasure is, at the most, just a relief of a tense state. Sexual energy gathers, accumulates; you become tense and heavy and you want to release it. The man who is asleep, his sexuality is nothing but a relief, like a good sneeze. It gives you nothing but a certain relief. A tension was there, now it is no more there; but it will accumulate again. Food gives you only a little taste on the tongue; it is not much to live for. But many people are living only to eat; there are very few people who eat to live.

The story of Columbus is well-known. It was a long trip. For three months they saw nothing but water. Then one day Columbus looked out at the horizon and saw trees. And if you think Columbus was happy to see trees, you should have seen his dog!

That's why the Siberian dogs are the fastest in the world: because the trees are so far apart.
But this is the world of pleasure. The dog can be forgiven, but you cannot be forgiven.

During their first date, the young man, looking for ways to have a good time, asked the young lady if she would like to go bowling. She replied that she did not care to go bowling. He then suggested a movie, but she answered that she did not care for them. While trying to think of something else he offered her a cigarette which she declined. He then asked if she would like to dance and drink at the new disco. She again declined by saying she did not care for those things.
In desperation he asked her to come to his apartment for a night of lovemaking. To his surprise she happily agreed, kissed him passionately and said, "You see, you don't need any of those things to have a good time!"

It depends on people what can be called happiness. To the sleeping, pleasurable sensations are happiness. He lives from one pleasure to another pleasure. He is just rushing from one sensation to another sensation. He lives for small

thrills. His life is very superficial; it has no depth, it has no quality. He lives in the world of quantity.

Then the people who are in between, who are neither asleep nor awake, who are just in a limbo, a little bit asleep, a little bit awake. You sometimes have that experience in the early morning: still sleepy, but you can't say you are asleep because you can hear the noise in the house, your wife preparing tea, the noise of the samovar or the milkman at the door or children getting ready to go to school. You can hear these things, but still you are not awake. Vaguely, dimly these noises reach to you, as if there is a great distance between you and all that is happening around you. It feels as if it is still a part of the dream. It is not a part of the dream, but you are in a state of in-between.

The same happens when you start meditating. The nonmeditator sleeps, dreams; the meditator starts moving away from his sleep towards awakening. He is in a transitory state. Then happiness has a totally different meaning: it becomes more of a quality, less of a quantity; it is more psychological, less physiological. He enjoys music more, he enjoys poetry more, he enjoys creating something. He enjoys nature, its beauty. He enjoys silence. He enjoys what he had never enjoyed before, and this is far more lasting. Even if the music stops, something goes on lingering in you. And it is not a relief.

The difference between pleasure and THIS happiness is: it is not a relief, it is an enrichment. You become more full, you become a little overflowing. Listening to good music, something is triggered in your being, a harmony arises in you -- you become musical. Or dancing, suddenly you forget your body; your body becomes weightless. The grip

of gravitation over you is lost. Suddenly you are in a different space: the ego is not so solid, the dancer melts and merges into the dance. This is far higher, far deeper than the joy that you gain from food or sex. This has a depth. But this is also not the ultimate.

The ultimate happens only when you are fully awake, when you are a buddha, when all sleep is gone and all dreaming is gone, when your whole being is full of light, when there is no darkness within you. All darkness has disappeared and with that darkness, the ego is gone. All tensions have disappeared, all anguish, all anxiety. You are in a state of total contentment. You live in the present; no past, no future anymore. You are utterly herenow.

This moment is all. Now is the only time and here is the only space. And then suddenly the whole sky drops into you. This is bliss. This is REAL happiness.

Seek bliss, Jayananda; it is your birthright. Don't remain lost in the jungle of pleasures; rise a little higher. Reach to happiness and then to bliss.

Pleasure is animal, happiness is human, bliss is divine. Pleasure binds you, it is a bondage, it chains you. Happiness gives you a little more rope, a little bit of freedom, but only a little bit. Bliss is absolute freedom. You start moving upwards; it gives you wings. You are no more part of the gross earth; you become part of the sky. You become light, you become joy.

Pleasure is dependent on others. Happiness is not so dependent on others, but still it is separate from you. Bliss is not dependent, is not separate either; it is your very being, it is your very nature. To attain it is to attain to God, to nirvana.

The third question:
Question 3
BELOVED MASTER,
WHAT IS SELFISHNESS?

Yoga Chetana, selfishness is the shadow of the idea of a separate self. It is a shadow of a shadow, a reflection of a reflection. It is as if you see the moon in the lake and then you see the moon reflected in the lake in a mirror. It is far far removed from reality. Even the reflection in the lake is not real, but the reflection of the lake in the mirror is even more unreal.
The ego is a reflection in the lake of your true being. Your true being is the moon; the ego is only a reflection in the lake. The reflection in the lake can be disturbed even by a small pebble. Throw a small pebble and you will see: the moon is disturbed, distorted. Ripples arise and the moon is broken into thousands of pieces.
Selfishness is the shadow of the ego, even more unreal. You are not a self. In Buddha's words, you are not an ATTA -- a self; you are ANATTA -- a no-self. Hence, Buddha does not teach you altruism, neither do I teach you altruism. This point has to be understood well: I don't teach you to be altruistic. That's what the priests of almost all the religions go on doing. They say, "Selfishness is bad." They don't say, "Selfishness is false." They say, "Selfishness is bad, selfishness is sin." But they accept its reality, they don't reject its reality. If it is unreal, then they cannot condemn it as a sin. How can you call anything unreal a sin? If it does not exist in the first place, how can it be sin

and how can it be bad? So they go on saying, "Selfishness is bad, selfishness is sin." And to avoid it they teach you to be altruistic: "Serve others, be servants of humanity, public servants."

Many times people who have been conditioned by these priests and missionaries come to me and, of course, they are shocked because I never talk about altruism. And they ask me why I don't teach my sannyasins to be altruistic.

I cannot, because in the first place the self is false, so to tell them to be unselfish is absolutely wrong. To tell them to serve others, to be altruistic, is taking them deeper and deeper into unreality.

My effort here is to help them to see that the self is false. Hence I am not against the self -- it does not exist. How can I be against something which does not exist? And I don't teach you altruism. If the disease is false, what is the point of giving you some medicine?

I simply tell you to look within yourself, watch silently... and you will not find the ego at all. The self disappears. In fact, to say "disappears" is not right; it has never been there, but you had never looked in. When you look you don't find it.

It is like you say, "In my room there is darkness," and I give you a lamp and I tell you, "Go and search with the lamp where the darkness is." You go with the lamp and you search -- and you can't find it! You come back and you say, "I can't find it!" So I say, "It is finished! Don't be worried about it. Whenever this itching arises in you, this urge, this doubt, take the lamp and go again and search." Slowly slowly, the truth will settle in you that there is no darkness; it is only absence of light.

Ego is absence of your attention, absence of your awareness, nothing else. If you move in, if you look in, it is not found at all. And with self gone, where is selfishness? And then your life is a life of love, of compassion. Then your life is truly altruistic. I will not call it "unselfish," I will call it "nonselfish," because in the word 'unselfish' the reality of the self is recognized. I would like to use the Buddhist word, 'nonselfish' -- anatta, no-self.

Buddha's insight is tremendous, very significant. There is no need to teach people to be unselfish. Just let them know that there is no ego, and then their whole life, without any effort, becomes a life of love. They will not become missionaries because they will not be doing anything in particular. They will not brag that they have done so much for humanity; they have done it because they enjoyed it. They are already well rewarded. The reward is not somewhere in a future life, after death, in paradise; the reward is in love itself. Love is its own reward.

When you live out of love, your life is tremendously joyous, ecstatic; that is the reward. And when you live out of a false ego, your life is a misery, it is a suffering, it is hell; that is the punishment. There is no need to wait -- that after death you will be thrown into hell. Forget all these stories! They are good to tell to children because they can't understand anything else; they can understand only stories. But to mature people those stories are irrelevant.

Each act is either its own punishment or its own reward. If it is arising out of your reality it brings great joy, beauty, bliss, benediction. If it is arising out of some false idea it brings misery, pain, suffering. That's what hell is.

Yoga Chetana, selfishness is the shadow of a self which does not exist at all. But don't accept what I say just because I am saying it. You will have to look in, let it become your experience. You will have to become a little more awake to look in. You will have to come out of your slumber.

It was down South in a dry state. The railroad station was packed with a party on their way to a football game. Over at one side of the waiting room stood Baxter, a quiet little man, fidgeting about and attempting to hide himself from the crowd.
A federal agent, assigned to this moonshine-making area, noticed Baxter had something under his jacket from which drops were falling in slow trickles. The fed, with a gleam in his eye, walked over to him, put a finger out under one of the drops, caught one, and tasted it.
"Scotch?" he asked.
"Nope," said Baxter. "Airedale pup."

You missed it! Taste it again... it is not Scotch, it is an Airedale pup.

There was a big alcoholic party on at this flat in San Francisco. Everything was at its drunkest and wildest when it happened -- an earthquake. Chimneys toppled in the street, water mains were broken. All the guests rushed outside from the wild party. But one man was missing. The heroic host dashed back and there in the bathroom he found the missing man, knee-deep in water. The inebriated guest

could only mumble, "Honest, Paul, I swear all I did was pull the handle."

Yoga Chetana, you will have to become a little more conscious, that's all. Come out of your drunkenness; it is very ancient. For many many lives we have lived in a drunk state. You will have to make a little effort to pull yourself out of the mud of unconsciousness. And then the ego disappears and a pure space is left behind.
Out of that pure space, lotuses bloom -- lotuses of compassion, of love, of joy. Not only are you blessed, but you become a blessing to the whole existence.
Don't fight with selfishness, remember. Fighting with it is what you have been told again and again. Don't fight with it. Fighting with it means you have already accepted its reality; hence I don't teach you to fight with your ego. If you fight with your ego you will become humble, but then in your humbleness the ego will hide. Then the ego will go on bragging about its humbleness. The ego can even say, "I am the most humble person in the world, the greatest humble person in the world."

Three Christian priests were talking; they met on a crossroad. One belonged to a Trappist monastery. He said, "As far as asceticism is concerned, nobody can compete with us. We are the most ascetic people in the whole Christian kingdom."
The second belonged to another monastery. He said, "That may be so, but as far as scholarship is concerned you are nowhere. Our people sacrifice their whole life for the scriptures to find out the truth and the gems."

The third one smiled and said, "You both may be right, but as far as humbleness is concerned, we are the tops!"

"As far as humbleness is concerned we are the tops...."
Hence, Yoga Chetana, I will not say fight with your selfishness. Fighting has not been of any help; it has only created pious egoists all over the world. My suggestion is watch it, look at it, observe it. Observe how it functions, how you go on creating it -- because it IS your creation. It is very arbitrary. It is a fiction that you maintain and manage. And the maintenance is very costly because it keeps you in hell; it destroys your whole life just to maintain something false. Watch it. The moment you will see its falseness it is gone. You need not drop it, it simply drops on its own accord. It is not found at all.
And then a totally new life begins. You are reborn. That's what I call sannyas.

The fourth question:
Question 4
BELOVED MASTER,
IS IT REALLY TRUE THAT YOU NEVER WORKED IN YOUR WHOLE LIFE?

Sandesh, it is really true. I am the original hippie! You may not know it, but I am the founder of the whole movement!

The shop foreman, irritation showing plainly in his face, strode over to Sheldon, a hippie.
"Listen," he grated, "do me and everyone else in the shop a big favor and quit whistling while you work."

"Hey, man," retorted Sheldon defensively, "who's working?"

I have lived, I have not worked! Whatsoever I have done I have enjoyed it; it was not work, it was my joy, it was play. I loved it, that's why I did it. I was not doing any service to anybody, I was not working for any other motive; hence it was not work at all, it was my joy.
I am talking to you. It is not work, it is my joy. I enjoy -- yakkety, yakkety, yakkety... this is not work! I simply love it. To call it work will not be right -- it is fun!
Whatsoever I have done in my life, it has never been work. I have been simply whistling!

The fifth question:
Question 5
BELOVED MASTER,
YOU ARE EXACTLY WHAT I HAVE BEEN SEEKING FOR THE LAST TWENTY YEARS IN STUDIES, POLITICS, YOGA, FAMILY AND COMMUNITIES. NOW FINALLY I AM HERE. AND IT'S SO BEAUTIFUL! AND TOMORROW I LEAVE. AND I AM HAPPY, TOO. WHY?

Hans Peter Finger, there is no tomorrow. Today you are here, and that's more than enough; that's more than one can ask for. Who knows about tomorrow? I myself may be leaving, even before you leave!
And it is not a question of BEING here. If you have found me, you have found me; wherever you are you will be with me, I will be with you. The whole thing is once you have

found the right person with whom you fit together, with whom you find absolute harmony, communion, then no space can divide you. That's why you are feeling happy. I can understand your problem.
You say, "And I am happy, too. Why?"
Ordinarily, if you have fallen in love with me and are going tomorrow you should have thought, expected to be miserable, because "Now here is the man I have been looking for, for twenty years and now I have found him, and I have to leave tomorrow." But you are not miserable. That is a clear-cut indication that you have really found me. To find me AND be miserable is impossible!
There are a few people who are here AND miserable, because they have not found me. And there are people who are not here but are immensely joyous because they have found me, wherever they are.
You will belong to me from now onwards.
A single moment of deep harmony is enough, a single moment of love is eternity.
Then time does not matter, space does not matter.
Your heart knows it, but your mind is questioning because it seems illogical. Your mind says, "If you are really so much in love, then why are you leaving? If you are really enjoying, then why should you go at all? For twenty years you have been searching! You wasted twenty years and now you have found -- and you are going! And still you are happy! What is happening to you?" This is your mind which is creating a question mark, but your heart knows you have found me. Now wherever you are, this communion will continue.

Whatsoever has transpired between me and you is something beyond time, beyond space. So you can go happily, you can go joyously. And whenever you will close your eyes and remember me, you will be now and here. My buddhafield has not to become confined to the commune; it has to spread all over the earth. So wherever a person exists who loves me deeply, he creates a small buddhafield around himself.

Hans-Peter, not only will you remain related to me, but you will become a bridge to many people towards me. You will become a messenger -- not a missionary but a messenger. A missionary is bogus. A missionary is one who himself has not understood at all, who has not experienced anything at all. A missionary is a professional: he has chosen religion as a profession, he earns his livelihood out of it. You will be a messenger. You will be spreading the word to many more people -- to your friends, to people you know, you love.

Yes, it is perfectly good -- go and share me with others. And whenever it is needed you will be called forth, you will be back here again. And if it is needed to be here forever you will be here forever. Whatsoever is needful will happen.

Trust!

The sixth question:

Question 6

BELOVED MASTER,

WHY DOES NOBODY TAKE ANY NOTICE OF ME?

Narendra, meditate over Murphy's maxim:

Nobody notices when things go right.
You must be going right. People notice only when something goes wrong. If everything goes absolutely right, people are not going to notice you at all.

It is said of Mahavira that he wanted to renounce his kingdom. He asked the permission of his mother. The mother said, "Stop this nonsense -- never ask me again! Till I die I won't allow you. If you leave the house without permission you will be doing something very violent to me -- and you go on talking about nonviolence. So remember!"
Mahavira never asked her again. After two years she died. When they were coming back from the funeral he asked his elder brother on the way home, "Can I leave now? -- I was just living here because our mother said, 'Never ask again.' Now, fortunately, she is dead -- so can I go?"
The brother said, "Stop all this nonsense! Such a calamity has fallen over us -- our mother has died -- and you want to leave me? Till I die you are not allowed."
And Mahavira was so obedient -- he said okay. He started living in the palace as if he had renounced. He would meditate, he would be silent, he would move so quietly and so gracefully that, slowly slowly, he became almost absent. It is a beautiful story, that the family stopped taking any notice of him.
Then one day suddenly the brother realized, "For months we have not taken any notice of him." He remembered, "Where is he?" He went in search of him. He called the whole family and asked them, "What to do now? He has almost left! He has become so silent, so peaceful. He makes no noise, he never interferes, he never says anything to

anybody. He is as if he is not in the house at all! So what is the point of preventing him anymore?"
They all gathered together and requested Mahavira, "Now you can go. In fact, you have already gone because we have stopped taking any notice of you."
Mahavira said, "It makes no difference now. But if you say go, I will go."

Narendra, don't be worried. People take notice only when you are doing something wrong. When a dog bites a man it is not news, but when a man bites a dog it is news! So if you want to become news, bite a dog! Do something stupid, become some kind of nuisance. Only people who are a nuisance are taken notice of.
That's why you see in the newspapers all the politicians are covered every day, for the simple reason that they have nuisance value. You can ask any prime minister or any president of the world on what grounds he chooses his cabinet. It is nuisance value! Whoever is going to create nuisance, if he is not chosen has to be chosen. The more you are a nuisance, the more you will be taken notice of, obviously. If you are a silent person living in deep harmony with yourself and existence, who is going to take any notice of you? Do something wrong, anything!
That's why your saints go on doing such stupid things -- just to be taken notice of. Stand on your head in the M.G. Road market and a crowd will gather. People will stop wherever they were going. They may have been going on some urgent work, but now a greater thing is happening: a foolish man is standing on his head! They have to stop, they have to watch. Do something stupid.

Robert Ripley says that one man wanted to become famous. He asked Ripley what to do. Ripley is a famous man; he has written many books -- BELIEVE IT OR NOT.... He used to accumulate all kinds of unbelievable things; he was an expert in unbelievable things -- true but unbelievable. People used to ask him also... somebody asked him how to become famous.

He said, "You do one thing. Shave half the hair of your head and just walk silently all over New York. For three days go on walking and don't say anything, just let people watch."

And within three days he was in every newspaper! That a strange man is there, half his head shaved, walking all over New York, never saying anything. You ask him and he keeps quiet. Very strange!

That's why I have chosen orange for you, so that wherever you are -- New York, Berlin, Paris, Rome, wherever you are, everybody has to take notice of you. It helps my work! People start asking, "What has happened to you?" My sannyasins all look like Jesus is back!

Narendra, you must be doing everything right. Be happy that nobody is taking notice of you.

The seventh question:

Question 7

BELOVED MASTER,

WHY DO YOU GIVE THE PRIESTS SUCH A BAD TIME? THEY DON'T STOP YOU DRINKING AND

YOU ONLY HAVE TO LISTEN TO THEM ONCE A WEEK.

Niranjan, it is enough to poison people if they have to listen once a week to all kinds of nonsense. For centuries it has been propagated... it has come into the air, it has become part of the atmosphere. It is not a question of listening to them once a week only; their vibe is everywhere. They go on reminding you in every possible way. Whenever you pass, there is a church or a temple or a mosque. Do you think it does not remind you of something? And they go on tolling bells in the churches just to remind you, "Don't forget we are still here!" And the towering churches, you can see them from anywhere; they are reminding you. These are subtle processes of reminding you.

In India you cannot pass a street without coming across a temple -- everywhere temples. And it is so simple in India to make a temple: you can just paint any stone. You can try! Just bring a rock from anywhere, put it under a tree, paint it red and just sit by the side with closed eyes. Within a few minutes you will see people are arriving. Somebody will put flowers, somebody will bow down to the rock; they will think this is the statue of Hanumanji!

India does not believe in very costly things; it has made everything cheap. It is a poor country, you know, so things have to be cheap, within everybody's capacity. You can have as many gods as you want. Any stone will do; just, if it is round it becomes Shankara, Shiva. If it is not round, ugly in shape, paint it red; it becomes Hanuman! Just sit by the side and wait, and you will find worshippers have started coming.

I am not giving a bad time to the priests. In fact, the intelligent priests are immensely pleased with me.
Just the other day I received a card from a priest who is very happy because he has been listening to my tapes, reading my books. He is happy because I am here -- a congratulation card from a priest! I am not giving a hard time to intelligent priests. No, I am simply showing them the exit! And a few have escaped. There are many priests, monks and nuns who have become sannyasins. And there is great fear now because if this goes on happening there is danger.
The Protestant authorities in Germany have ordered all the Protestant churches of Germany that my name has not to be mentioned in any sermon. There was an eighteen-page report published by a special commission appointed by the Protestant church to investigate what I am saying. They have read all the books... and my feeling is half of them will be converted because the report seems to be very confused! Sometimes they seem to be favorable to me, sometimes they seem to be against me. They are not in a situation to say whether this man is right or wrong. Their report is very revealing.
They say, "This man talks like Jesus -- yet beware of him." Now I think more priests, particularly Protestant priests in Germany, will read the books. They have quoted all the books. They have given the names of the books. Even the priests who would not have known about me will be knowing about me now! This is how things happen in the world. This is a very strange world!

And I am not giving anybody a hard time. At the most, I told a few jokes about the priests. And my feeling is that reading them when they are alone they must be enjoying!

The pope stood before a hushed crowd of attentive villagers and spoke to them, "You must not use the Pill!"
A lovely signora stepped forward, shaking her finger.
"Look," she chided the pontiff, "you no play da game-a, you no make-a da rules!"

The last question:
Question 8
BELOVED MASTER,
MY HUSBAND IS MAD, BUT SOMETIMES WHAT HE SAYS IS TRUE. IS IT POSSIBLE FOR A MADMAN TO DO THAT? 8

Neelam, madmen can do anything, obviously -- they are mad! They can even say the truth. It is the so-called sane people who are unbelievable, who are expert in lying. Mad people are simple; they can say the truth. They don't worry, they don't care.
Listen to your husband. He is far saner than the other so-called sane people. If sometimes you find that he is telling you the truth, maybe at other times also he is telling you the truth, you are just not aware of it.
Mad people are beautiful people. They are mad only because they are so sensitive that they cannot live in this mad world. This mad world drives them mad! They are so sensitive and vulnerable that they become victims. They are not cunning; they are innocent, sincere and honest people. I

know many mad people -- in fact, I know only mad people -- and I respect them.
You ask me, Neelam, "Can a madman do that? Is it possible for a madman to say the truth?"
Only madmen can say the truth.
Jesus must have been mad; otherwise he would not have said the truth. He would have played the game of the crowd and he would have become a famous rabbi, not crucified but crowned. But he was mad and he said the truth.
Socrates must have been mad, utterly mad; otherwise why bother about truth? Live as other people live, imitate them; lie as they lie, deceive as they deceive, be hypocrites as THEY are. Why try to be true? Why insist on truth? But he must have been mad.
The judges had asked him in the last moment... because they also felt sorry for the man, they knew his sincerity. They told him that if he was ready to leave Athens he could be forgiven -- but he could not enter Athens again.
Socrates said, "That I cannot do. I have lived in Athens, I have taught in Athens, my disciples are here, my people are here. Now in this old age, where am I going to start my business again?"
Yes, he actually used the word 'business'.
The judges asked, "What do you mean by your business?"
He said, "The business of telling the truth -- that is my business."
The judges were really sympathetic. They said, "Then you do one thing. You can live in Athens, but stop talking, be silent."
He said, "That is not possible. It is better to die because then my death will speak. And let me remind you," he said

to the judges, "even after centuries, when I am dead, my death will go on speaking to people about the truth. And you will be remembered only because of me; otherwise nobody will remember you. I cannot stop my business of speaking the truth. I am ready to die."
He must have been mad! Even his disciples thought that he was mad. Life is so valuable! But to a man of truth, truth is more valuable.
And mad people can do anything. Help your husband, don't hinder him. Help him to be authentic and true and don't call him mad. Who knows who is mad? In fact, no definition exists. Psychoanalysts call Jesus neurotic. Friedrich Nietzsche says Buddha is mad. Freud says Nietzsche is mad. Jung thinks Freud is mad. Who is to be believed?

The noted doctor opened the patient's stomach and a bunch of butterflies flew out.
"Say," the doctor said, "this guy was really telling the truth!"

And maybe he is just playing a role, just acting, because sometimes it is really beautiful.
I know one madman. When he was alone with me he was absolutely sane, and when he would go home he would become mad. I asked him, "What is the matter?"
He said, "This is very comfortable. I don't have to go to work, I don't have to bother about the family business, I don't have to worry about anything. I enjoy! I swim in the river, I lie down in the sun, and everybody thinks, 'He is mad!' My wife, my children, they have all taken all the responsibility. My wife runs the shop, my children about

whom I was always worried -- now they are worried about me! And I am enjoying, I am having the time of my life!" He said, "I have done enough. Now this is the only way."

There are many mad people who are simply pretending to be mad.
Just help your husband. Maybe it is just because of you that he is pretending to be mad! Neelam, women are dangerous! You should see Aseema....
Aseema is a beautiful sannyasin. I have seen her two ex-husbands -- both have gone crazy! Then I started thinking, what is the matter? And both are beautiful people -- you know both. One is Sarvesh, the ventriloquist. He was perfectly okay before he met Aseema. Now this beautiful sannyasin has driven him mad! Another is Nikunj; Nikunj is mad. The whole credit goes to Aseema! Now, if anybody else is thinking to fall in love with Aseema, think twice! And then stop yourself!

A woman goes to a palm reader.
"Your husband will die a violent death," she is told.
"One more question," she asks. "Will I be acquitted?"

A group of hikers passing a hillbilly's cabin smiled as they saw the owner reclining in a rocking chair on the porch. They noticed his wife going into the house via the front, and only door. A few seconds later they saw a wildcat leap through the open window.
They rushed up to the mountaineer. "Do something quick!" someone shouted. "A wildcat just leaped into your house and your wife is in there."

"That's his tough luck," said the hillbilly. "I never did like wildcats, anyway."

So, Neelam, meditate a little about yourself. Why is this poor man behaving as if he is mad?

At the height of the unfortunate American involvement in East Asia, an owlish-looking young fellow approached the recruiting officer's desk.
"What must I do to get to Vietnam as soon as possible?" asked the prospective soldier.
"Well, first you have to sign up," exclaimed the officer with a grin.
"Do volunteers have to take a physical?"
"Certainly."
"Darn, that'll slow me up. I wanna get to the front lines right away."
"In any case, you'd have to go to boot camp for training," explained the officer. "Nobody goes where the fighting is until he's properly trained."
"Then at least will the army fly me to Vietnam? I'd hate to go there by slow boat."
"What are you so all-fired anxious about?" growled the army man. "Don't you realize you could get killed or wounded over there?"
"So I get killed or wounded. What's the difference, as long as I'm getting all the glory?"
"Listen, buddy," snapped the recruiter, "why don't you go home and forget the whole thing? You're crazy!"

The young fellow abruptly reached into his coat pocket, pulled out a paper and thrust it into the army officer's hands.
"Here," he said quickly. "Just sign!"

Enough for today.

The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 10

Chapter #11
Chapter title: All is not lost, but time is running short
2 March 1980 am in Buddha Hall

Q1, Q4 and Q5 on video

The first question:
Question 1
BELOVED MASTER,
WHY ARE YOU BEING CONTINUOUSLY MISUNDERSTOOD AND MISINTERPRETED BY PEOPLE?

Rajesh, it is absolutely inevitable, it is unavoidable. It has to be so. It is part of the destiny of those who speak the truth. They are bound to be misunderstood, misinterpreted. If they were not misunderstood, not misinterpreted, that would be a miracle. It has not happened up to now and there is no hope that it is ever going to happen.
Buddhas have always been misunderstood for the simple reason that they speak from a totally different vision which

is not available to the masses. They speak from a totally different experience. Their experience is such that it cannot be expressed through words, yet they try to express it through words -- they try to do the impossible. Saying it through words creates trouble. They use words in their own way, they give the words their own color, but when those words reach YOU they have lost all the meaning that was given by the awakened ones. Immediately you interpret them, you translate them into your experience.

Buddhas speak from sunlit peaks and you live in dark valleys. They talk about light and you have never seen light. They talk about eyes and you have not even dreamed about eyes. They talk about eternity and all that you know is time; all that you know is temporary and they talk of that which never changes, which is always the same, which abides. It is unbridgeable, the gap. Unless YOU become also conscious it remains unbridgeable.

Hence only a few disciples, slowly slowly, attain to the meaning of the masters. Very slowly a few people become awakened, they come out of their sleep. It is arduous, too, because all that you know about your life is your sleep and your dreams. Leaving your dreams and your life behind is hard. It is demolishing your whole past. It is entering into such an unknown territory and without maps -- one feels scared.

Only disciples can understand; the masses cannot understand. The masses have every investment in NOT understanding. Even if there is some possibility of understanding they will avoid that possibility. They will not come close to the buddhas. They will try in every possible way to create more and more barriers. They will create

rumors, all kinds of rumors. They will surround the buddhas with so much smoke of their own creation that the buddhas become almost invisible to them. They don't WANT to listen -- it hurts. Their whole life is rooted in lies and the truth hurts, it shatters.

And the masses are vast, the blind people are millions. The people with eyes are rare, few and far between. Only once in a while comes a Zarathustra, a Lao Tzu, a Jesus, a Moses, a Buddha. They are doing something unimaginable. They are trying to explain light to the millions who are blind. The blind people can hear the word 'light', but they cannot understand it -- or they will understand it in their own way, whatsoever is their idea, opinion about light. And they are not only blind; they have thousands of opinions. They have much knowledge -- without knowing anything at all. They are full of scriptures. They hide their blindness behind scriptures. They can quote scriptures, they can argue. They are clever and skillful in argument.

In fact, truth cannot be argued about. Either you know it or you don't. Truth cannot be proved either; either you know it or you don't. Knowing is all that is possible, or not-knowing; there is no way to prove it.

Once it happened:

A blind man was brought to Gautama the Buddha. He was a logician, a philosopher, very argumentative. He had been arguing with the village that there is no light, "and you are all blind, just as I am blind. I know it and you don't know it, that's the only difference." He was saying this to people who had eyes! And he was so clever in argument that the villagers were at a loss what to do with this man.

He was asking them, "Bring your light. Let me taste it or smell it or touch it. Only then will I believe."
Now, light cannot be touched, cannot be tasted, cannot be smelled. You cannot hear it. And these were the four senses available to the blind man. Then he would laugh in victory. He would say, "Look! There is no light. Otherwise, give me the proofs!"
When Buddha came to the village, the villagers thought it would be good: "Let us take this man to Buddha."
They brought the man to Buddha. Buddha listened to the whole story and then he said, "He does not need me. I also work with blind people, but of a different kind -- spiritually blind people. I heal them, I cure them. But this is physical blindness. You take him to a physician. You take him to my personal physician."
He had a personal physician a king had given him. The greatest physician of those days, Jivaka, was given to Buddha as a gift to take care of his body. "You take him to Jivaka, and I am certain that he will be able to do something. He needs a physician; he does not need great philosophy about light. Talking about light is just stupid. And if you argue with him, he is going to win. He can prove that there is no light."
Remember, to prove that there is no God is very easy; to prove that there IS God is impossible. To prove the negative is easy because all logic tends to be negative. To prove the positive is not possible; logic has no opening towards the positive. Hence the atheist is more argumentative and the theist feels almost defeated. He cannot prove the existence of God or the soul.

Buddha said, "You take him to Jivaka." Jivaka cured his eyes. Within six months the man was able to see. He came dancing with many flowers and fruits as a present to Buddha. He fell at his feet and he said, "If you had not been there I would have argued my whole life against light -- and light is! Now I know!"

Buddha said, "Can you prove it? Where is light? I would like to taste it and touch it and smell it!"

And the blind man -- the EX-blind man -- said, "That is impossible. Now I know it can only be seen; there is no other way to approach it. Excuse me, I am sorry. I was blind, utterly blind, and in my blindness I was saying things. I was arguing against something which exists and is the most beautiful experience of life. If YOU were not there I would have argued my whole life against something which is, and I would have remained a blind man. And you did well that you did not say a single word about light; otherwise, I had come prepared, fully prepared to argue with you, and I know now, even you would not have been able to prove it. But your insight is deep: you could see that I didn't need any proofs; I needed some medicine. I didn't need philosophy, I needed a physician. You directed me to the right person. I am immensely grateful."

And the man never left Buddha. He said, "What you have done to my physical eyes, now do to my spiritual eyes too." He became a disciple, he became a sannyasin.

To be a disciple means to be ready to be operated on. It is a surgery, a very internal surgery: surgery in the very deepest core of your being. Only then can you understand me, what I am saying to you.

But the masses are not ready. And don't be worried about them, Rajesh. That is none of our business. If they misunderstand, for us it does not matter. If they misunderstand, they miss something. If they misinterpret, it is their loss. Try to help them to come closer to me, but don't argue with them.
I am a physician, I am not a philosopher. My work here is that of a surgeon, not that of a teacher. The master is always a surgeon. He cuts away all that is false in you, chunk by chunk. Slowly slowly, he demolishes the whole edifice of your falsehood. And then what is left behind is your truth, is your being. When you have experienced it, only then will you be able to understand what is being conveyed to you through words, through silence, through communion.
I am trying every possible way to reach to you, but I can reach you only if you are open to me. I cannot reach to the masses; that is not possible in the very nature of things.

The second question:
Question 2
BELOVED MASTER,
HOW CAN I BECOME THE NEW MAN THAT YOU SPEAK ABOUT?

Bhagwato, Jesus says: Unless you are born again you will not enter into my kingdom of God. Exactly that's what I say to you: Unless you are born again....
There are two births. One is given to you by your parents; that is a physical birth. That is only an opportunity for the second birth. If you think that the first birth is all, you have

missed the whole point. The first birth is only a seed. It is of immense value if the second happens; it is of no value at all if you miss the second birth. You have to be twice-born. That's how we have defined the buddhas in the East.
The second birth has to happen within you; it is of consciousness. It is not of your body, it is not even of your mind; it is of awareness.
Ordinarily, the first birth makes you only a machine. You start living in a very superficial way; you don't have any depth, you don't have any soul yet. You eat, you drink, you work, you sleep, but all like a robot. You don't see the beauty of existence -- you can't see it. You don't see the godliness of every moment; it is impossible for you to experience it. It needs a transformation of your whole interiority. It needs a new subjectivity, a new vision, a new perspective.
You see in a certain sense, you hear only in a certain sense. Yes, you hear the words, but the meaning is missed. You read the Bible, the Koran, the Vedas, but just like a parrot. Even parrots are far more intelligent than your so-called pundits, than your so-called knowledgeable people. You go on repeating like a gramophone record. And you are so egoistic that you can't accept, you can't say, "I don't know."

Jascha Heifetz, the distinguished violinist, was in London where he was scheduled to give a concert. A few hours before curtain time, he noticed that a violin string had broken, so he hurried to a music supply shop for a replacement. He was waited on by a girl who was new to the business.

"I would like to have an 'E' string for my violin," said Heifetz.
"A what?" asked the uncomprehending girl.
"An 'E' string."
"Sorry, luv," she replied apologetically, "but ye will have to pick it out yourself. I can't tell the he's from the she's!"

People are very reluctant to accept the fact that they don't know. They try in every possible way to manage a facade that they know. This is the greatest mistake in life. You are not yet born, but if you think you are already born, if you think you have already attained to life, then this whole opportunity is going to be lost. It will go down the drain. And you can learn great words; they are available. You can learn them so much so that if you meet Jesus you may repeat his words better than he can do it himself because you have been repeating them for so long. You may defeat him; in a competition he may not be able to survive at all. Some stupid priest may win the competition because he will be just repeating exactly, word for word. Jesus cannot do that; that is impossible. He has to be spontaneous. He will respond to the situation. He may say some new things -- because twenty centuries have passed. How can he go on saying the same old things? Impossible.
That's why the people who believe that they know are the most ignorant in the world. To be ignorant is not that bad, but to believe that you know, without knowing, is very dangerous.

It seems that talking parrots had become quite fashionable. Understandably, Mulla Nasruddin's wife decided she must

have one for herself. However, every store she went to had sold out of parrots. Finally she found a shop that had one left.
"But," the owner cautioned, "this bird was previously owned by a madam in a whorehouse and its language may be quite salty. Perhaps if you keep him covered for a week, he will forget what he has seen and heard."
Mrs. Nasruddin purchased the bird and did as the shopkeeper bid. At long last the week was over and the bird was finally uncovered. He first blinked his eyes and then after adjusting to the light looked around and said, "Hmm... pretty new house. Hmm... pretty new madam. Hmm... pretty new girls too."
Just then Mulla Nasruddin walked in. The bird took one look at him and said, "Ah, shit! Same old customers. Hi, Mulla!"

Yes, even parrots are more spontaneous than your pundits. You go on repeating. Your parents believed that they lived and their parents believed that they lived, and they have given you the idea that you are alive. You are not alive, you are only vegetating. To be alive means to be awakened. Bhagwato, when I say the new man, I mean the conscious man. Humanity cannot be saved if the conscious man does not arrive. In the past it was not so necessary, but now it is absolutely necessary, it is a must. If the new man does not arrive on the earth, if more and more people are not going to become conscious, alert, awake, then this earth is doomed. Its fate is in the hand of the stupid politicians, and now they have immense power of destruction, such as they never had before. That is something new.

Just five years ago they had so much power that they could have killed every single human being seven times -- although you don't need to kill any human being seven times, once is enough. We had five years ago so much atomic energy -- atom bombs, hydrogen bombs -- that we could have destroyed this earth seven times. And within five years we have really progressed -- now it is seven hundred times! We can destroy seven hundred earths like this earth, and we go on piling up.... And any moment, any mad politician can trigger the process of self-destruction. The coming twenty years are going to be the most dangerous in the whole history of humanity; it has never been so dangerous -- we are sitting on a volcano. Only more consciousness, more alertness can save it; there is no other way. We have to de-automatize man. The society automatizes you. It creates efficient machines, not human beings.

My effort here is to de-automatize you. I am doing something absolutely antisocial. The society makes you a machine and my effort is to undo it. I would like this fire to spread and reach to all the nooks and corners of the earth, to help as many people as possible to be conscious. If in a great quantity consciousness grows on the earth, there is a possibility, a hope, we can save humanity yet. All is not lost, but time is running short. Everything is being controlled by politicians and by computers, and both are dangerous. Politicians are mad. It is impossible to be a politician if you are not mad enough. You have to be absolutely insane, because only insane people are power-obsessed.

A sane person lives life joyously; he is not power-obsessed. He may be interested in music, in singing, in dancing, but he is not interested in dominating anybody. He may be interested in becoming a master of himself, but he is not interested in becoming a master of others.
Politicians are insane people. History is enough proof. And now computers are dominating.
You know the saying: To err is human.... That is true, but if you really want to create a great mess, human beings are not enough -- you need computers. Now machines and mad people are dominating the whole world. We have to change the very foundation. That's what I mean by a new man.
A new man means more conscious, more loving, more creative. This whole process is possible through being more meditative. Become more meditative, silent, still.
Experience yourself deeply. In that experience, a fragrance will be released through you. And if many many people become meditators, the earth can be full of a new perfume.

The third question:
Question 3
BELOVED MASTER,
I NEVER KNOW WHAT IS COMING NEXT.
IT IS NO USE BEING PREPARED.
YOU ARE KILLING ME.
I AM SO GLAD, BUT IT IS SO PAINFUL AND SO SCARY.
P.S. THIS IS FOR A FEW STROKES. PLEASE DON'T CAUSE ANY MORE TROUBLE.

Prem Samarpan, a few strokes are enough to cause trouble. And when you ask it, you get it! Sometimes people get it even without asking. Whatever you need and whenever you need, it is given to you.

Pain is not always bad; sometimes it is absolutely necessary. It is a blessing in disguise. You grow through it; you cannot grow if you try to bypass it. One becomes integrated, crystallized through pain. The only condition to be fulfilled is that you should go into it consciously. Then pain, too, is a gift of God, just as death is. Then everything is a gift, if you can go consciously into it. Then everything prepares you for the new birth, for the new man.

You say, "I never know what is coming next."

Nobody knows and nobody needs to know. Samarpan, it is good not to be bothered about the future. The present is enough. And to live in the present, totally absorbed in the present, is the way of the sannyasin.

Jesus says to his disciples, "Look at the lilies in the field, how beautiful they are!" And what is their secret? The secret is, they never think of the morrow, they live in the present. The whole existence lives in the present, except man. Hence, except man, there is no anxiety, no anguish. All anxiety, all anguish is man-created; it is our own doing. It simply exists in our own minds. Either we are worried about the past -- which is so stupid because you can't do anything about it; whatsoever has happened has happened, you cannot go back. But we go on thinking, "Had I done this, had I said this...." You are simply wasting more time. People go on repenting about the past -- that which is not is not worth repenting about. People feel guilty about their

past. That which is gone is gone forever. Feel disconnected, become discontinuous.

Each moment, Samarpan, one has to become discontinuous with the past. And if you become discontinuous with the past, only then do you stop worrying about the future, because the future is nothing but a projection of the past. The people who live in the past also live in the future. The future is a reflection of the past. What exactly is your idea of future? It means you are not going to commit the mistakes that you committed in the past -- delete those mistakes. And you are going to enjoy all that was pleasant in the past more deeply. That's what your future is: intensifying your pleasures of the past and deleting your pains of the past.

But you don't understand life. Pains and pleasures are joined together. If you want the same pleasures that you enjoyed in the past and you want them to be more intense, you are asking for the pain that you also suffered in the past. And, of course, the pain will be as intense as the pleasure. They are always balanced, they move together, they are inseparable. They are two sides of the same coin. So you are simply wasting time, whether you are thinking of the past or of the future. And the future is not going to be according to YOU. Who are you to decide about the future? This vast universe can't be decided by your private will, by your ego. You have to stop pushing the river. You have to learn how to go with the river, how to go with the wind. Lao Tzu says: Be like a dead leaf, so wherever the wind blows the leaf goes with it. It has no destiny of its own, it has no private goals of its own, it has no will of its own. It is utterly surrendered. That is the meaning of your name,

Samarpan. SAMARPAN means "totally surrendered": one who has lost his will into the will of the whole.
Jesus says on the cross, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done." That is samarpan, that is surrender. "Thy will, not mine." That is his last prayer and the very essence of prayer, the very soul of a religious man.
There is no need to prepare for the future. Live in the present so totally, that's all. That is preparation for the future without preparing at all. Why? -- because when you live totally in the present, the future is going to be born out of the present. From where is it going to come? It is going to grow out of this moment. If you have lived this moment in its total beauty, joy, celebration, the next moment will come out of it and you will be able to live it even more totally, even more joyously. But you don't think about it and you don't prepare for it because thinking and preparing means missing this moment. And if you miss this moment you will miss the next too, because it will be coming out of this empty moment which you absolutely missed.
So a strange phenomenon happens, a very strange law of life: those who prepare for the future are the ones who go on missing, and those who don't prepare but LIVE in the present, utterly surrendered to the whole, they never miss anything. Their future comes out of the present, flows out of the present. Then the whole takes care. When you are surrendered, the whole takes care; when you are not surrendered, you have to take care of yourself. And that is like trying to pull yourself up by pulling your shoestrings.

Mulla Nasruddin went for his first airplane flight. When he came back he was looking very tired -- and just a fifteen-

minute flight from Bombay to Poona -- he was trembling, his face was looking so pale.
I asked, "What is the matter?"
He said, "What is the matter! Those two plane flights!"
I said, "What two plane flights? You have been only on one plane flight."
He said, "Two -- my first and my last! I am finished with this nonsense! I was so afraid, I had to sit just on the edge of the chair."
"But why on the edge?" I asked him.
He said, "So that my whole weight was not on the plane, that's why."

And this is the way millions of people are living in the world: so their whole weight is not on the whole; otherwise something may go wrong.
The whole is capable of carrying you. You are almost nothing; it is not a problem for the whole.

A man who had finished his life went before God. God reviewed his life and showed him the many lessons he had learned. When he had finished God said, "My child, is there anything you wish to ask?"
The man said, "While you were showing me my life, I noticed that when the times were pleasant there were two sets of footprints, and I knew you walked beside me. But when times were difficult there was only one set of footprints. Why, Father, did you desert me during the difficult times?"

And God said, "You misinterpret me, my son. It is true that when times were pleasant I walked beside you and pointed out the way. But when times were difficult, I carried you."

You say, Samarpan, "I never know what is coming next. It is no use being prepared."
Certainly, it is no use being prepared -- or, there is a totally different way of being prepared. That is what I am trying to show you. Live in the moment totally, fully aware. That is the real way of preparing WITHOUT preparing. That is preparation without preparation. You will be ready for the next moment naturally, without any worry.
You say, "You are killing me."
Yes, in a sense. And in another sense....

Meditate over this story:
A man is taking a walk in a park late at night. Suddenly, behind some bushes he hears strange gasps and muffled screams. Alarmed, he shouts, "Is anybody being killed in there?"
"No, no," shouts back a voice. "Just the opposite!"

Yes, in one sense I am killing you; in another sense, I am giving you a new birth. I am doing just the opposite.
The master is a womb. He takes the disciple inside his womb. We call that womb the buddhafield. And then the disciple grows in his love, is nourished through his love, in his light. He is showered continuously with his compassion, with his understanding. And one day he comes out of the womb of the master, a totally new man. The old dies and the new is born. This is how you become twice-born.

The fourth question:
Question 4
BELOVED MASTER,
YOU TALK ABOUT THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN 'KNOWING' AND 'KNOWLEDGE'. BUT TO BECOME A MASTER, DO YOU NOT HAVE TO HAVE 'KNOWLEDGE' AS WELL AS 'KNOWING'? IT SEEMS TO ME THAT YOU, IN YOUR TALKS, SHOW MUCH KNOWLEDGE. CAN THIS NOT BE A PART OF THE WAY FOR SOME?

Nicholas Mosley, there is a great difference between knowledge and knowing. And to you, knowing may appear as knowledge because you are not acquainted with knowing at all; you know only knowledge. Hence you may find much knowledge in what I am saying, but it is not KNOWLEDGE to me, it is knowing to me. Knowing means my own experience; knowledge means something borrowed.
And it is not necessary that my knowing should go against the knowing of Buddha or Jesus or Krishna. In fact, it cannot go against anybody's knowing. Knowing is the same, the process is the same, whether Buddha knows or Zarathustra. It is the same.
Knowing means you enter into your interiority, you move inwards, you reach to the very center of your being. You experience who you are... and in that very experience you know you ARE God, because only God exists. To say, "God is," is a tautology because God means "is"; "isness" is God.

Whatever I am saying here may appear to you as knowledge because it can be found in the Bible, in the Koran, in the Gita, in THE DHAMMAPADA. And you will think, "Of course, it is knowledge." It is not. The difference is subtle and delicate.

One can know about love -- libraries are full; thousands of books about love have been written. You can gather as much knowledge about love as possible. You can make an encyclopedia of love. You can become an encyclopedia of love. Still, if you have not experienced love, all that you know is rubbish, all that you know is verbal, intellectual; it has no existential value.

Buddha used to say: It is like a man who goes on counting other people's cows and buffaloes every day -- and he himself has no cow, no buffalo. Counting other people's cows and buffaloes you may become very expert in counting, you may become very reliable, but unless you have your own cow you will not be nourished by that counting.

To know means to be silent, utterly silent, so you can hear the still, small voice within. To know means to drop the mind. When you are absolutely still, unmoving, nothing wavers in you, the doors open. You are part of this mysterious existence. You know it by becoming part of it, by becoming a participant in it. That is knowing.

And once knowing has happened, then to read the Bible and the Koran and the Gita is beautiful, because then they all become witnesses. Otherwise you can read, you can repeat, but they are only words with no meaning, with no content.

Knowledge is without content, empty shells with nothing inside. But if you have seen only knowledge, from the outside both will look almost the same. Knowledge comes through studying and knowing happens through meditation. The processes are different. In knowledge you have to go into words, into language, into scriptures. In knowing you have to go within yourself. The processes are not only different but polar opposites. In knowing, first you have to drop knowledge because that becomes a hindrance. First you have to know that "I don't know." You have to become innocent.
Jesus says: Unless you are as innocent as small children you will not enter into my kingdom of God.

The clergyman was telling his guests a story when his little girl interrupted.
"Daddy," she asked, "is it true or is it mere preaching?"

There is a great difference whether something is true or is just preaching -- "mere preaching."

An old priest had to leave his village one Saturday -- the day everyone goes to confession. He taught the new young priest who was taking over his job the necessary basics: "If a woman steals money from her husband -- three 'Ave Maria' and two 'Pater Noster'; if someone commits adultery -- five 'Ave Maria' and three 'Pater Noster'; for those who have been telling lies -- one 'Ave Maria' and two 'Pater Noster', and so on."
The young priest heard first the confession of a pretty village girl.

"Father, I have committed a sin," the girl said.
"What have you done-a, my child-a?" asked the priest.
"I have given the boy next door a blow job," she replied timidly.
The young priest was puzzled because he had not been instructed about such a situation. At that moment, he saw the old priest passing by, his suitcase in hand, preparing to leave. Quickly he called out to the old man, "Father, Father, one moment please. There is a young-a girl-a here. What do I give her-a for a blow-a job?"
"Fifty dollars," replied the old priest.

Knowledge is borrowed; knowing is yours, your own. It is authentic. Knowledge is information, knowing is transformation.
You ask me, Nicholas, "You talk about the difference between knowing and knowledge. But to become a master, do you not have to have knowledge as well as knowing?"
Knowing is enough. To be a master, knowing is enough.
"It seems to me," you say, "that you, in your talks, show much knowledge."
I am not a master because of my knowledge, but in spite of it! I was a professor in the university. I had to struggle a great deal to get out of my knowledge. Still, something of it goes on lingering around me. Forgive me for that! But it has nothing to do with being a master.
Jesus had no knowledge; he was more fortunate. He was not a professor in a university, he was just a poor carpenter's son. Mohammed was fortunate; he was absolutely illiterate. I was unfortunate. I have suffered a lot from knowledge. My whole problem was how to get rid of

it. That's why I am so much concerned about you and I continuously insist on being aware of knowledge -- don't become knowledgeable. I am saying it because of my own experience.

It is easy to renounce wealth, it is easy to renounce power, prestige, because they are outside things. The greatest problem is to renounce your knowledge because it goes so deep. It becomes almost a part of your being, it becomes so ingrained. You can escape to the Himalayas -- the wife, the shop, the power, everything will be left behind, but not knowledge. It will be there with you wherever you go. It is not a shadow, it is something inside your skin. It is easy to get out of your skin; it is more difficult to get out of your knowledge. Hence I go on saying to you: Beware, beware of becoming knowledgeable. And there is a great tendency in the mind to become knowledgeable because it is very ego-fulfilling.

But one need not be knowledgeable to become a master. If you are already knowledgeable, then put it aside. Become innocent again so that you can know on your own, and when you have known you can use your knowledge. It can be used, but only later on. Knowing comes first, then you can use your knowledge, but your use of knowledge will be totally different from the use of the scholars.

That's why MY interpretation of Jesus, Buddha, Mahavira, is totally different from the interpretations of scholars. It is bound to be so. Their interpretations are verbal, they are only logical interpretations. They are great argumentators, clever in hairsplitting.

My interpretations are not argumentative, are not intellectual. My interpretations are paradoxical. If you are

against me you can call them anti-intellectual; if you love me you can call them supra-intellectual. It depends on you. If you are against me, they are irrational; if you are in love with me, they are suprarational. If you are against me, they are self-contradictory; if you love me they are mysterious, paradoxical.
And when I say anything I am not concerned whether I am being true to Buddha or not. My concern is whether I am being true to myself or not. If I am true to myself I know that I must be true to Buddha; it can't be otherwise. So I don't take much care whether I am literally true to Buddha, to Jesus, or not. I take every freedom.
Sometimes I change the stories because when I see that this story is not possible, it can't happen to a buddha... sometimes I invent stories too.

Once a great Buddhist scholar, Bhadant Anand Kausalyayan, came to see me. He said, "Everything you say is beautiful, but a few stories I have come across which I have not found in any scriptures."
I asked him, "For example?"
He said, "For example, just the other day I was reading a beautiful story you have told: Buddha is passing down a street talking to his disciple, Ananda, and a fly sits on his head. He goes on talking and just moves his hand to scare away the fly, and then he stops suddenly in the middle of the road. The fly is gone, but he moves his hand again slowly as if the fly is there.
"Ananda is very much puzzled. He says, 'What are you doing? The fly is no longer there!'

"Buddha says, 'Yes, I know, but this is how I should have done it before. I continued to talk with you and automatically I allowed my hand to move. That is not right for me. I should move my hand with more awareness. So now I am doing it as I should have done.'"
Anand Kausalyayan said, "I have never come across this story. I have read ALL the scriptures."
I asked him, "But do you think the story is beautiful?"
He said, "The story is beautiful."
Then I said, "It is perfectly right. Then why bother about the scriptures? Don't you see a Buddhist flavor in it?"
He said, "I can see."
"So that is the whole point!"

I am not functioning here as a man of knowledge, but only as a man of knowing.

The fifth question:
Question 5
BELOVED MASTER,
I AM LOSING MY MEMORY AND IT IS WORRYING ME TO DEATH. WHAT SHOULD I DO?

Mamta, nonsense! Just forget all about it!

The sixth question:
Question 6
BELOVED MASTER,
WHAT WOULD YOU SAY WAS WRONG WITH THE INDIANS?

Madhuri, almost everything!

The seventh question:
Question 7
BELOVED MASTER,
YES! I WAS NOT SURE UNTIL NOW! I SAID THE SAME WORDS TO ASEEMA A MONTH AGO: "YOU HAVE DRIVEN TWO OTHER MEN MAD. DON'T LET IT BE ME." WOW! WE HAVE BEEN IN LOVE FOR MAYBE ONE YEAR NOW, AND TO TELL YOU THE TRUTH I AM REALLY ALLOWING HER TO AFFECT ME IN ALL POSSIBLE WAYS. BOTH NIKUNJ AND SARVESH ARE AFFECTED BY HER, AND FOR MYSELF I SEE WHAT IT IS: LOVE WITH A WITCH! RELEASE ME, BELOVED MASTER.
AH... WHAT SHALL I DO?

Narayana, it is too late! And I am not a witch doctor! Now, nothing can be done. In fact, you are already mad.

Mulla Nasruddin plays on the sitar, but he goes on playing the same note continuously for hours. His wife has gone mad, his children have gone mad, his parents have gone mad.
One day he continued to play the same note, and a neighbor asked him, "Mulla, we have seen many people playing sitar, but they change notes."
Nasruddin said, "I know they go on changing -- because they have not yet found the right note. And I have found it, so why should I change?"

The neighbor said, "But now it is two o'clock in the night. Please! Just one hour more and I will go mad. Stop it!" Nasruddin said, "It is too late because I have stopped already. It is almost two hours since I stopped! What are you talking about?"

Narayana, one year with Aseema... you are finished! She is dangerous -- all beautiful women are. All women are witches! In fact, the word 'witch' means wise. It is exactly the equivalent of 'buddha'. If a woman becomes enlightened she becomes a witch.
Aseema is just on the verge of becoming enlightened, and on the way she is giving whatsoever help she can. Whosoever meets her, she helps him. You have been helped by her, and there is no way now for you to be released. All is finished! You had better settle in it.
Nikunj and Sarvesh got mad because they tried to escape. Only then they became aware that they were mad. If they had remained with Aseema, there would have been no problem.
So don't try to escape from Aseema, that's my only advice. Remain with her. She is beautiful and I love her.

The eighth question:
Question 8
BELOVED MASTER,
IS THERE ANY GOOD QUALITY IN THE INSTITUTION OF MARRIAGE OR NOT AT ALL?

Jagdeesh, an ancient scripture says... this is knowledge: Marriage is an institution that teaches a man regularity,

frugality, temperance, forbearance and many other splendid virtues he would not need had he stayed single.

The venerable old man was celebrating his one-hundredth birthday and was asked by a reporter, "To what do you attribute your advanced age and remarkable physical condition?"
"I will tell you," replied the centenarian. "When my wife and I were first married, the rabbi who performed the ceremony suggested that whenever I saw an argument coming I should take a walk around the block. I took the rabbi's advice and I want you to know that for seventy years the constant exercise did wonders for my health."

The last question:
Question 9
BELOVED MASTER,
ABOUT THIS TALK YOU GAVE IN FAVOR OF MIXED MARRIAGES. I COME FROM GOOD OLD TRADITIONAL DUTCH STOCK AND HAVE RECENTLY GOTTEN TOGETHER WITH A SIMPLE-MINDED, BEER-BOOZING COCKNEY. SINCE THEN I HAVE TAKEN UP DISCO DANCING, ROCK 'N' ROLL SINGING, PARTIES AND BEER. I AM HAVING A BALL -- BUT ARE YOU SURE THIS IS THE WAY TO RAISE THE CONSCIOUSNESS IN THE WORLD?

Arup, I am absolutely sure!
Enough for today.

Chapter #12
Chapter title: A new man with a new vision
3 March 1980 am in Buddha Hall

Q2 and Q4 on video

The first question:
Question 1
BELOVED MASTER,
I AM AN UNEDUCATED MAN. CAN I STILL BECOME ENLIGHTENED?

John, there is more possibility for you than for an educated man. The education that exists in the world is not true education. True education will be a help towards enlightenment because it will make you more meditative, more silent, more aware, more inward-looking.
The education that exists in the world makes you more ambitious, outward-looking, more egoistic, more superficial. It gives you all kinds of wrong values. It is a kind of poisoning. It does not help you, in any way, to be yourself. It is destructive. It helps you to be somebody else, and that's its very destructive foundation. It is a poisoning, but so slow that you never become aware. It begins the day you are born and it goes on slowly slowly destroying you, distracting you from your nature.
By the time you come out of the university you are no longer a natural being. You are artificial, arbitrary. Universities are like factories, assembly lines, where man is

destroyed and machines are created, where man is reduced to a machine.

Enlightenment means discovering your being. It has nothing to do with education. In fact, those who are educated will have to become, in a certain sense, uneducated again. Those who are knowledgeable will have to cease to be knowledgeable. They will have to become again childlike, innocent, so their eyes can be full of wonder, surprise, so they can again see the tremendous beauty of existence, the eternal joy, the celebration that surrounds you. But the knowledgeable person is absolutely unaware because he thinks he knows; that is his barrier. The more you know, the less you are surprised by anything. The more you know, the less you wonder. And God is only for those whose wonder is total, who know the experience of being in awe; those who can dance with the wind and the sun and the rain; those who, seeing a roseflower, are so struck by its beauty that they become speechless, that for a moment their minds stop functioning. Only those few can know God. Only those few can become enlightened.

John, you are fortunate. Of course, if you are educated you will be able to earn more money -- but not more meditation. You will be able to have more political power because you will be more cunning, more clever -- but not insight into your own being. You may be able to possess many things, but that will be only a deception. In fact, things will possess you because you will not be your own master. It is better to possess one's own being than to possess the whole world. It is better to be a buddha -- a beggar -- than to be Alexander the Great, because the buddha lives a full life and dies a full death, and Alexander the Great lives an empty life, hollow,

somehow stuffing it in an effort to convince himself that he is not empty, and then dies utterly empty.
When he died he said to his generals, "Let my hands hang out of my coffin."
"Why?" they asked, because that was not the way to carry a dead body.
He said, "That may not be conventional, but I would like my hands to hang out of my coffin so people can see that I am dying empty-handed."
That's how his body was carried. Millions of people had gathered to see, and everybody was wondering, "Why are his hands hanging out?" And, slowly slowly, the rumor went around that Alexander wanted it to be known by everybody that he was going empty-handed. His life had been utterly futile.
John, no need to be worried about education, knowledge. In the inner world, the ordinary education is not needed -- something else, a TRUE education.
The word 'education' is beautiful. It means "drawing something out": drawing out that which is within you. In fact, we should not use it for the ordinary education. It is wrong to use a beautiful word like 'education' for this rotten system of schools, colleges and universities. It is not education in the literal sense even, because instead of drawing out what is within you it forces things from the outside upon you. It is an imposition.
Real education is like drawing water from a well, not pouring something into the well. Real education is drawing out your being so that your inner luminosity starts filtering through your body, through your behavior.

I am reminded of a beautiful story. It really happened, it is not just a story.

Stosh, a new immigrant, got off a boat at Ellis Island and set about finding himself a job. Door-to-door inquiries brought no luck until he rang the bell of a whorehouse. The madam was sympathetic and employed him to clean up the basement. After completing the task in record time, Stosh asked for further work, whereupon the madam suggested that he become their permanent bookkeeper.

When Stosh explained that he could neither read nor write, the madam paid him ten cents and sent him off on his way with her best wishes.

With the ten cents Stosh bought two apples in the market. He ate one and sold the other in the town center for ten cents. He returned to the market and bought two more apples which he sold again for ten cents each. Increasing his business this way he eventually became the owner of a small fruit wagon, then several fruit wagons, then a small fruit store, then a supermarket, and finally a chain of supermarkets.

When several of the giant national food chains offered to buy him out, he accepted the highest bid -- seven and a half million dollars. The contracts were drawn up and the corporate executive and Stosh, surrounded by a large number of attorneys, met in the plush corporate offices atop one of Manhattan's most prestigious skyscrapers. The contracts were looked over, heads were nodded and finally the executive signed on the relevant dotted line. Then Stosh picked up the solid gold pen and laboriously scrawled his 'X' at the bottom of the page.

The corporate executive leaped up from his chair and shouted, "My God, man! You mean to say you have amassed this business worth seven and a half million dollars without being able to read or write?"
"Hell!" snorted Stosh emphatically. "If Stosh could read or write, Stosh would still be a bookkeeper in a whorehouse!"

The second question:
Question 2
BELOVED MASTER,
WHAT IS MECHANICAL GOODNESS?

Gina Goyt, there is nothing like mechanical goodness. Goodness cannot be mechanical and anything mechanical cannot be good. It is a contradiction in terms. Goodness can only be conscious, nonmechanical; and evil can only be unconscious, mechanical.
But I understand your question. It is relevant, because for centuries something like mechanical goodness has been taught to people because it is easy. People ARE mechanical. To bring real goodness in their lives, real virtue, you will have to transform their unconsciousness into consciousness, you will have to change their darkness into light. That is an arduous effort, and the society, moreover, is not interested in it at all. In fact, it is afraid of it because whenever a REALLY good person has happened in the world he has created trouble for the society.
A Jesus, a Lao Tzu, a Buddha, a Kabir, these are the greatest rebels for the simple reason that they were so conscious that they could see through the whole stupid game that we go on playing. They could see through our

lies, they could see through our deceptions. It was impossible to deceive them and it was impossible to exploit them and it was impossible to enslave them. Not only was it impossible to enslave them, but they created great movements of consciousness in the world. They created chains, they triggered chains. Many many people became enlightened through their efforts. Their efforts were thought to be antisocial. That's why Jesus was crucified.

Where can you find a man who is more good than Jesus? What was his crime? His crime was that he was REALLY good. If he had been only mechanically good there would have been no trouble. There were many rabbis who were mechanically good. The society is not afraid of mechanical people; they are manageable. They are dependent on the society. They always live with the collective, they are always following the crowd. The crowd is very happy with these people. And it is easy to create mechanical goodness because, in the first place, people ARE mechanical. You have just to replace their evil ideas with good ideas, not changing at all their beings.

For example, hell was created -- the idea of hell -- to create mechanical goodness. People are afraid, people live in fear; priests became aware of it in the very beginning of humanity, that it can be exploited: make them more afraid. They depicted hell in such detail, they created so much fear in people, that people became conditioned -- out of fear.

It is the same type of conditioning that can be done now in easier ways because we have more developed technology. There is no need to teach for twenty-five years the idea of hell; then a person becomes mechanically good. Now you

can ask Pavlov, Skinner and other behaviorists: they will teach you some methods. Just electric shocks will do. Somebody smokes and you don't want him to smoke -- just give him electric shocks. Whenever he smokes let him have an electric shock. Within three days he will drop smoking because the moment he takes a cigarette in his hand he will start trembling. He will become so much afraid that now the shock is coming. That's how they teach rats, they teach monkeys and chimpanzees. And that's how they are trying to teach human beings.

Religious people created hell, politicians created prisons -- just to torture people. If you torture them enough, people become accustomed. Pavlov calls it "conditioned reflex." He worked his whole life with dogs; he conditioned his dogs.

If you bring food before a dog, of course, it affects his saliva. He starts salivating, his tongue starts hanging out, saliva starts dripping. Seeing delicious food, it is natural. But if you ring a bell it won't happen. There is no connection between a bell and saliva glands, but Pavlov did one thing: whenever he would give food to his dogs he would ring a bell. Whenever he would ring a bell he would give food to the dogs. The bell and the food became associated, linked, hooked with each other. After fifteen days he just rang the bell and the dogs started salivating and their tongues hanging out. Now, there is no natural connection between the bell and the tongue, but a new, unnatural connection has been created.

Pavlov became the founder of communist psychology. That's how in Soviet Russia, in China and other communist countries, people are being conditioned. They don't think

that man is any different from dogs; maybe a little more developed, a little more complicated, but still a dog. Skinner goes on working on rats and goes on finding how to condition rats, and he says the same is applicable to human beings. You just create fear and then they will not do certain things; and you create greed.... And that's why paradise, heaven were created. These are simple strategies for dominating people. Create fear for that which you want people not to do and create the idea of reward for that which you want them to do -- and you have created a mechanical behavior. They will not do the bad and they will do the good.

But what kind of good is this? It is exploitation by the society, by the church, by the state -- by the vested interests. It has not changed the BEING of the man. It has not made him more aware, alert, more joyous, more celebrating. It has not given him any taste of bliss. It has not opened any window for him from where he can have a little glimpse of God. I don't call it goodness, virtue. My idea of virtue is that it should be a by-product of consciousness. You should become so conscious that you CAN'T do wrong -- not because you are conditioned but because you can see it is wrong.

For example, I was born in a Jaina family. Now, Jainas are the most fanatic vegetarians in the world. In my house even tomatoes were not allowed because their redness reminds you of meat and blood. Even poor tomatoes, so innocent! In my childhood, the very idea of somebody eating meat was enough to make me sick. In my family there was no

possibility to eat in the night. Jainas don't eat in the night. Who wants to suffer in hell just for eating in the night? When I was eighteen years old, for the first time I ate in the night. It was so much against my whole background, but I had to because we had gone for a picnic and all the other boys were Hindus. They were not interested the whole day in preparing food, and I don't even know how to prepare tea! So I had to depend on them. I told them many times, but they were not interested. They were interested in exploring the mountains we had gone to, the fort, a very ancient fort, and the statues and there were many other things.

The day was tiring and by the evening we were utterly tired. Then they started cooking food. The food was ready in the night. Tired, hungry... and the delicious food that they were preparing... and the aroma! And I was the only one who was in such suffering! I could not eat because just one night's wavering and you suffer in hell for eternity. But I was wavering -- naturally. On the surface I was keeping calm and cool as I was supposed to, but they were persuading me -- and deep down I was ready to be persuaded. In fact, I was hoping that they would be able to persuade me! Finally they persuaded me and I ate. But I have never suffered so much. The whole night I was sick and vomiting. Nobody else was vomiting, nobody else was sick. It was just my conditioning.

Now, this kind of vegetarianism is not good. It does not come out of your consciousness -- it is mechanical.

Mechanical goodness is not real goodness; it is just a facade. Intelligence is needed to be good, awareness is needed to be good.

The unshaven and booze-smelling Polack was arrested for public drunkenness, and now he stood in front of the judge.
"Your honor," he pleaded, "I honestly didn't mean to drink a whole quart of vodka at one time."
"Then why did you do it?" demanded the judge.
"I lost the cork."

A contractor working for the U.S. government in Vietnam submitted a bill for the tiling of a roof. The government office was astonished at the total of over twenty thousand dollars, most of it for medical expenses incurred on the job. A lieutenant was dispatched to the hospital to investigate. This was the contractor's explanation: "At the outset of the job I attached a pulley to the edge of the roof and ran a rope through it. To one end I attached a large barrel; the other end I tied to a stake in the ground. I then filled the barrel half full with tiles, untied the rope, hoisted the barrel up to the roof, retied the rope to the stake, climbed up the ladder, unloaded the tiles on the roof, lowered the barrel, climbed down the ladder, and repeated this process several times until all the tiles were on the roof.
"Early in the evening the job was completed and I began loading the unused tiles into the barrel. I had overestimated the number of tiles needed and so had a full barrel of extras. I climbed down the ladder and unhooked the rope.
"It was then that I realized my error. The barrel, now full of tiles, was heavier than I and began descending. In my

shock, I forgot to let go -- up I went! Halfway up, the barrel and I met, breaking my right hip. I continued up, breaking several fingers and one hand as I hit the edge of the roof. Meanwhile the barrel hit the ground, tipped over and spilled out most of the tiles. The barrel, now lighter than I, came back up. I descended. Halfway down we met again -- this time my ribs were crushed. When I hit the ground my left leg was broken.
"It was at this time that I had the presence of mind to let go of the rope. A few seconds later the barrel landed on my head giving me concussion!"

More intelligence is needed, more awareness is needed, and then life becomes naturally good, spontaneously good.

The third question:
Question 3
BELOVED MASTER,
I AM HOMOSEXUAL. I FEEL TERRIBLY OPPRESSED AND STRICKEN BY THE STIGMA OF HOMOSEXUALITY. IT SEEMS FALSE TO ME TO COME HERE TO FIND A WAY TO COME CLOSER TO MYSELF AND AT THE SAME TIME NOT TO HAVE THE COURAGE TO SHOW MYSELF THE WAY I AM. THEN I WANT TO RESIGN AND RETURN HOME SO THAT I DON'T HAVE TO THINK ABOUT IT ANY LONGER. WHAT CAN I DO?

Hein Steff, there is nothing wrong in being homosexual. You need not feel guilty about it. One certainly has to go beyond sex, but that is as much applicable to

heterosexuality as it is applicable to homosexuality. Heterosexuality or homosexuality are just styles of the same stupidity! You need not feel guilty.

In fact, looking at the population of the world, homosexuality should be supported. At least you will not be increasing the population of the world, you will not be loading the earth more. It is already loaded too much. Homosexuality should be valued, respected -- it is pure fun! Heterosexuality is dangerous. And what is wrong? If two persons are enjoying each other's bodies, nothing is wrong. It should be their concern; nobody else's business to interfere.

But the society is continuously interfering in everything; it does not leave anybody any privacy. It enters in your bedroom too. Your society is not a free society. It talks of freedom and democracy and all that rot, but it is pure slavery. It is a big prison. And your priests and your so-called God are all Peeping Toms. They are all looking into your private lives, what you are doing. It should be nobody's business.

What is wrong in loving a man or a woman? Two men can love each other, two women can love each other. Love is a value in itself. And fun should not be condemned. Life is already such a burden, such a drag, such a boredom. Leave at least something in life so people can feel a little less bored.

Here you need not feel afraid to show yourself the way you are. My whole approach is to help you to be the way you are because that is the only way to help you transcend it. Feel guilty and you will remain the same. Guilt never transforms anybody.

And homosexuality is such an innocent phenomenon. Why is it so much condemned? The reason is that if it is not condemned, the fear is that almost everybody will turn homosexual because every child has the tendency. Every child passes through the stage when he is homosexual. Every boy, every girl, passes through a time when boys like boys and girls like girls. The fear is that if many people turn homosexual -- and particularly in the past when the population was not big and every society wanted more numbers because numbers meant power.... To allow homosexuality was dangerous; it had to be condemned, absolutely condemned, so much so that in a few countries it is the greatest crime.

For example, in Ayatollah Khomeiniac's country, Iran, it is one of the greatest crimes. You can be imprisoned for your whole life or you can even be sentenced to death, just for being homosexual. It seems absolutely absurd, ridiculous, but in the past there was some reason in it. Every society wanted to be more powerful. It was a constant struggle -- a struggle between groups, struggle between tribes, struggle between clans -- the deciding factor was your number, how many you are. If people become homosexual, then the population will decrease; hence it has to be condemned as the greatest sin.

It may have some meaning if you think of the past, but in the present it is absolutely meaningless. In fact, the whole situation has become just the opposite: now heterosexuality is the danger; less numbers are needed. If humanity goes on growing this way, then we cannot support humanity, we cannot live any longer. By the end of this century the population will be so much, the poverty will be so much,

that there seems to be no way out except a third world war which will kill almost everybody -- so that a few people can start the whole story again.

I have heard a story, a twenty-first century story:
The third world war has happened, and a monkey is sitting on a rock taking a sunbath. A female monkey comes with an apple and gives the apple to the monkey. And the monkey says, "My God, are we going to start it all over again?"

Homosexuality is condemned because there is every possibility that if it is not condemned many more people will turn towards it. The inner tendency is there in every person. In fact, the person who is against it... the more he is against it, the more he has the tendency. Deep down, unconsciously, he knows it is there. To repress it he has to be very much against it; he feels disgusted by the very idea. But nobody is telling HIM to become homosexual. If others feel attracted, then it is not your business to interfere or to condemn them. It is their freedom, and they are not doing any harm to anybody. It is a harmless game -- stupid, certainly, but not a sin. But as far as stupidity is concerned all sex is stupid, for the simple reason that it is a biological urge and you are not the master of it, you are just a victim. And you need not be so much worried about it, Hein, because homosexuality has a very beautiful origin: it originated in the monasteries. It is something religious! The first homosexuals were monks and nuns -- Christians, Buddhists, Jainas; all great religions have contributed their share to it. It was bound to be so because there are

monasteries even now in existence where no woman has ever entered.

In a Catholic monastery in Europe, Mount Athos, for one thousand years no woman has entered; not even a six-month-old girl has been allowed to enter in. What kind of people are living there? A six-month-old girl and they are afraid even of that! What can they do? But repressing sex creates fear, so the whole monastery is full of men; and homosexuality is a natural by-product if only boys are together or only girls are together.

Religious people have contributed greatly. Educationists have contributed greatly, because boys have to be educated separately. They have to reside in different hostels specially for them and girls have to stay aloof in separate hostels, in separate schools. If you put too many girls together they are bound to become lesbians, because when the sexual urge takes possession of them and they cannot find a boy, then anything is better than nothing.

In zoos even animals turn homosexual -- only in zoos, remember. In their wild state they don't become homosexual. There is no need -- females are available. But in a zoo, if females are not available, they become homosexual. A zoo is worth studying. I used to study zoos because the zoo gives you many indications about human society. The human society is a big zoo because everything has become so unnatural.

Go to a zoo and watch the animals and you will be able to see many things. They become homosexuals; they never become homosexuals in their wild stage. They are FORCED to become homosexuals. They go crazy, they become insane, mad. In wild states they never become

insane. No animal ever becomes mad in his wild state; he remains sane. But his sanity needs a little freedom.
A lion has a big territory in his wild state, miles of territory, and he is the king of the whole territory. In a zoo he is in a small cage. If you go to the zoo you will see the lion walking up and down the cage, up and down, up and down, the whole day. It can drive anybody mad. He needs freedom, he needs a certain territory. In such a small space he is overcrowded. He becomes angry, enraged, violent.
Many diseases never happen in the wild. For example, no animal suffers from tuberculosis or cancer, but in a zoo animals suffer from tuberculosis and cancer. Strange! In the wild there are no medical facilities for them and in the zoo every kind of medical facility is available. Doctors are there to look after them, great doctors, doing something great! What they cannot take care of on their own -- cancer, tuberculosis -- doctors help them with. Animals become victims of illnesses which they have never known before.
Human society has been so much forced to live in unnatural circumstances -- and the monastery is one of the most unnatural circumstances. It is a zoo, a religious zoo! Homosexuality was born there, so you need not feel very bad about it. You are a religious person! And you have a great lineage of homosexuals....
If you look for homosexuals you will be surprised. Many poets, many authors, many painters, many musicians, many dancers, many great people, many creative people, were homosexuals. Many Nobel Prize winners have been homosexuals.
And don't be worried about enlightenment either, because at least one homosexual I know has become enlightened --

Socrates; he was a homosexual. And there are suspicions about Jesus. I cannot prove it, they are only suspicions -- because he always moved with the boys. Those twelve apostles... who knows? But if he was, nothing is wrong in it. Socrates was certainly a homosexual. Plato was, Aristotle was. Greeks are great people!

One American girl was going to marry a Greek. The mother was very much worried. She said, "Wait! If you can avoid this marriage...."
The girl was mad. She said, "No. He looks so beautiful, just like a Greek god!"
The mother said, "I know, but after only a few days you will know he is nothing but a goddamned Greek! And one thing more," the mother said, "if you marry this man then remember one thing: never turn your back towards him, never! Whatsoever happens sleep on your back the whole night!"
The girl got married. She insisted, and soon she found the mother was right: the Greek god was nothing but a goddamned Greek! And she was also puzzled because he was always trying to tell her, "Why don't you turn over?" -- but she wouldn't turn over; she was also stubborn!
After six months all efforts failed. The Greek said, "Listen. If you don't turn over you are not going to have children ever."
Then the girl had to turn because she wanted children. The Greek played a logical trick.

Greeks have been homosexuals for centuries. All their great people have been homosexuals. So you need not worry --

you have a great history behind you! Walt Whitman was a homosexual -- one of the greatest poets of all the ages. There seems to be something in homosexuality that makes people creative, or creative people homosexuals. There is something in it and I can see the point. When you stop creating children, your creativity takes new turns, new dimensions. You create poetry, you create painting.

And the people who have been condemning homosexuality for ages are also condemning it for one more reason. As far as the man/woman relationship is concerned it is always on the rocks, because man cannot understand the mind of the woman, the woman cannot understand the mind of the man. They are poles apart. That is their attraction, but that is also their conflict, constant conflict. If homosexuality is allowed, accepted, the fear is that many people will settle into it because a man can understand another man more easily -- they have the same mind. And women can understand each other more easily -- they have the same mind.

That's why homosexuals are called "gay" people. They are really gay! The heterosexuals look so sad. Whenever you see a couple you can immediately know whether they are married or not: if they are sad they are married, if they are looking dull and dead they are married. Marriage kills all joy for the simple reason that it creates so many conflicts. Hence all societies have condemned homosexuality, for the simple reason that if it is not condemned, what will happen to reproduction? In the past it had some meaning, but now it has no meaning.

Now the day has come when homosexuality CAN be accepted, should be accepted as a natural outlet of your

sexual energies. I am not against it, I am not for it either. I am simply saying that if you have to live your sex you can choose your style, you are free to choose your style. If you decide to be stupid, at least you should be given the freedom to choose what kind of stupid you want to be! I give you total freedom.

My effort here is to help you to go beyond it, so if you are homosexual you have to go beyond homosexuality, if you are heterosexual you have to go beyond heterosexuality. And there are other people also who are neither, who are autoerotic, autosexual. They have to go beyond their autoeroticism. Man has to transcend sex, whatsoever kind of sex it is, because unless you go beyond your biology you will never know your soul. But meanwhile -- before you go beyond -- it is your freedom to be whatsoever you want to be.

You say, "I am homosexual. I feel terribly oppressed and stricken by the stigma of homosexuality."

There is no need to be "terribly oppressed." You must be accepting people's condemnation. Deep down somewhere you are also against it; otherwise, why feel oppressed? If people are against, let them be against! You need not declare to everybody that you are a homosexual. You need not move with a flag that you are a homosexual! You can remain a homosexual. Of course, you cannot hide it because your sex style changes your body language. The way the homosexual walks is totally different from the heterosexual; the way he talks is totally different. And he looks so gay, so happy!

So you will have to remain a little less happy, that's all. Don't look so happy, and walk a little more consciously,

that's all. Don't feel oppressed and don't feel stricken by the stigma of homosexuality. That is all nonsense!

And you say, "It seems false to me to come here to find a way to come closer to myself and at the same time not to have the courage to show myself the way I am."

What courage are you talking about? Here there is no question of courage. If you are homosexual you are homosexual! Here it does not need courage to declare it. Here you can write on your shirt, "I am homosexual." Nobody will take any notice of it. People will say, "So what?"

This is a totally different world. Here we accept all kinds of people: sane, insane, crazy -- we have no objection. Unless you start harming others we have no objection. And homosexuality is a harmless game, absolutely harmless. But you think that this is courageous that you are declaring that you are a homosexual. Here it is not; anywhere else it will be. And I will not suggest that you declare it anywhere else; there is no need. Why brag about it? Accept it silently, relax into it.

But you wanted to say it because it is boiling within you. Don't be worried what others say. Just look within yourself, what you are saying to your own homosexuality. You are not at ease with it. The society has corrupted you, contaminated you. The society has given you ideas. It has created a certain conscience in you and that conscience is pricking, continuously feeling hurt.

Now you say, "Then I want to resign and return home so that I don't have to think about it any longer."

Just by going back home you will not be getting rid of it. Neither you will get rid of homosexuality nor will you get

rid of the stigma or the feeling of being oppressed. You will have to drop your conscience that has been created by the society in you. You will have to understand yourself and clean yourself of all ideas imposed by others; only then will you be able to relax.

You ask me, "What can I do?"

Hein, don't make a problem out of it. Nothing has to be done about it. I don't tackle individual problems. My whole approach is that there are millions of diseases, but there is only one cure, and that cure is meditation.

You meditate -- homosexual, heterosexual, bisexual.... You meditate. You become more still and more silent. You create inner emptiness. You become more transparent, and then things will start changing. You will be able to see what you are doing to yourself. If it is right you will go on doing it with more joy, with more totality, with more intensity, with more passion. If it is wrong it will simply drop, just like dead leaves falling from a tree.

So I cannot suggest any specific method because to me all the problems are arising because we have become minds and we have forgotten that deep down there is a space within us which can be called no-mind. Entering that space, no-mind, will give you perspective, vision, clarity.

Meditate. Sit silently watching your thoughts -- homosexual, heterosexual, whatsoever they are, it doesn't matter. You watch, you become the witness. Slowly slowly, a distance will be created between you and your thoughts. And one day suddenly, the realization that you are not your mind. And that day a revolution has happened within you. After that day you will never be the same again. A transcendence has happened. After that, whatsoever you do

is right; you can't do wrong then. And before that, whatsoever you do is wrong.
So when I say I have nothing against homosexuality I am not supporting it, remember. I am not saying, "Be homosexual." I don't have anything against heterosexuality either, but I am not supporting heterosexuality. I am not supporting anything. These are all mind games -- and you have to go beyond all the games.
Your mind is created by the society.

Fifteen-year-old Bobby was running out of a theater where he had just seen a porno movie.
The manager stopped him. "Why are you in such a hurry?"
"My mother told me," said Bobby, "that if I ever looked at anything bad I would turn to stone -- and I have started!"

Two members of London's exclusive Explorers Club were discussing a mutual friend over large brandies and soda.
"Well, I'll be damned," said the first old boy. "You say Parkhurst has gone to Africa and married an ape?"
"Quite so, old man."
There was a pause and the first clubman asked in a discreet tone, "A female ape, naturally?"
"Of course," came the reply. "There is nothing queer about old Parkhurst."

The mind functions as an agent of the society within you.
To go beyond mind is to go beyond society.
To go beyond mind is to go beyond the whole history.
To go beyond mind is to go beyond past.
To go beyond mind is to enter into God.

And then whatsoever happens is good, is virtue.

The fourth question:
Question 4
BELOVED MASTER,
THE WEST SEEMS TO BE OBSESSED WITH SEX. PEOPLE ARE STUFFED WITH ENDLESS TECHNIQUES AND PORNO IMAGES. WHY, IN ALL THIS TIME, ARE PEOPLE STILL STUCK AND UNABLE TO MOVE INTO THE TANTRIC EXPERIENCE OF SEX, OF LOVE AND OF LIFE? 4

Prem Karin, it is not a question of West or East. Both are obsessed with sex -- of course, in different ways. The West is indulgent, the East is repressive, but the obsession is the same. And the significant question is: Why is the West so indulgent? It is two thousand years of Christianity and its repressive methods that have brought this indulgence.
The East is repressive; sooner or later, it is going to become indulgent. The mind of man moves like a pendulum, from the right to the left, from the left to the right. And remember, while the pendulum is moving to the right it is gaining momentum to move to the left, and vice versa. It appears it is going to the left, but it is gaining momentum, energy, to go to the right. When a society is repressive it is gaining momentum to become indulgent, and when a society is indulgent it is gaining momentum again to become repressive.
So a strange thing is bound to happen, and in fact, it is happening: the West has been indulgent for a few decades and the repressive trend is arising again. There are many

cults which preach celibacy now. The Hare Krishna movement preaches celibacy, BRAHMACHARYA, and thousands of people have become interested in it. And there are many cults arising which are all agreed on one point: that sex has to be repressed. In the name of yoga, in the name of Zen, in the name of Christianity, many cults are arising which are again repressive. The West will become repressive soon.

And in the East, the number of porno magazines is growing every day; porno movies are coming more and more. The East is a little slow in everything, a little lazy in everything, so it takes a little longer. The West moves with speed. But the East is becoming West and the West is becoming East, and that is one of the greatest problems. If this happens, then the misery remains the same. Again the pendulum has moved and again you will go on doing the same things. This has happened many times in the past. A repressive society becomes indulgent sooner or later. When the repression comes to a point where you cannot repress it anymore it explodes: people go berserk. Or when a society has been very indulgent it starts seeing the futility of it, the sheer wastage of energy. And it gives no contentment; rather it makes one feel more and more frustrated. Then one starts thinking of brahmacharya -- celibacy. Maybe the ancient RISHIS were right!

In the East also it has happened many times. The Hindu religion, in the beginning, was very indulgent; it was not a repressive religion. The Hindu seers were married people. Not only were they married, they were allowed to have a few other women also as their concubines. They were allowed even to purchase women -- because in those days

in India, men and women were sold in the marketplaces just like any commodity.
Beware of all those people who go on talking about the Golden Age of India. There has never been any golden age. Even in the days of Rama... Hindus talk very much about Ramarajya -- the kingdom of Rama is thought to be the highest pinnacle. People were sold like commodities in the marketplaces, and particularly women were thought to be just property; anybody can sell, anybody can purchase. People used to give them as gifts. A guest would come to your house and he would like one of your women, and you would present the woman to him. Even the so-called saints used to have many women; they were all indulgent. All the stories of those days, even about the gods, are very indulgent.
You must have seen Shiva temples -- temples devoted to the god Shiva. The statue is nothing but a phallic symbol. If you look, if you observe minutely, you will be surprised: it has both man and woman's sexual organs in it. It depicts the meeting of man and woman. The story is this:

One day Vishnu and Brahma went to see Shiva... this is the Hindu trinity: Brahma, Vishnu, Shiva. Brahma is the creator god, Vishnu is the maintainer god and Shiva is the destroyer god. All the three are needed to keep the world running. One creates, one maintains, one destroys; then again one creates, the other maintains and the third one destroys. So it remains in a flow.
Brahma and Vishnu went to see Shiva. As it happened, the guard was fast asleep, so they entered in without asking any permission, and Shiva was making love to his wife, Parvati.

He was so passionately into it, so drunk! -- he may have taken some drug, because he is perfectly well known to have used drugs. Marijuana and hash and opium were all known to him.
He continued to make love and these two gods stood there watching. Great gods! They could not even say, "Excuse us," and get out. They must have enjoyed the scene -- living pornography! Six hours it continued, the love-making, and these two gods stood there for six hours watching. A long blue film! -- and nothing else, just making love! No other incidents, nothing else... just Shiva making love to his wife. But they were very angry.
When Shiva was finished they told him, "We have been waiting for six hours and you have not even taken any notice of us. We are very angry and we curse you that you will be remembered forever and forever by your sexual organs."
That's why in the Shiva temple you see the phallic symbol: Shiva is remembered by his sexual organ.

Now, these Hindus must have been very indulgent. Their gods, too, were very indulgent. But then came a reaction, the pendulum moved. Buddhism and Jainism rebelled against this indulgence and they created a very repressive world, a repressive morality.
India still lives under that influence, but it is moving slowly slowly again towards the indulgent. The West is influencing it -- Western films, Western novels are influencing it. The West is being influenced by Buddha, by Zen, by Patanjali, by yoga, by meditation, and the East is

influenced by PLAYBOY! People are reading PLAYBOY, hiding it inside their Gitas!

Prem Karin, you ask, "The West seems to be obsessed with sex."

It is not true only about the West. The whole of humanity, up to now, has remained obsessed with sex, and it is going to remain so unless we change the whole gestalt. Up to now the gestalt has been repression/indulgence, indulgence/repression, going on moving between these two. We have to stop exactly in the middle. Have you ever tried to stop the pendulum of a clock in the middle? What happens? The clock stops. The time stops.

That's my effort here. I don't want you to be indulgent and I don't want you to be repressive. I would like you to be balanced, just in the middle. It is in the middle that transcendence is possible, and it is in the middle that we can create a humanity which will be neither Eastern nor Western. And it is immensely needed, urgently needed, that a man comes on the earth which is neither Eastern nor Western: a new kind of man with a new vision, freed of all the bondage of the past.

You ask, "Why, in all this time, are people still stuck and unable to move into the tantric experience of sex, of love and of life?"

Tantric experience means neither to be repressive nor to be indulgent. Tantric experience is possible only if you move deep into meditation, otherwise not. When you become very very still, silent, aware, alert, then only is it possible that you will know something of tantra. Otherwise, tantra can also become an excuse for indulgence -- a new name, a religious name. And you can move into indulgence behind

the name of tantra. Names won't make much change; your being needs change.

Zelda, the Hebrew zebra, was walking down a country lane, some place in the boondocks of Pennsylvania. Soon she came upon a flock of sheep.
"Yoo-hoo, may I speak to you, please?" she called out.
One of the sheep came to the fence.
"What do you want to speak about?"
"I represent the Hadassah Zebra Association of South Africa. You are Jewish?"
"Oh yes, we are all Jewish here."
"Well, I am on a fact-finding tour. Our zebras are interested in learning how Jewish animals in America earn a living. Would you mind telling me what kind of work you do?"
"What do I do?" exclaimed the sheep. "What kind of a question is that? I give wool, what else? Every year they shear it off and next season they do the same thing. Is it any different there in South Africa?"
"Oh no, it is just the same. Well, I must be running along. Ta-ta, and thank you most kindly."
Zelda continued on her fact-finding mission until she met a cow.
"Excuse me, madam, I am from the Hadassah Zebra Association of South Africa. I am interviewing Jewish-American domestic animals. Would you be so kind as to describe your work?"
"Glad to," murmured the cow. "I am employed by a strictly kosher dairy, being orthodox myself, of course. My work, you ask? Well, I am a purebred Guernsey, and I give Grade A milk. I live up there in that pretty white barn. Sorry I

can't ask you in, but we were not expecting company and the place is a mess."
"That's perfectly alright. Thank you for your information. You have been most helpful. Toodle-oo."
A short time later, Zelda saw a stallion in a pasture, and there was no mistaking his Jewishness. He happened to see her at just about the same moment. He charged toward the fence, skidded to a four-footed stop and loomed over the zebra with nostrils flaring.
"And just what is it that you do, sir?" asked the zebra demurely.
"Honey, you just slip out of those fancy pajamas," he said, "and I will show you what I do!"

The whole humanity is suffering from obsession, either through indulgence or through repression. The whole humanity is concerned with sex twenty-four hours a day. Psychologists have discovered that every man thinks of women at least once in three minutes, and every woman thinks of man at least once in six minutes. That may cause enough problems -- the difference; that may be the whole trouble between man and woman.

Tantric sex is not sex at all; it is meditation. Meditation has to spread all over your life. Whatsoever you do, do meditatively. Walk meditatively, eat meditatively. If you are making love, make love meditatively. Meditation has to become your life twenty-four hours a day; then only the transformation. Then you go beyond sex, you go beyond body, you go beyond mind. And for the first time you

become aware of godliness, of ecstasy, of bliss, of truth, of liberation.

The last question:
Question 5
BELOVED MASTER,
WHY ARE THE INDIANS SUCH A PROUD PEOPLE?

Paul, God knows! They have no reason to be. I am also surprised. There is nothing -- but the ego clings to anything or it invents something. India goes on inventing a beautiful past. It is invention, pure invention. It has never been there, it has never existed.

Yes, there have been people like Krishna and Mahavira and Buddha, but they are not Indians at all. Jesus is not Jewish and Lao Tzu is not Chinese. These people are universal; nobody can claim them. The whole earth belongs to them; they are our common heritage, so you cannot brag about them.

But every country has to invent something to feel good. Just as individuals need egos, countries need egos, races need egos, religions need egos. And Indians have a tremendously big ego. They think they are the most spiritual people on the earth, and that is just bullshit! The very idea is unspiritual.

To be spiritual means to be humble. To be spiritual means to be nobodies. To be spiritual means not to belong to any country, to any nation. To be spiritual means not to be Hindu, not to be Mohammedan, not to be Christian. But even spirituality is being used as a prop.

It happens every day: some new Indians come, once in a while, those who don't understand me... because it is not possible to understand me just if you come once as a visitor just to look around. You can't understand me if you come as a tourist. Indians come, but they come only as visitors. And the few Indians who have become absorbed into my commune, who have become sannyasins, I don't count them as Indians anymore. They have become universal. It is a universal brotherhood.

But when new Indians come they ARE Indians, very much Indians. And what egos they carry! When I pass around the Buddha Hall with my hands joined together, with my head bowed down to them in love, in prayer, in salutation, they can't even respond. They sit like stones. Not even a formal gesture they can show. They look so silly, so stupid, and I feel so sorry! How to help them? These people seem to be beyond help, beyond approach. And they see the whole ocean of sannyasins with their hands joined together joyously bowing, responding in love, communing, but they can't do it. They just sit there like dead rocks. Strange... but not so strange because deep down they think they already know. Deep down they think they are great inheritors of a spiritual tradition. They know the Vedas and the Gita and the Upanishads.

I watch them, I watch their spirituality. They don't look at me -- they look at my Rolls Royce! That's why I have asked my secretary to bring a Rolls Royce: at least for Indians there must be something to see! They are more interested in the car -- and they are spiritual people, not materialists! When they come to the ashram, the first question they ask the guides here is, "Where is the Rolls?"

They are not interested in seeing meditations, they are not interested in seeing Sufi dancers, they are not interested in seeing vipassana, they are not interested in anything. "Where is the Rolls?" Their whole mind is materialistic, but they go on pretending to be spiritual. And you can always invent something or other.

The country is poor so they cannot brag about richness. The country is uneducated, they cannot brag about education. The country is technologically backward, they cannot brag about technology. So they have fallen upon something invisible: spirituality. You can always brag about spirituality. Nobody can disprove it. Of course, you cannot prove it either, but one thing good about spirituality is that it cannot be disproved. So you can go on talking about your spirituality -- which exists nowhere, which has never existed.

Individuals have been spiritual beings, societies have never been. We have still to wait for that great day when there will be so many individuals awakened that the society will start having the color of spirituality. Up to now, it has not happened. Hitherto it has not been happening; it has only been a hope. But every religion believes that they are religious. Just believing in certain ideas gives you a false feeling of being religious. And whenever you come across a real religious person you shrink back, you become afraid. Hence they are against me -- they are bound to be against me. I am shattering all their structures. I am shattering their whole egoistic patterns. I am trying to bring them down to the earth, to the reality -- and it hurts.

India has never been against anybody as India is against me, for the simple reason that nobody has ever shattered

their egos. I am making every possible effort to shatter their egos because that is the only hope. If India loses its ego, there is a possibility of a rebirth. The country can be reborn. It has great potential. It has the same potential as when you don't use a field for many many years, you don't grow any crop, and the field becomes more and more potential every year.

For centuries India has not grown any creativity. It has become the most potential country in the world. If it explodes into creativity it is really going to be something great, something of great consequence to the whole earth. But before it can ever happen the shell of the seed has to be shattered, has to be broken.

I am going to be condemned, criticized, rejected; that is bound to be my destiny. But I am the only hope. If I succeed in helping a few intelligent Indians to come out of their closed egos into the open, that will help not only India but the whole world. It will be a great contribution to the growth of consciousness.

It is possible, and you are all here to help it happen.

Enough for today.

The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 10

Chapter #13

Chapter title: Religion is a song, poetry, a dance of your heart

4 March 1980 am in Buddha Hall

Q2 and Q4 on video

The first question:
Question 1
BELOVED MASTER,
ARE YOU CONVERTING PEOPLE TO YOUR OWN RELIGION?

Christina, I don't have any religion at all: a certain kind of religiousness, but no religion in particular. That's why it is so easy for me to absorb Jesus, Buddha, Lao Tzu, Zarathustra, Moses, Mohammed, Mahavira. If I had a religion, then it would not be possible for me to be so universal.
To have a religion means to become limited. To have a religion means you have defined life, you have made a dogma out of life, you have demystified it. It is no longer infinite; it is no longer unknown, unknowable. You have reduced it to a system of thought.
My whole effort here is to melt all systems of thought, to melt your minds which have become ice-cold, frozen into prejudices, so that a new kind of warmth surrounds the earth. It will be a kind of religiousness -- just a vague feeling, not a definite thought. You can experience it, but you cannot explain it. It will not be like a flower, it will be more like a fragrance. If you are not suffering from cold you will be able to feel it, the fragrance. And people's heads are too full of coldness; they are suffering from cold, they have become frozen. One is a Hindu, another is a Christian. That is the meaning of your name, Christina: a Christian. Be a christ and never be a Christian! Be a buddha, never be a Buddhist! That is settling for rubbish. When you can

experience the truth yourself, why settle for secondhand knowledge? All religions are secondhand knowledge.
When a master is alive he has a certain climate, there is no doubt about it, a certain atmosphere around him, where people start growing -- growing into themselves. That is true conversion. Conversion does not mean a Hindu becoming a Christian or a Christian becoming a Hindu; that is not conversion. That is simply changing one prison for another, moving from one dead system of thought to another dead system of thought -- but you remain the same. Conversion means a radical change in your being. It is not a question of changing your ideology, it is a question of changing your consciousness. In that sense, people are certainly being converted. And I am not converting them, they are allowing themselves to be converted. Remember that difference. I am not interested in converting anybody; I am simply making a space available for those who want to go through this revolution. They can go through this revolution. Neither directly nor indirectly am I trying to make you part of any religion.
Just the other day I was reading... somebody has written -- a Hindu -- that I am converting people into Jainism because I was born in a Jaina religion. And Jainas think that I am converting Jainas into the Hindu religion because orange is a Hindu color -- as if colors can also be Hindu or Mohammedan! And Christians have been writing letters to me, writing articles against me, that I am converting Christians to Hinduism. It is a very strange world! Christians think I am converting you to Hinduism, Hindus think I am converting you to Jainism, Jainas think I am converting you to Hinduism, Mohammedans think I am

converting you to Buddhism and Buddhists thinks I am converting you to something else.

I am not converting you to any organized system of thought, directly or indirectly. I am not interested in that at all. But certainly I am making a dimension available to you. If you are interested in going through a revolution you can go. If you have guts and courage you can have a new consciousness.

But I can understand the question, particularly from a Christian, because Christians have been doing this business of conversion all over the earth for centuries, in every possible way, right or wrong. If people cannot be converted by convincing them, then convert them by swords. If swords have become out-of-date and look ugly, then convert them by money, by bread and butter. People are poor and starving.

In India I have never come across a single rich family who has become Christian. Only very poor people who are always on the verge of dying because of starvation have become Christians. The reason is not that they are interested in Christ; they are simply interested in surviving -- and Christian missionaries have the money. They can give them the money, employment, clothes, medicine, schools, hospitals. And when it is a question of survival, who cares about religion? To what religion you belong does not matter -- the first requirement is to survive. So in India all the poor people, very poor people have been converted. This is converting them by bribery. Now instead of swords, a very subtle methodology is being used to convert them.

But I am not interested in converting anybody. I love Jesus as much as I love Buddha because I don't see any difference. Both are religious because both are awakened. There is no difference at all between the awakened people. But the churches are not concerned with awakening or the awakened people; their concern is with numbers, and they use every possible way, direct, indirect, gross and subtle to convert people.
Hence, Christina, the question has arisen in your mind: maybe I am doing something like the Christian missionaries. I am not a missionary.

Mr. and Mrs. Chotnik had hoped that their son, Stanley, would follow in the path of their own orthodox ways and pursue his higher education at Yeshiva University. Instead, despite their voluble concern, he entered a Christian college. But when he returned home for summer vacation, they were vastly relieved to see that their fears had been groundless. Stanley had not forsaken his ancestral faith, he had not been converted, he had not, it was clear, been affected in the slightest way by his non-Jewish environment. In fact, on the very next Friday, he readily agreed to accompany them to synagogue.
That evening, at the close of shabbes services, the rabbi, an old friend of the Chotnik family, greeted the young student with a wide smile.
"It is good to see you here in the temple again, Stanley," said the rabbi, shaking the youth's hand. "Frankly, your parents and I were afraid you might be Catholicized there at South Bend."

Stanley's eyebrows lifted in surprise. "Impossible!" he declared. "No one will ever convert me, Father."

There are subtle ways to convert. The person who is being converted does not become aware at all what is happening. You go on conditioning him, slowly slowly. You go on repeating the gospels and slowly slowly, without his awareness, his mind becomes full of all that has been repeated. He is being conditioned. It is a process of hypnosis.

MY effort here is just the opposite: it is a process of dehypnosis, deconditioning. I decondition you, whosoever you are, Christian, Hindu, Mohammedan. I simply decondition you and then I leave it to you so that you can be yourself. I don't recondition you again. I stop with deconditioning so that you are free from the old pattern, from the old gestalt that has been imposed upon you. Once you are free then my work is finished. Then you can grow on your own according to your own light, according to your own inner needs. Each individual has a birthright to be himself.

The world does not need Christians, Hindus and Mohammedans; it needs certainly religious people. And what do I mean when I use the words 'religious people'? I mean people who are aware that the world is not only matter, that the world is something more, something plus. It is not finished with matter; matter is only the circumference: consciousness is at the center. And this is possible only when you experience consciousness at your own center; then you can experience consciousness everywhere. When you start feeling consciousness

everywhere you have come across godliness. This experience is religion.
I am certainly interested in introducing you into this vast experience, but you have to come to it on your own. You have to come to it without any beliefs, prejudices -- open, vulnerable, ready to see that which is, rather than to project what should be. I don't give you any shoulds and should-nots, I don't give you any commandments. I simply help you like a gardener helps a seed. It is not an effort to make a lotus out of a rosebush or vice versa. The gardener helps the rose to be a rose and the lotus to be a lotus. Whatsoever is your potential, you have to be that.
I am not here to decide what you have to be; I can only give you hints how to grow into your own being. And that's how a person becomes a Jesus, a Buddha, a Zarathustra.

The second question:
Question 2
BELOVED MASTER,
THE WEST IS OVERPOPULATED WITH PSYCHOTHERAPISTS AND THEIR PATIENTS, BUT WHY DOES NO ONE SEEM TO BE HELPED?

Patrick, the help is possible only through a buddha. The help is possible only through the awakened one.
The psychotherapists are as asleep as you are; they are in the same boat. There is no qualitative difference between you and them -- in fact they may be crazier than you are. They may be more in a mess than you are because they constantly deal with mad people; day in, day out, they are surrounded by mad people. Rather than helping the mad

people to become sane, just the opposite happens: being constantly in contact with mad people, slowly slowly they become mad themselves.
This is natural. They don't have yet that awareness which can remain aloof, unaffected. They don't have that distance, that coolness, that detachment. They are not living on sunlit peaks; they are groping in the same dark valley where you are groping. They are as blind as you are, but they have to pretend that they are not blind -- and that is more dangerous.
If a person is blind and knows that he is blind and never pretends otherwise, there is every possibility he will walk more cautiously. If he pretends that he is not blind, if he projects that he is not blind, if he convinces others that he is not blind, slowly slowly he will be hypnotized by his own sayings, auto-hypnotized. He will start believing that he is not blind and he will start walking less cautiously. And that is more dangerous.

I have heard:
Once a blind man came to visit a Zen master. When he was leaving -- it was night, a dark night, no moon, and so many clouds -- the master said to the blind man, "Please take this lamp with you."
The blind man laughed loudly. He said, "Are you joking? What can a lamp do for me? I cannot see! It is all the same to me whether I have a lamp or not."
But the master said, "That I know, that you cannot see, but at least others will be able to see in the darkness that you are coming so they will not stumble into you."

The argument appeared right. The blind man took the lamp, went away. He had just walked only a hundred yards and a man just walked into him. He said, "What is the matter? Are you too blind? Can't you see this lamp?"
And the man said, "I am not blind. Excuse me, but your lamp is no longer lit; its flame has gone out."
The blind man went back to the Zen master and said, "Look, never give a lamp to another blind man again. If there was no lamp I would have walked more cautiously. I always walk cautiously. Because of the lamp I walked as if I were no longer blind -- and the lamp went out. But how was I to know that the lamp went out? Because of this lamp, for the first time I have been hurt by a man. Otherwise, I have walked my whole life in every possible situation, but because I was so cautious, always making noise with my stick on the road so people can feel that some blind man is there, always groping with my stick in the darkness so I know where I am, whether I am facing a wall or a door.... It was the first time that I walked without any fear."

And that's what is happening to your psychotherapists, Patrick. They think they know -- they know nothing. They are more informed, but information is not knowing. They are well educated, but they have not a higher being than you. And help is possible only when somebody higher than you gives you a hand.
More psychotherapists go mad than any other profession and more psychotherapists commit suicide than any other profession. And it is natural. Living with mad people, one can understand -- they become affected.

A few scenes will be helpful to you....

The first scene:
A man walks into a psychiatrist's office.
"You must help me!" he exclaims.
"What do you do for a living?" asks the shrink.
"I am an automobile mechanic."
"Get under the couch!"

The second scene:
First psychiatrist: "Hello!"
Second psychiatrist: "I wonder what you mean by that?"

The third scene:
The patient: "Of course I am upset, doctor. I have eleven children and I find out my husband does not love me."
The doctor: "You are very lucky. Imagine if he did!"

The fourth scene:
"Doctor, my wife accuses me of being a compulsive card-player."
"That's ridiculous. Now shut up and deal!"

And the fifth scene:
"Doctor, now that you have cured me of my homosexual tendencies and since this is our last session, may I kiss you goodbye?"
"Don't be ridiculous -- men don't kiss. I shouldn't even be lying on the couch with you!"

You ask me, Patrick, "The West is overpopulated with psychotherapists and their patients, but why does no one seem to be helped?"
Help is possible only from higher sources. A person who is on the same ground as you cannot be of any help to you. Help is possible only when a fully conscious man tries to help the unconscious. It is as if you are asleep; do you think somebody else asleep can help you in any way? Only somebody who is awake can wake you. If you want to be awakened at a particular hour, you don't say to somebody else who is asleep, "Please wake me up at five o'clock in the morning. I have to go for that goddamned Dynamic Meditation!" You have to ask somebody who is awake. Only somebody awake can wake you up. In fact, the person who is asleep may help you to fall into a deeper sleep. You may have watched it happen. If a few people are sitting just by your side yawning, you start feeling sleepy. They create a certain vibe; they create a certain atmosphere in which anybody vulnerable will start feeling it is better to go to sleep.
The same happens with awakened people: a buddha creates a totally different vibe. He shakes you up, he wakes you up. He goes on shocking you in many ways; he finds devices to shock you.

Kavita has asked, "Beloved Master, sometimes you use such words that I feel shocked -- and I used to think that no word can ever shock me. Don't you have any couth?"
Kavita, I will go on using these words unless you wake up. You would like to listen to lullabies -- but lullabies are not going to help. What appeals to you, what you like is not

going to help. Something that shocks you.... I am going to use rough words till you stop yawning.
Whenever I see somebody yawning somewhere, immediately I have to say something which shocks you -- and I can see his yawning disappears. The moment I say "bullshit" -- immediately I say it he stops yawning! His spine is erect, his kundalini is rising upwards!
Unless you all become awakened I am not going to leave you at ease; I will go on hitting you in every possible way.

Help is possible, Patrick, only from the awakened ones. You don't need psychotherapists, you need buddhas. Secondly: you go to the psychotherapist, but you don't really want to be helped. You have great investment in your pathology.
A few scenes again.

First:
"Doctor, my wife thinks she is a refrigerator."
"Why don't you divorce her?"
"I would but I need the ice."

Second scene:
"Doctor, my girlfriend thinks she is a rabbit."
"Bring her in. I will see what can I do."
"Okay, but whatever happens, I hope you don't cure her."

Nobody wants really to be helped. People are only playing games. They go to the psychiatrist in the hope that he can't do anything, that he is not going really to change them. Nobody wants to be changed; everybody wants to remain

the same as he is. You have become so accustomed to your misery, to your pathology... it is your life, it is your way of life.
If you want to be changed you will seek a master, not a psychotherapist.

The third question:
Question 3
BELOVED MASTER,
IS THERE ANY TRUTH IN THE PHILOSOPHY OF PHYSICAL IMMORTALITY WHICH SAYS THAT IT IS ONLY OUR BELIEF IN THE INEVITABILITY OF DEATH WHICH PRODUCES OLD AGE, DISEASE AND DEATH? TO WHAT EXTENT DO OUR THOUGHTS MANIFEST RESULTS?

John Fisant, man is afraid of death; hence he goes on creating all kinds of stupid ideas. Physical immortality is sheer nonsense because anything that begins is bound to end. Physical immortality is possible only if you are not born through parents but manufactured in a factory. If you are made out of plastic, if you are not a real man, then there is a possibility. Plastic seems to be the only immortal thing. So if you don't have skin but plastic instead, if you don't have real blood but synthetic blood which you can change any time -- you can go to the petrol pump -- and all that you have in your body -- your bones, your joints, everything -- is replaceable so whenever there is some problem, things can be replaced; you just have to change a few parts and parts will be available.... You may have to go to the garage for a time; a few things may have to be unscrewed and

screwed again. Then you can be physically immortal -- but then you will not be a man, you will be a machine.
If you are born you are bound to die. Yes, it is possible your life can be prolonged -- life HAS been prolonged. As medicine has evolved, as scientific technology has come to help human beings, as we have become more and more aware of the secrets of life, life has been prolonged. It may be prolonged from seventy years to seven hundred years, but then too you will not be physically immortal.
And I don't think many people would like to live seven hundred years; even seventy years is too much! People start thinking after a time, "Now it will be better to die." Death is a relief, a relaxation. Everything wants rest; death is going into rest. Your body also gets tired, matter also gets tired. It wants to go back to its original source: water into water and air into air and earth into earth and fire into fire. Everything wants to go back to its source to rest, to rejuvenate itself, and come back again. But man has always cherished these ideas -- physical immortality. And not ordinary people, even people who are thought to be extraordinary, they also go on having such stupid ideas.

Sri Aurobindo and the mother of Sri Aurobindo both believed in physical immortality -- and both died! When Sri Aurobindo died nobody believed it, because all the disciples who had gathered there had gathered for the simple reason that he knows the secret of physical immortality and by being his disciples THEY are going to become physically immortal. How can they believe that he had died?

For three days it was kept a secret that he had died. They waited: he may be in deep samadhi, he may come back. But after three days when they saw no sign of his coming back and his body started stinking, then they had to bury it. Then they hoped that the mother would be immortal. She lived a long life, but a long life does not mean physical immortality. When she died, again they were shocked. Their whole philosophy was confused by these two persons' deaths.
But one thing is good about death: now you cannot ask Sri Aurobindo, "Why have you been telling your whole life that physical immortality is possible, that you know the secret, that you have been able to bring God into the physical world?"

But fools gathered. Fools become attracted always to strange things. Just deep down the fear is there -- nobody wants to die. Why? Why in the first place are you afraid of death? Death is not the enemy. To a man who has really lived, death is the friend. It is like sleep. Nobody wants to remain wakeful twenty-four hours a day.
There are a few people who think that sleep is also just an old habit and they try to reduce it. For centuries they have tried. Yes, it can be reduced, it can be reduced to two hours because two hours is the essential sleep; you also sleep only two hours in a deep way. Somewhere between two and four or three and five you sleep for two hours very deeply; those are the refreshing moments. All dreaming disappears, you are almost dead. Hence the ancients used to say sleep is a small death. But people have been trying to avoid sleep also.

The logic is: if you can avoid sleep then you can one day avoid death too. If sleep is a small death and you have conquered sleep, you will be able to conquer the big sleep, death, too. But why? What is wrong in dying? The people who are afraid of death are the people who have not really lived their lives. They are not afraid of death, they are simply afraid that they have not lived yet and death has come.
Rather than thinking of physical immortality, think of living your life totally. While you are here, live your life in a multidimensional richness. And then when death comes you will feel it as a crescendo, as a peak, as an ultimate -- life reaching to the highest -- and you will enjoy death as much as you have enjoyed life. You will be utterly satisfied with death because it will give you rest, relaxation; it will renew you. It will take away the old garments and it will give you new garments.
But people go on philosophizing. They have created things like Christian Science, mind over matter. They think that if you believe that you are not going to die then you will not die.

I heard about a man who was a Christian Scientist. One day he met a young man. He asked the young man, "Any news about your father?"
The young man said, "He is very ill."
The Christian Scientist said, "All nonsense! Tell him, 'Mind over matter.' He believes he is ill, that's all; it is his belief that is creating illness. Don't believe in illness and you will be healthy."

After a few days again the young man came across this Christian Scientist, and the Christian Scientist asked, "How are things now with your old man? How is he?"
And the young man said, "Now he believes that he is dead."

It is not a question of belief: illness has a reality, and death too has a reality. Yes, by believing also you can create a few illnesses -- which are false, bogus -- and by disbelieving in them you can destroy them. But you cannot destroy a real illness; the illness has to be false in the first place. If you BELIEVE in it and create it, then by disbelieving in it, it can be dropped.
But death is not your belief; otherwise why do animals die? They don't believe, they don't believe that they are going to die. Why do trees die? They don't believe that they are going to die, they don't have any belief system. Why do stars and suns and moons die? Why do earths die? They don't believe; death is a universal phenomenon, it happens everywhere. It is part of life; it is the other side of the coin. I am not in any support of Christian Science. It is neither science nor Christian -- it is simply nonsense.

Two middle-aged men were walking off the tennis court after only a few minutes of play. The older, somewhat corpulent fellow was puffing heavily.
"I guess I am in pretty poor shape," he confessed ruefully.
"How long have you been playing, Herbie?" asked the young man.
"About two weeks."

"Then let me give you a little practical advice. Try the Christian Science way -- mind over matter."
"I already have," admitted the fat one. "When my opponent serves the ball to me, my Christian Science mind says, 'Now, Herbie, you just race right up to the net, slam a blistering drive to the far corner of the court and then jump back into position.' That's exactly what my Christian Science mind tells me....
"But my Jewish body says, 'Herbie, to make a schlemiel out of yourself you don't need!'"

In fact, body and mind are not two things: the body is the outer side of the mind, the mind is the inner side of the body. To use the phrase 'body AND mind' is not right; you are bodymind, not even a hyphen in between. We should use it as a single word 'bodymind', 'psychosomatic'. So of course, your inner affects your outer, your outer affects your inner -- you are bodymind -- but you are not finished with the bodymind. There is a witness also.
John Fisant, rather than bothering about physical immortality, get in touch with your witnessing soul which watches the body and mind both. It watches life, it watches death; hence it transcends life and death both. Only this witness is immortal because it is never born and it never dies.
The Zen people call it the original face. This witnessing is your original face. And meditation is nothing but an art to discover your original face. You are immortal, but not physically; just in your awareness, in your consciousness you ARE immortal, you are universal.

The fourth question:
Question 4
BELOVED MASTER,
WAS BUDDHA NOT A POET? DID HE NOT HAVE A LOGICAL MIND? HOW ARE WE AS NEW MEN AND WOMEN TO GO BEYOND WHAT YOU HAVE CALLED HIS ONE-DIMENSIONALITY, WHEN IT SEEMS THAT YOUR BASIC TEACHING, AS WELL AS THAT OF BUDDHA, IS SIMPLY AWARENESS?

Roderick, Gautama the Buddha was not a poet if you understand him directly, but if you understand him via me, he IS a poet. When I am speaking on Buddha it is very natural that my color is reflected in him.
I love poetry and I go on finding poetry even where it is not.
Buddha is like a desertland -- but I love oases and I go on discovering them. If you had seen Buddha you would have seen immediately that he couldn't have anything to do with poetry. Poetry was fiction for him, as much fiction as it was for Plato. In his Republic, Plato says, poets will not be allowed, for the simple reason that they are liars, they live in lies. What is poetry? Beautiful lying! Buddha was also of the same mind; he would have agreed with Plato. He was very insistent on truth.
My approach is different. I don't see religion as a dry, dead thing. To me religion is a song, a dance. If I am going to create a republic, a utopia, then poets will be the only citizens there; they will be the only ones allowed -- because beauty is far more valuable than truth itself. And the poet

discovers beauty -- not only discovers, he creates. The poet is creative.

It is because of me that in Buddha you will find poetry. Excuse me, I cannot do otherwise. That's why Buddhists are not happy with me; particularly Buddhist scholars are not happy at all. They say I go on finding in Buddha things which are not there. I am not much concerned whether they are there or not. I use Buddha only as an excuse, just as I use Jesus and I use Mahavira and I use Patanjali. I am not a commentator -- I have my own vision. I use them as pegs to hang myself on.

When you are hearing Buddha through me, it is a totally different phenomenon. You are looking through MY eyes; hence Buddha will look like a poet -- but he was not. He was a very logical man; hence I say he was one-dimensional. He was utterly logical, as logical as Ludwig Wittgenstein.

Wittgenstein says you should not speak about something which cannot be spoken of. That's exactly Buddha's standpoint; Buddha would have immediately agreed with Wittgenstein. That's exactly what he said twenty-five centuries before Wittgenstein. He never spoke about God because nothing can be spoken about God; hence don't say anything. Even to say that nothing can be spoken about God is to say something about God; better not to say even that.

The Upanishads say: Nothing can be said about God; he is indefinable. Buddha will not say even that because that is self-contradictory. To say that nothing can be said about God is self-contradictory because you have said something already. Even to say that nothing can be said is saying

something. Buddha was utterly logical, absolutely logical. He kept absolutely silent.

Whenever he would enter a town, a city, a village, his disciples would go ahead of him to declare, "Don't ask these eleven questions to the Buddha, because he is not going to answer, so don't waste your time and his time."

Those eleven questions consisted of everything that philosophy, theology, metaphysics is made of. If you don't ask those eleven questions, nothing is left to ask -- nothing metaphysical. Then you can ask only actual problems. You can ask about your anger, your greed, your sex. You can ask about your misery, suffering, how to get rid of it, but you cannot ask whether God is. You cannot ask what will happen after death. You cannot ask what is truth, what is beauty, what is good; he forbade it. He was a very logical man and one-dimensional.

Life is three-dimensional. And up to now there have been people, great people, but they were all one-dimensional. For example, Buddha is logical, so is Socrates. There have been great poets -- Kalidas, Rabindranath, Shelley, Shakespeare. They are one-dimensional: beauty is their god. And there have been moral people, absolutely moral people, virtuous people whose whole life was devoted to being just as virtuous as possible: Mahavira, Lao Tzu. But all are one-dimensional.

Humanity has come now to a crossroads. We have lived the one-dimensional man, we have exhausted it. We need now a more enriched human being, three-dimensional. I call them three C's, just like three R's.

The first C is consciousness, the second C is compassion, the third C is creativity.

Consciousness is being, compassion is feeling, creativity is action. My sannyasin has to be all the three simultaneously. I am giving you the greatest challenge ever given, the hardest task to be fulfilled. You have to be as meditative as a Buddha, as loving as a Krishna, as creative as Michelangelo, Leonardo da Vinci. You have to be all together simultaneously. Only then your totality will be fulfilled; otherwise something will remain missing in you. And that which is missing in you will keep you lopsided, unfulfilled. You can attain to a very high peak if you are one-dimensional, but you will be only a peak. I would like you to become the whole range of the Himalayas, not just a peak but peaks upon peaks!

The one-dimensional man has failed. It has not been able to create a beautiful earth, it has not been able to create paradise on the earth. It has failed, utterly failed! It created a few beautiful people, but it could not transform the whole humanity, it could not raise the consciousness of the whole humanity. Only a few individuals here and there became enlightened. That is not going to help anymore. We need more enlightened people, and enlightened in a three-dimensional way.

That is my definition of the new man.

Roderick, you ask me, "Was Buddha not a poet?"

He was not! But the people who will become awakened here with me are going to be poets. When I say "poets" I don't mean that you have to WRITE poetry -- you have to be poetic. Your life has to be poetic, your approach has to be poetic. Logic is dry, poetry is alive. Logic cannot dance; it is impossible for logic to dance. To see logic dancing will be like Mahatma Gandhi dancing! It will look very

ridiculous. Poetry can dance; poetry is a dance of your heart. Logic cannot love; it can talk about love, but it cannot love. Love seems to be illogical. Only poetry can love; only poetry can take the jump into the paradox of love. Logic is cold, very cold; it is good as far as mathematics is concerned, but it is not good as far as humanity is concerned. If humanity becomes too logical then humanity disappears; then there are only numbers, not human beings -- replaceable numbers.

Poetry, love, feeling give you a depth, a warmth. You become more melted, you lose your ice-coldness. You become more human.

Buddha is superhuman, about that there is no doubt, but he loses the human dimension. He is unearthly. He has a beauty of being unearthly, but he does not have the beauty that Zorba the Greek has. Zorba is so earthly.

I would like you to be both together: Zorba the Buddha! One has to be meditative, but not against feeling. One has to be meditative but full of feeling, overflowing with love. And one has to be creative. If your love is only a feeling and it is not translated into action, it won't affect the larger humanity. You have to make it a reality, you have to materialize it.

These are your three dimensions: being, feeling, action. Action contains all creativity, all kinds of creativity: music, poetry, painting, sculpture, architecture, science, technology. Feeling contains all that is aesthetic: love, beauty. And being contains meditation, awareness, consciousness.

You ask me, "It seems awareness is your basic teaching, as well as that of Buddha...."

I have no basic teaching, I cannot have a basic teaching. I am not a teacher at all. I don't teach you, I am simply a presence. You can learn, but I don't teach. You can imbibe my spirit, and my spirit and its implication will depend on you.

There are people to whom awareness will help as a basic teaching; they will learn awareness from me. And there are people to whom love will help; then they will learn love as a basic teaching from me. It will depend on you. I am multidimensional, hence I can absorb all kinds of people. Buddha would not have accepted you all, remember, neither would Jesus or Mahavira; they would have chosen. A few people would have been chosen by Buddha and a few would have been chosen by Jesus and a few would have been chosen by somebody else. But I don't choose at all, I am absolutely choiceless. Whosoever comes to me is accepted, absolutely accepted, totally accepted, because I don't have a basic pattern. I have only hints -- and hints for all, for all kinds of people.

It is not a teaching; teaching becomes rigid, becomes defined. It is only a presence. I am only a window; through me you can look into God. And once you have looked into God, then you can look into God on your own -- I am not needed anymore.

The fifth question:

Question 5

BELOVED MASTER,

WHY ARE ALL THE AWAKENED ONES AGAINST DESIRING? WHAT IS WRONG WITH DESIRE?

Sujata, meditate over Murphy's maxim: Be careful about what you want, because you are liable to get it.

The sixth question:
Question 6
BELOVED MASTER,
WHY DO I ALWAYS FIND IT DIFFICULT TO RELATE TO MY WIFE?

Richard, because you are British, and you know British wives!

Sent to Australia for an extended business trip, the Englishman was asked if he missed his wife, who was still back in London.
"Ah, I don't miss her all that much," he explained. "One day a week I hire a local woman to come in and nag."

After they had been discussing their problems for more than an hour, the prissy English lady said to the marriage counselor, "I think it is unfair to suggest that I don't enjoy sex. But what can you say about a man who wants it five or six times a year?"

And the last:

"I am taking Kung Fu lessons just in case some sex fiend tries to rape me on some dark night," the prune-faced Englishwoman told her long-suffering husband.
"Why bother?" remarked the husband. "It will never get that dark."

The seventh question:
Question 7
BELOVED MASTER,
ALL THE BUDDHAS SAY THAT ONE SHOULD LEARN TO BE SILENT, BUT IN DAY-TO-DAY LIFE ONE HAS TO SPEAK. THEN WHAT SHOULD ONE DO?

Shakti, first meditate over Murphy's maxim: Think twice before you speak and then don't say anything.
But if you have to say something, then meditate over this:

Walker, a newspaperman, was on vacation up in Maine. He came across a lonely hut and began interviewing the owner with the idea of doing a story on the locale.
"Whose house is this?" asked the reporter.
"Moggs'," replied the Mainer.
"What in the world is it built of?"
"Logs."
"Any animals natural to the locality?"
"Frogs."
"What sort of soil have you?"
"Bogs."
"How about the climate?"
"Fogs."
"What do you live on chiefly?"
"Hogs."
"Have you any friends?"
"Dogs."

Be telegraphic!

The eighth question:
Question 8
BELOVED MASTER,
AHA! I THOUGHT THERE WAS SOMETHING FAMILIAR ABOUT HIM -- MURPHY IS A JEW! USED TO BE CALLED MOSHE KAPOYER?

Tao, this is a remarkable discovery! I wonder how you managed to find it out. It is true. Moshe Kapoyer was the only Jew in a small town and since business was bad he decided to change his name. There were other reasons also to change his name: because he was a Jew and the only Jew, people were avoiding him and his business was suffering. And secondly because his name, Moshe Kapoyer, means Mr. Topsy-turvy or Mr. Upside-down, so he was not very happy with his name either.
He went to a judge and became Mr. Jones. One week later he was back before the same judge asking that his name be changed to Murphy.
"Why do you want your name changed? I just changed it last week."
"So that when people ask me what my name was before it was Murphy, I can say it was Jones."

The ninth question:
Question 9
BELOVED MASTER,
CAN I ALSO BE A GOD?

Krishna, Deva, I have given you the name Krishna Deva. It means God Krishna. Yes, there is no trouble about it. In fact you ARE a god; even if you want to be somebody else you cannot. Everybody is trying to be somebody else, but nobody has ever succeeded in being somebody else. God is our nature. You can forget all about it, but you cannot change it.

Flaherty and Gluckstein were discussing the merits of their religion.
"Answer me this," said the Irishman, "could one of your boys be pope?"
"No," answered Gluckstein. "Could one of your boys be God?"
"Why, of course not!" replied Flaherty.
"Well," said Gluckstein, "one of our boys made it!"

If Jesus can make it, if Buddha can make it, why not you? In fact, they could make it because it is not something to be achieved, it is something to be only discovered. We have forgotten it; it is already there like an undercurrent. Our godliness is always there; wherever you go it goes with you. It is you. It is in the sinner, it is even in the saint!

The tenth question:
Question 10
BELOVED MASTER,
I LOVED YOUR ANSWER THE OTHER DAY TO ARUP'S QUESTION. THE ONLY TROUBLE IS THAT I HAVE STARTED COMING HOME EARLY AND NOT DRINKING SO MUCH, WHILE ARUP IS GETTING

DISCO PARTIES TOGETHER, GOING OUT AND GENERALLY HAVING A GOOD TIME. AM I BECOMING MEDITATIVE, WHILE ARUP IS BECOMING AS LOOSE AS A GOOSE?

Niranjan, now you know why I said to Arup that this is absolutely the sure way to raise the consciousness of humanity. She has started -- she has begun with you. You are her first victim!

The last question:
Question 11
BELOVED MASTER,
WHAT IS MISUNDERSTANDING?

Dhyanesh, three stories for you:

Anna: "Is it true what I hear about your husband cutting down on his smoking?"
Hannah: "Yes, now he is smoking only after meals -- his meal, my meal, the children's meals, everybody's meal!"

The second:
The defendant was accused of sullying the honor of a pure young maiden, according to the lady's testimony, and he was having a difficult time explaining the circumstances. "I am innocent, Your Honor," he declared. "All I did was offer her a scotch and soda, and she reclined!"

And the third and the last:

Young Moishe was getting married. On the day of his wedding, his father took him aside and said, "Look here, Moishe, if you want to have a successful marriage you've got to make three things clear right from the start: you've got to show your wife that you're the master of the house, that you're a man, and that you're independent."
Moishe thanked his father and went off to his wedding and honeymoon.

Kavita, if you are asleep, be awake!

After the couple had returned and father and son were alone together in a quiet moment, the father asked how his advice had worked.
"Ah, beautiful!" beamed Moishe. "I put it into practice on the first night of our honeymoon. When we were alone in the hotel room, I first ripped off her clothes to show her who's the master; then I ripped off my clothes to show her that I'm a man; and then I jerked off in front of her to show her that I'm independent!"

Enough for today.

The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 1

1

Talks given from 11/04/80 am to 20/04/80 am
English Discourse series

10 Chapters
Year published:
The original tape and book title was "The Book of the Books, Vols 1 - 6". Later reissued as twelve volumes under the present title.

The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 11

Chapter #1

Chapter title: Hold your tongue
11 April 1980 am in Buddha Hall

HOLD YOUR TONGUE.
DO NOT EXALT YOURSELF
BUT LIGHTEN THE WAY
FOR YOUR WORDS ARE SWEET.

FOLLOW THE TRUTH OF THE WAY.
REFLECT UPON IT.
MAKE IT YOUR OWN.
LIVE IT.
IT WILL ALWAYS SUSTAIN YOU.

DO NOT TURN AWAY WHAT IS GIVEN YOU,
NOR REACH OUT FOR WHAT IS GIVEN TO OTHERS,
LEST YOU DISTURB YOUR QUIETNESS.

GIVE THANKS
FOR WHAT HAS BEEN GIVEN YOU,
HOWEVER LITTLE.

BE PURE, NEVER FALTER.

Life is full of complications. Even when we are born there is a string attached. The greatest complication, the source of all complications is unawareness, unconsciousness. We are focused on the objective world and we are totally unaware who we are.

The whole message of Gautama the Buddha is to turn in. The message is simple, but the implementation is arduous. It is arduous because for many many lives we have lived outwardly, we have lived the life of an extrovert. We have completely forgotten how to relate with our own beings, how to be with ourselves. We have forgotten the path, the language, the method. Not only that, we have become completely oblivious that there is an interiority to us. We think as if we have only an outside. Now that is stupid. The outside can exist only with an inside; without the inside the outside is impossible. If we can see out, we can also see in. In fact, to see in is easier because it is there that we are rooted.

But never seeing in, we go on rushing in all directions, doing all kinds of things, not knowing why, just because others are doing them. We are imitating, following. We become carbon copies. That's the most ugly thing in life: to be a carbon copy. Man can never be blissful unless he is original, unless he knows his original face.

I have heard a very beautiful story. It may be true, it may not be true. Its truth is not historical but, far more significant, it is metaphorical.

The story is: Alexander the Great was on his way to India. He met a fakir sitting by the roadside with a round, small, crystal-like object in his hand.
"What's that?" inquired Alexander.
"I will not tell you," said the fakir, "but I will bet you that it is heavier than all your gold, silver and jewels."
Alexander ordered an enormous balance to be brought along with all of his treasures. On one side of the balance he piled all the treasures; the fakir put his small round crystal on the other side and, lo! it was heavier. Down it went and the vast treasures were lifted into the air.
Alexander was amazed.
Then the fakir said, "I will show you one more thing." He took a little dust and spread it over the crystal. It immediately became light, went up into the air, and the treasures came down.
Alexander could not contain his amazement anymore and asked the fakir, "Please, you must tell me. What is this object?"
Said the fakir, "It is nothing special. It is only a human eye."

Man has the capacity to see himself too, but that capacity is full of dust. We have an inner eye too -- the third eye -- but that eye is not functioning, and we have not used it for so long that it has gone out of function completely; it has become a paralyzed part in our being.
Now even physiologists have discovered a certain part in the human brain which seems to be absolutely superfluous. They are puzzled because nature never creates anything superfluous. It must have a purpose, but it seems to have no

purpose. It can be removed and that will not affect you at all.

But all the mystics down the ages have been saying the same thing -- of course, not in scientific terminology; they have their own way of saying it. They call it the third eye. A certain part of your mind is capable of functioning in an introvert way only. Meditation creates the right atmosphere, the right climate for it to function.

Meditation simply means removing the dust that the fakir threw on the eye. And the dust is nothing but the whole mind process of thoughts, desires, imagination, memory. If you become capable of a few intervals, gaps, when all thought processes cease... suddenly you are and there is nothing to see inside. Then the turning happens; then immediately there is a radical change in your vision, your gestalt changes. The outside world disappears and the inside world appears.

It is because of this that the mystics say that the outside world is illusory. Not that it does not exist; it exists, but it is illusory because the mystic knows a certain state of consciousness when it simply evaporates, it is found no more. You enter into a totally different dimension: the dimension of bliss, the dimension of peace, the dimension of Buddha, Christ, Krishna.

These sutras today are very special. This whole series... this is the last series of Buddha's sutras. Up to now he was talking to the disciples who were getting ready. Now this last part of his sutras is meant for the BODHISATTVAS, for those who have become ready, for those who have experienced something of the inner. It is not for the

initiates, it is not for the adepts. Hence this last part is the most important part.
Buddha says there are two kinds of enlightened people in the world; he is very scientific about his approach. His categories are very significant; nobody has done that before or since. He says the first category of the enlightened ones is called ARHATAS. The arhata is a mystic; he has known, he has realized, but he is utterly unconcerned about others. He has found the way. He has reached his home and he does not care about others who are seeking and searching, because his understanding is that if they seek and search authentically they will find the way themselves. And if they are not true seekers, nobody can make them true seekers; hence no help is needed. The arhata does not help anyone. He has traveled alone and he knows everybody has to travel alone.
When Buddha became enlightened himself, his first idea was to become an arhata. For seven days he remained absolutely silent, not saying a single word.

The story is: Gods from heaven came. They were very much worried because only once in a while does a person become awakened, and if he remains absolutely silent the world will miss his message. And his message is a medicine for those who are dying; his message is a nourishment for those who are starving for truth. His message can be a boat to the other shore. His message HAS to be delivered, he has to be persuaded. They came, and they argued.
But Buddha said, "You must agree with me that nobody was able to help me -- of course, I knocked on many doors

-- because it is something which is not transferable. Even if they had it they could not give it to me; I had to find it by my own effort. Hence I think that is the only way: people have to seek and search; it cannot be borrowed."

He was right and the gods had to agree. And he said, "Even if I say it, only one out of ten thousand people will understand. The remaining ones will not understand; on the contrary, they will MISunderstand. So why create so much misunderstanding in the world? The world is already in confusion -- why create more confusion? Out of compassion I am keeping quiet. And the one who will understand will find it himself anyway. The man who can understand what I say is so intelligent that really he needs no help. So what is the point? Why should I bother?"

The gods were silenced. They moved into the woods to ponder over the matter. "How to convince the Buddha? He appears to be right, he is logical, but some way has to be found." It is good that they were able to find some way, otherwise we would have missed THE DHAMMAPADA; these beautiful sutras would have been missed. The world would have been far poorer. The whole credit goes to those anonymous gods who persuaded Buddha!

They pondered over the matter for hours; they found a way. They came back and they said, "We agree with you, but only on one point we cannot agree. And that point is that we understand that only one person will understand out of ten thousand, so you need not bother about that one person; he will find himself sooner or later. It is only a question of time, and time does not matter because existence is eternal. So what does it matter, how does it matter, whether one achieves today and somebody else achieves tomorrow or

the day after tomorrow? All those who have become awakened are contemporaries; it does not make much difference at all."

That's why I say I am a contemporary to Buddha, a contemporary to Jesus, a contemporary to Zarathustra, a contemporary to Lao Tzu. Once you know, you become contemporary to all the knowers. All small time gaps simply disappear, they are so tiny. Twenty-five hundred years make no difference at all.

That's why in the East we have not bothered much about time. Nobody knows when Krishna was born. We could have also created a calendar in the name of Krishna -- before Krishna, after Krishna -- we could have made a history. And Krishna certainly preceded Jesus by at least three thousand years, so his calendar would have been five thousand years old by now. But we have never bothered about it. Nobody knows when the founder of Jainism, Adinatha, was born or when he died. He must have preceded even Krishna by at least five thousand years. If we had a calendar then, his calendar would by now have been at least ten thousand years old. I am saying "at least," because Jainas say that he is far older. According to them he is almost ninety thousand years ancient; it is possible. But we have not created history, we have not written history, for the simple reason that the people who are worth writing about go beyond time; for them time becomes irrelevant. And the people who are not worth writing about, only they make much noise in the world of time. Genghis Khan, Tamerlane, Adolf Hitler, Joseph Stalin, Ayatollah Khomeiniac, these people make much noise in the world of time. A Buddha, a Krishna, a Jesus, a Zarathustra simply

make no trace in time; they disappear without leaving a trace, as if they are not part of history, or they are part of a totally different kind of history which is nontemporal.
The gods argued with Buddha. They said, "We agree about that one person: he will find it whether you tell him or not, he is so intelligent; if he can understand you immediately, then he will find it by himself. And we also agree about the others, that thousands will not understand you at all; they will, on the contrary, misunderstand you. But they are already misunderstanding, what more misunderstanding can there be? So you need not be worried about that point. They are already in confusion, you cannot confuse them any more."
And this is my experience too: howsoever I try I cannot confuse you any more! You have already touched the rock bottom; there is nothing below it, you can't go deeper than that. You are utterly secure.
So the gods said, "You cannot confuse them more. They are so skillful in confusing themselves, they have done it already to the maximum. So about that we don't agree.
"And one thing more: there may be one or two people among ten thousand who are just between these two sorts of people -- the one who can understand you and the millions who cannot understand you and are bound to misunderstand you. Between these two do you think," they said to Buddha, "there is not a possibility of a few people, one or two or three -- yes, they will be very few, they can be counted on the fingers -- who may be just in the middle, neither so confused that they cannot be helped at all nor so clear that they can find their path on their own? Speak for them; they will be helped by you."

And Buddha had to agree; it was not an argument for argument's sake. People like Buddha don't argue for argument's sake; he saw the truth of it. He said, "I have to agree with you. Yes, there are a few people who are exactly in the middle, on the boundary line. If I don't say anything to them they may be lost in the crowd; if some help is given to them, a little hand, they may be pulled out of their mud. I will speak for them."

He was going to be an arhata. Arhata means one who has arrived but is unconcerned about others, almost cold, does not care a bit. He became a bodhisattva; that is the second category.

Bodhisattva means one who is not only a mystic but also a master, who has not only known himself, but tries to make it known to others. Of course, the work of the bodhisattva is far more difficult; the arhata is in a better position. The bodhisattva has to struggle with all kinds of insanities -- insane people, split people, schizophrenic people, neurotics, psychotics. Humanity is full of these people. The bodhisattva has to go into the crowd, into the mud where you are, because that is the only way to help you out. Unless he comes amongst you, unless he lives with you, unless he relates with you, communicates with you, in a thousand and one ways seduces you, creates the longing for truth in you, he cannot help you. And these are not easy things.

People are not concerned about truth at all. They are concerned about money, they are concerned about power, about prestige. They are not interested in being liberated, they don't want to be sane. They protect their insanity in

every possible way because they have invested so much in their insanity. It is THEIR insanity and they are very proud of it.
Are you not proud of being a Christian, of being a Hindu, of being a Mohammedan? Are you not proud of being a German or British or an Indian? You are proud of all these insanities. These divisions have been destructive. These divisions have proved curses to humanity. They have been calamities, but you are very proud. Everybody seems to be proud.

I have heard:
An Englishman was talking to an Italian. And the Englishman asked the Italian, "If you had been given a choice before you were born, what nationality would you have chosen?"
He said, "Of course I would have been British!"
And the Englishman asked, "How would you have felt?"
He said, "I would have felt very proud!"
These were the days of the second world war and the Italians and the Germans were being defeated. They were losing their prestige and their power, they were condemned all over the world.
The Italian asked the Englishman, "If you had not been born British, how would you have felt?"
And the Englishman said, "I would have felt ashamed."

That's why the British seem to be the most neurotic of all -- very much obsessed with being British, as if it is something very great.

The same is the case with the Indians; they also suffer from the same chronic disease. They feel very proud of being Indian. They don't think that anybody else in the world is really human; all are a little below. But that's how everybody thinks deep down.
When the first Westerners reached China, they wrote in their diaries that they could not believe the Chinese were human. Encountering such a different race for the first time it must have been difficult for them to accept them as human. And what about the Chinese? Their records say that looking at the Western people they were very much puzzled -- they had never thought that monkeys could talk like human beings!
Everybody tries to protect his insanity; hence it is difficult work.

"Psychiatry is a lot of junk," said one man to another.
"Oh?" said his companion. "Why do you say that?"
"Well, today my psychiatrist told me that I am in love with my umbrella. Have you ever heard of anything so silly?"
"It does sound rather daft."
"I mean, me and my umbrella certainly have a sincere affection for each other. But love? That is just ridiculous!"

Affection is okay: "... A certain affection between me and my umbrella, that's okay, but love? That's ridiculous!"
Just watch yourself, the functioning of your mind, how you go on protecting, how you go on defending yourself. And what are you? Nothing but a bundle of insanities!
These sutras are for the bodhisattvas, for those who are going to work with the crowds, with the insane people.

These are suggestions for them. Try to understand each single sutra as deeply as possible.

HOLD YOUR TONGUE.

Buddha says: Speak, but speak only when it is absolutely necessary. Speak, but speak only to those who are ready to listen. Don't go on speaking to each and everybody; that is a sheer wastage. Speak only to the disciples because only a disciple is ready to risk. It is really a risk to transform yourself. It is a risk to encounter yourself. It is a risk to find yourself, to know yourself. It is a risk because by knowing yourself all your old projects will fall down to the dust, and your whole life that you have spent working for them will be gone down the drain. You will have to start from ABC, afresh.

Unless you are very courageous you cannot make an effort to know yourself. Yes, you would like to know ABOUT yourself; that is cheap. Knowing about is cheap because it is only information, it is not transformation. But knowing oneself is transformation; it hurts, it cuts you. It has to cut many chunks out of your being which are unnecessary, which are only a drag on you, which are only an unnecessary weight and a barrier to your growth. And it hurts because it goes against your idea of yourself, your image of yourself.

Hence Buddha says: Speak, but be alert -- speak only to those who are ready to listen. Speak only to those who are surrendered to listening. Otherwise: HOLD YOUR TONGUE.

Buddha is asked thousand of questions by all kinds of people; he rarely answers. He answers only when a disciple asks.

This happens here too every day. Many people ask questions who have come just for one day -- visitors, tourists, and immediately they ask great questions. I never answer their questions; they feel offended. They write angry letters: "Why don't you answer my questions?" I cannot answer your questions unless you are ready to listen, unless you are a disciple.

A disciple means one who is ready to learn. If your question comes out of your knowledge I am not going to answer it; if it comes out of your innocence, certainly I am here to answer it. If you are asking only to be confirmed that whatsoever you think is right, I am not going to answer because I am not here to confirm all kinds of stupid ideologies.

Somebody believes in UFO's and goes on asking, "What do you think about UFO's?" Why should I think? I don't think at all!

Just a few days ago somebody was here who was asking about the theory of the hollow earth. I laughed at his question, I joked about his question. But people are so encapsulated in their knowledge. Back in America he wrote a letter thanking me, saying, "Whatsoever you say, I know you believe in the theory of the hollow earth." How does he know that I believe in the theory of the hollow earth? He gives the reason that it is impossible for an enlightened person NOT to believe. Now if I am to be an enlightened person I have to believe in the theory of the hollow earth. Buddha never heard about it and he was enlightened; Jesus

never knew about it and he was enlightened. But this man writes a letter saying, "You may joke, you may laugh at it, because you don't want to say anything about it. There may be some reasons why you don't want to talk about it, but I am absolutely certain that you know that it is so."

Even if you deny it, even if you laugh and joke, the people who are convinced of a certain idea, whatsoever it is, howsoever insane, absurd, will find ways and means to get support for it. If you don't answer they will think you are not answering because other people, the common people, won't understand it; it is such a subtle matter that only very few people can understand it.

Now one woman has inquired, "Beloved Master, what do you say? I feel I have become enlightened." I never asked anybody. Why should you ask me? If you are enlightened, very good! Get lost! What are you doing here? Now become a bodhisattva and help others to become enlightened. Go to California because there you will find so many enlightened people, and all confirming each other!

Buddha says: The first thing to remember when you move into the masses is to hold your tongue.

Once he was convinced of the fact that people are in need of great help he insisted his whole life that, unless you find it absolutely contrary to your innermost nature, become a bodhisattva. But there are a few people for whom it may be against their inner nature; then they have to remain arhatas. Don't force them. Remember: people need help. If you can be of any help, do whatsoever you can, but if you cannot, if it feels simply something totally against your intrinsic nature, your inner voice, then forget all about it.

An arhata also helps in his own way; without helping he helps -- by his presence. He remains in his silence, he lives his ordinary life without telling anybody anything, without manifesting his experience, without expressing his joy. He lives joyously, but he makes no deliberate effort to communicate. Still, a few sensitive souls will be attracted to him. They will start following him silently, they will sit by his side. He will not say anything; they will listen to his silence. If he has arrived then there is an aura around him; they will be nourished by this aura. If he has found his home there will be such peace radiating that you will be bathed in it, you will be blessed to be with him. He will be able to help you only indirectly.

A hot and flustered city gent in his big car was hopelessly lost in a maze of country lanes. Spotting a local sitting on a gate, chewing a piece of straw, he drew up opposite and shouted, "I say, my good man, can you tell me where this road goes to?"
"No," was the reply.
"Can you tell me where that road goes to, that turns off to the left?"
"No."
Getting quite a bit irritated the city gent yelled, "Well, where does that road that goes off to the right go to?"
"Don't know," was the reply.
"You must be some sort of idiot!" yelled the frustrated gent.
"Maybe," said the cool man, "but at least I know where I am."

This is the way of the arhata: he knows where he is. He will not say anything about any road, anything about any way, but he knows where he is and he is utterly contented with that. You can sit by his side, you can be nourished by his presence, but he is not going to make any direct effort. Indirectly... if you can drink out of his presence you are welcome, but he will not call you forth, he will not seek and search for you.

Buddha says: Mostly it happens that fifty percent of the enlightened ones are arhatas and fifty percent are bodhisattvas. That's how nature keeps its balance on every plane. So don't be worried if you feel one day that you have arrived, but there is no desire to help anybody; then don't force it. Forcing it will be ugly, will be violent, will be destructive. If it is not there it is not there. Then God is happy with you as you are.

But if you feel that there is a desire arising in you to help, to be compassionate, to hold somebody's hand, to make a boat and take people to the further shore, then don't be worried about the troubles. The troubles ARE there, but the world needs some people who can show the way, and only those who know can show the way. Even for them it is difficult. And the world is in immense need because it is being led by stupid people. It is being guided by politicians and priests, all kinds of people who don't know what they are doing. That's why it is always in such chaos.

Mulla Nasruddin's son came home late from school. The Mulla grabbed him and gave him a beating, saying, "Let this be a lesson to you not to come home late!"

The next day the boy came home with his clothes dirty from playing. The Mulla gave him a good smacking, saying, "Let this be a lesson to you not to dirty your clothes!"
The following day the boy came home with bad grades. The Mulla beat him again, saying, "Let this be a lesson to you not to get bad grades!"
The fourth day, as soon as the son came home, the Mulla just grabbed him and beat him.
"What is the matter, father?" asked the boy, crying. "Today I came on time, with clean clothes, and with good grades!"
"Let this be a lesson to you," said Mulla Nasruddin. "There is no justice in the world!"

Now these are the people who have created the world and who are guiding it and who are teaching and who are bringing up new children -- to create more chaos in the world.
Yes, bodhisattvas are needed, but their path is far more arduous than the path of the arhatas. The mystic enjoys his bliss. He is like a beautiful roseflower, fragrant, dancing in the wind, in the sun, in the rain, but unconcerned about anything else. The bodhisattva takes the burden of others on his shoulders. He tries to help people who are mostly incapable of taking any help, who are not only incapable of taking any help but who are also very stubborn in their refusal of it, who feel offended if you try to help them.
That's why Buddha says: HOLD YOUR TONGUE.
Be very conscious of what you are saying, to whom you are saying it, for a few reasons. The first: the truth that you have found cannot be said; language is inadequate. You can

only indicate, you can only make a few gestures -- fingers pointing to the moon. You cannot argue for it. You can persuade, but you cannot convince anybody. It is not their experience, so don't be angry if they don't listen to you. If they go against you, don't feel that they are ungrateful. They are simply behaving the way they can behave. You have to be very very patient with them. You have to accept all kinds of abuse that they will throw on you. You have to accept their stones as flowers. Even if they kill you, you have to die loving them.

That's how Jesus died: with a prayer on his lips to God, "Forgive them, for they know not what they are doing."

Secondly: to say the truth is to falsify it -- so try to say it indirectly; never make direct statements about it. Don't say "God is" or "God is not." These direct statements have created much confusion in the world; rather than helping people they have created conflict, wars, murders. Don't make any direct statement about God or truth or nirvana. You have to be very very subtle. You have to live in such a way that people become aware that you have attained something which is missing in their lives, that there is something more in life which is not available to them. That's all that you can do.

Speak not in prose but in poetry. Sing a song -- no syllogism is needed. Let your laughter and your joy trigger some process in them so that they can also start searching and seeking. Let YOU be the proof rather than making great arguments. A bodhisattva is not a theologian, he does not argue for anything. He IS the proof; he gives no other proof.

Truth is something which is beyond words and beyond even meaning. It is closer to music. So let there be a music around you: HOLD YOUR TONGUE... otherwise your words may destroy the music. Silence is more musical, more eloquent. Words give to truth a certain meaning, naturally, because words have meanings. Meaning gives a frame to the truth which is infinite.

It is like when you are looking from the window towards the starry sky and your window gives a frame to the sky. The sky has no frame; it begins nowhere, ends nowhere, but now your window is making a frame on the sky. That frame belongs to the window, but the person who has always lived inside the window and has never gone out of it will think that the sky is square like the window, that it has the same shape and form.

People live in words, they have never known anything wordless, so give them an experience of wordlessness. Help them to meditate. Rather than giving them a doctrine give them an experience.

Third: remember always, whatsoever you say is bound to be misunderstood by millions. So don't feel offended, don't feel angry, don't feel judged. When they are misunderstanding you they are simply saying something about themselves, not about you. Unless you can remain cool with all kinds of misunderstandings being heaped upon you, you cannot be of any help to them; then you yourself will need help.

Two very hippie hippies were walking down a country lane.

One hippie turned to the other and asked, "Did you shit in your pants?"
"No," replied the other.
A little further down the lane the first hippie again asked the other, "Are you sure you haven't shit in your pants?"
"Quite sure," said the other.
Further on down the lane the first hippie said, "Come on, take down your pants and let me see."
When the other hippie had obliged, the first hippie exclaimed, "There, I told you so!"
"Oh," said the other, "I thought you meant today!"

People understand according to themselves.

Mulla Nasruddin was going to Italy, so I told him, "Nasruddin, learn a little bit of Italian."
He said, "I have done it. I have been taking lessons from Radha."
When he came back from Italy he was very angry. I said, "What is the matter?"
He said, "One day I went-a to a big town to a big-a hotel. In-a the morning, I go down to breakfast. I tell-a the waitress, 'I wanna two piss toast.'
"She bring-a me only one piss. I tell-a her, 'I wanna two piss.'
"She say, 'Go to the toilet.'
"I say, 'No, you no understand -- I wanna two piss on-a my plate.'
"She say, 'You better no piss on-a the plate, you sonavabitch!'

"Later I go out to eat at a big-a restaurant. The waitress bring-a me a spoon and knife, but no fock. I tell-a her, 'I wanna fock.'
"She say, 'Everyone wanna fock.'
"I tell-a her, 'You no understand -- I wanna fock on-a the table.'
"She say, 'You better no fock on-a the table, you sonavabitch!'
"So I go to my room in-a hotel and there is no shits on-a my bed. I call-a the manager and tell-a him, 'I wanna shit.'
"He tell me, 'Go to the toilet.'
"I say, 'You no understand -- I wanna shit on-a the bed.'
"He say, 'You better no shit on-a the bed, you sonavabitch!'
"I go to check out and the man at the desk say, 'Peace to you.'
"I say, 'Piss on-a you too, you sonavabitch. I gonna go back home!'"

When you are learning Italian, avoid Radha! I have also been learning from her, but since Mulla Nasruddin told me I have stopped -- it is dangerous!
People have their own language, their own minds, their own prejudices, their own concepts, their own systems of philosophy, religion. When you talk to them you are talking to a mind which is full of garbage; you are not talking to somebody who is silent. And unless one is silent one is bound to misunderstand. Hence Buddha says: HOLD YOUR TONGUE.
And the fourth reason is: truth is something existential, it is not philosophical. Philosophy can be talked about; in fact, you can't do anything with philosophy except talk about it.

About and about it goes, round and round it goes. The word 'about' means round and round. But truth is existential. You have to help people to taste it. So talk only if you see that through talk you can persuade a person to meditate, to be silent.
It is a very paradoxical effort, hence the difficulty. You have to talk to people to help them become silent. You have to talk about silence because people can't understand silence directly. It is very absurd -- talking about silence, teaching people to be silent -- but that has to be done, particularly in the beginning.

Second: DO NOT EXALT YOURSELF....

It is very natural when you become enlightened. It is not egoistic, it happens very naturally. It has nothing to do with the ego because if the ego is still there you cannot become enlightened.
Buddha says: HOLD YOUR TONGUE. DO NOT EXALT YOURSELF... because when you become enlightened the ego HAS disappeared -- you can become enlightened only when you have fulfilled that condition -- but now the experience is so vast, so overflowing, so ecstatic that it starts expressing itself. You have to learn....

It is said of al-Hillaj Mansoor -- who was crucified like Jesus, in a far more inhuman and cruel way than Jesus himself -- it is said about him that the day he became enlightened, he shouted, "ANA'L HAQ -- I am the truth! I am God!"

His master, Junnaid, was present. He came close to him, whispered in his ear, "Mansoor, keep it inside you. Please keep it inside you! Contain it! I know it is very difficult to contain it -- it is so vast, almost uncontainable. It expresses itself. I know you are not uttering it, it is being uttered by some unknown force, by God himself, but still I say to you, hold your tongue!"

And Mansoor promised, "I will hold my tongue." He understood the point, but again and again he would forget. Again and again he would come into that same state of inner light, joy, bliss, and again the shout -- the lion's roar, as Buddha used to call it -- would come out of him in spite of himself.

He would come and apologize to Junnaid, his master, but the master would say, "Mansoor, something has to be done; otherwise you are going to get into trouble unnecessarily. You could be of great help to humanity, but this way you will be unnecessarily in trouble. And not only you, you will stop my work too. It happened to me too, but I had to contain it and you have to contain it too."

But Mansoor was not capable of it. Junnaid sent him to Kaaba for a three-year pilgrimage. "Maybe on this three-year-long journey, being with many mystics, he may cool down. The experience is so new; by and by he will become accustomed to it." But he could not become accustomed to it; when he came back he was again in the same state. He was caught by the king, by the people... because it was a Mohammedan country and it was one of the greatest crimes, the greatest sins, to call oneself God, to declare oneself God. He was killed.

For centuries it has been discussed among Sufis who was greater, Junnaid or Mansoor. Ordinarily one would say Mansoor: he was really a great martyr: he suffered and suffered laughingly. He died with laughter. Even Jesus had gone a little forsaken. When the last nail was put in his hands he looked at the sky and said, "God, have you forsaken me? Have you forgotten me? Why is all this happening to me?" There must have been a little doubt, just a shadow of doubt. He understood immediately, he apologized. He said, "No, forgive me. Let thy will be done." But for a moment he had wavered. Mansoor never wavered.

And he was killed so mercilessly that Jesus' crucifixion seems to be very humane compared to Mansoor's. First his legs were cut off, then his hands were cut off, then his eyes were destroyed, then his tongue was cut off, then his head was cut off. But even though all this suffering was there he was all laughter.

Before his tongue was cut off, somebody asked, "Why are you laughing?"

He said, "I am laughing because you cannot destroy my experience; whatsoever you do is irrelevant. And I am laughing because you are killing one person and I am somebody else. You are such fools, that's why I am laughing! And I am also laughing at God. I am laughing at him, 'You cannot deceive me. In whatsoever form you come I will recognize you. I recognize you in the butcher who has cut off my feet, who has cut off my hands. It is you who are in him, and nobody else.'"

In fact, Junnaid seems to be a little cowardly; many people think that he was a little cowardly. Why should he tell

Mansoor to keep it inside? But that is not true -- he was not a coward. In fact, he sacrificed far more than Mansoor. Mansoor's sacrifice is apparent; Junnaid's sacrifice is not apparent, it is very subtle.
To contain the truth when it happens is a superhuman feat, it is a miracle. And he tries to contain it so that he can help people. He is a bodhisattva and Mansoor is an arhata. He cares nothing for the work, he cares nothing for anybody else. He has attained, now there is no problem. Death is not a problem at all, he knows he is immortal.
Junnaid is working silently, in the dark, to help people who are blind. And you don't know HIS suffering. His suffering is that he has to contain something which is uncontainable.

Buddha says: DO NOT EXALT YOURSELF.... Avoid any exaltation, avoid any declaration -- unless you find it is going to help, unless you find it is going to prepare the way; then it is okay.
Buddha himself declared, "I am the most perfect enlightened one." He knew that this was going to help. But if Jesus had asked him he would have said, "No, contain it," because Jesus was in a wrong country with wrong people. To declare there that, "I am God" was just asking for your death, nothing else.
Jesus could only work for three years. Hence Christianity is so poor, because the master lived only three years. Up to his thirtieth year he was working for his own enlightenment. When he was ready he came out of the monasteries, started working, and then lived only three years. By the age of thirty-three he was crucified. Now,

three years' time is not enough at all. Buddha worked for forty-two years; even that is not enough.
If Jesus had asked Buddha, Buddha would have told him, "Keep quiet, work silently. Just be an ordinary rabbi. There is no need to declare that you are the Son of God. You know it, that's enough; and God knows it, that's enough." But in India, Buddha himself declared it. It is a totally different milieu, it is a totally different climate. For centuries buddhas have happened in this country, they have prepared the way; hence it is very simple to declare, no problem.
Still Buddha says: Be very cautious, because your function is to LIGHTEN THE WAY. Don't create more trouble for people who follow you. They are already in trouble, they are living in hell. You have to make their burden light.

FOR YOUR WORDS ARE SWEET.

If your words come out of silence, compassion, understanding, out of absolute emptiness -- if your words don't come from somebody who is extraordinary but from somebody who is just ordinary -- then they will be sweet and they will help people far more deeply than anything else.

FOLLOW THE TRUTH OF THE WAY.

What is the truth of the way? Buddha is always for experience and never for believing. He says: Whatsoever you have experienced, now follow it. Don't believe it because it has been told by other buddhas; follow it only

when you have experienced and follow it only to the extent that you have experienced. If you follow it to that extent, your light will fall a little further ahead and you will be able to follow in that light a little more and a little more. And just by a small lamp one can travel thousands of miles; one can pass the dark night of the soul very easily, howsoever long it is.

And remember never to find a shortcut. Belief is a shortcut; experience is not a shortcut.

Just a few days ago my samurai-in-chief, Shiva, had a fall from a wall. Now, a samurai is not supposed to be a Humpty-Dumpty! So I inquired, "What happened?" I came to know that he was trying to find a shortcut from one house to another house by crossing the wall. And the shortcut turned out to be a long cut -- he had twelve stitches!

Avoid shortcuts; shortcuts don't help. There are no shortcuts in life. Life has to be lived in all its totality. A shortcut means you are avoiding a few things. You are jumping to the conclusion, avoiding the process, avoiding a few steps. You may reach the conclusion, but it will not be your conclusion. And if it is not your conclusion it is of no value, it is borrowed. You are like a parrot. Even a parrot can be very knowledgeable, but that does not make him a buddha.

Rastus, the hot, black Harlem stud, decided that he needed an exotic parrot for his classy apartment.

After searching for some time, he finally found a pet shop that sold talking parrots. The shopkeeper showed him one for twenty-five dollars.

"Polly wanna cracker?" inquired Rastus, to which the parrot did not respond. "This parrot doesn't talk," said Rastus, "I wants me a talking parrot. Do you have any others?"

The owner said there was one for seventy-five dollars. He brought out a cage from behind the counter and uncovered a most attractive bird.

"Polly wanna cracker?" asked Rastus again, and again there was no response. "This parrot don't talk!" shouted Rastus with annoyance. "Don't you have any birds that talk?"

The shopkeeper told him that he did keep another one in the back room, but that it was quite expensive -- two hundred and fifty dollars.

He brought out the most beautiful bird Rastus had ever seen, and he excitedly asked, "Polly wanna cracker?" There was no response. Rastus was outraged. "Do you or don't you have any talking birds?" he asked.

The shopkeeper hesitated and then replied that he did have one bird that was quite exceptional, and although he had not planned to sell it, for two thousand dollars he would consider it. He led Rastus to a room at the very back of the shop. There, surrounded by one of the most complete libraries Rastus had ever seen, was the parrot. He was sitting in an overstuffed chair under a reading lamp, book in his lap, wearing glasses, a smoking jacket and slippers. He was smoking a pipe, deeply involved in his reading.

"Polly wanna cracker?" inquired Rastus breathlessly from the doorway.

Slowly slowly, the parrot looked up from his reading and wryly responded, "Nigger want a watermelon?"

Even then a parrot is a parrot!
Unless you have experienced, whatsoever beliefs you have are absolutely worthless. Hence Buddha says: FOLLOW THE TRUTH OF THE WAY. He means that which you have experienced by moving on the way of meditation, REFLECT UPON IT. Before you start helping others, reflect upon the experience that has happened to you through meditation -- because it is one thing to experience, it is totally another to express. Meditation is not so difficult as expressing the experience of meditation and persuading people to meditate. Mystics have been many, masters are very few.
A master has a golden touch. The moment he touches you, something in you starts growing. He is like a gardener who has green fingers.

REFLECT UPON IT.
MAKE IT YOUR OWN.

Absorb it totally. Meditation in the beginning is just an experience and you are the experiencer. Slowly slowly, the distance between the experiencer and the experience disappears; it takes time. Unless the experience and the experiencer become one you cannot help others. Unless meditation becomes your very heartbeat you will not be able to persuade anybody. It is almost a seduction! MAKE IT YOUR OWN.

LIVE IT.

Before you start helping others, live it in all possible ways. Walk meditatively, eat meditatively, sit meditatively, even sleep meditatively. Let meditation be spread all over your life. It should become a twenty-four-hour phenomenon, like breathing -- so much so that you need not remember to meditate. It becomes so much your own that it is always there like an undercurrent. Only then can you help.
LIVE IT.

IT WILL ALWAYS SUSTAIN YOU.

DO NOT TURN AWAY WHAT IS GIVEN YOU....

Remember, meditation will give you many joys, many blessings, many gifts will descend on you.
DO NOT TURN AWAY WHAT IS GIVEN YOU. Don't be a miser in receiving. People are miserly in giving, they are miserly in receiving too. When great gifts descend on you, you shrink away, you back away; you become afraid because those great gifts are so great that you feel you may be drowned. When bliss comes to you it is like a flood. Hence Buddha says: DO NOT TURN AWAY WHAT IS GIVEN YOU... because if you turn it away you will miss the opportunity, and it may not knock on your door again for a long time. One never knows when the moment will come again. So whenever something happens to you in meditation, open your heart. Even if you are afraid of the unknown, still go into the unknown. And go dancing, go joyously, because in meditation nothing wrong can ever happen to you. In meditation, only blessings are possible.

NOR REACH OUT FOR WHAT IS GIVEN TO OTHERS....

But that's how our minds function. Even when the minds are gone, even when the snake is no more, it leaves its trace on the sand. People become more interested in what is happening to others. Rather than receiving that which is happening to them they start becoming interested in what is happening to others; they start striving for those things. Remember, that which is happening to you is yours and that which is not happening to you, you are not yet ripe for; and it cannot happen before its time, so don't hanker for it. Wait. Keep yourself as patient as possible. Receive whatsoever comes and don't hanker for that which does not come on your way; it will come.

... LEST YOU DISTURB YOUR QUIETNESS.

You can disturb your quietness in two ways. One: by refusing that which comes to you, out of fear. And two: by asking for that which has not come to you, out of ambition.

GIVE THANKS....

For all that comes to you, be grateful.

... FOR WHAT HAS BEEN GIVEN YOU,
HOWEVER LITTLE.
BE PURE, NEVER FALTER.

Whenever Buddha uses the word 'pure' he always means innocent. Don't become knowledgeable. Even if you have come to know yourself, don't become knowledgeable. Even if you have encountered God, don't become knowledgeable. Whatsoever you have known, forget all about it. Become again innocent. Remain always in the state of not-knowing, then much more will go on happening to you.

What ordinarily happens when you move into meditation is that something happens, but you don't feel grateful; on the contrary, you feel this is your due -- in fact it should have happened long ago. You are such a worthy person, so virtuous, so holy, and you have done so much; why should you be grateful?

That is a wrong approach; that means you are stopping the process. In gratefulness much more will come to you. So even if a little glimpse comes to you, feel grateful. Just a ray of light and feel grateful, as if the whole sun has come to you. And the whole sun will be coming, following the ray. But if you are not grateful you become closed; even the ray will disappear and you will again be in your darkness, back in your darkness.

And remember to remain always in the state of not-knowing. Don't start becoming knowledgeable, don't start philosophizing, don't start creating systems of thought. This happens; that's why Buddha is making his bodhisattvas alert.

I would like you to remember these sutras because many of you -- at least fifty percent of you -- are going to become bodhisattvas sooner or later. So remember these sutras -- they ARE for you. I am not interested in THE DHAMMAPADA, I am interested in YOU! I am speaking

for YOU! THE DHAMMAPADA is just an excuse. I would like to say the same things to you, but Buddha has said them so beautifully, so poetically that I don't see any need to say them on my own; I can just comment on him -- because the truth is eternal and it remains the same forever. Avoid philosophizing when you enter into the world of meditation. It arises, it arises inevitably -- the itch to philosophize -- because so many beautiful things are happening and you would like to create systems of thought around them. All these philosophies in the world have arisen in this way. Something, just a little, had happened, and they started creating a big palace out of that. Just a brick was there and they made a big house, a palace, just an imaginary palace, out of it. Even the brick is lost in that imaginary palace.

Three small mice were sitting in front of their holes in a field. They were in a sad mood, as they silently watched the birds flying from one tree to another. After a while one mouse said, "It must be wonderful to be a bird and to fly in the sky."
All three mice pondered about it for a long time and became more sad.
Eventually the second mouse said, "It would be very nice to be one bird, but it would be even nicer to be two birds. If you were two birds you could fly behind yourself."
The mice thought about this even longer and they became even sadder than before.
After a long time the third mouse said, "The most beautiful feeling must be to be three birds, because then you could watch yourself fly behind yourself!"

This is what philosophy is. People just go on thinking things which are nowhere. But you can enjoy it. Philosophy is enjoyed by many people for the simple reason that everybody can afford it. If these three mice can afford it, what about man? Every man is a philosopher.
Buddha is very much against philosophy. He says philosophy corrupts, it makes you knowledgeable -- without making you a knower it makes you knowledgeable. It brings impurity; it pollutes your inner being.
Be pure and never falter from your purity.
If you want to help people, these sutras have to be remembered constantly. Meditate over them, make them your own, live them. They will always sustain you; they are a great nourishment.
Enough for today.

The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 11

Chapter #2

Chapter title: In a right moment
12 April 1980 am in Buddha Hall

The first question:
Question 1
BELOVED MASTER,
WHY CAN'T I TAKE SANNYAS? I GO ON THINKING AND THINKING AND THINKING.

Richard, sannyas has nothing to do with thinking at all. It is the crazy man's way to enlightenment! By thinking you can never come to a decision as far as sannyas is concerned. Thinking, at the most, can only help you to postpone it, and you can go on postponing it ad infinitum. Thinking, in fact, is a process of postponement.

Sannyas is not something that you can think about. You don't know it, you have not experienced it. Thinking moves within the world of the known; it has no approach towards the unknown, no bridge with the unknown. And sannyas is unknown for you. You may have seen sannyasins; that does not mean that you know what sannyas is. By seeing lovers you cannot know what love is. By seeing meditators you cannot know what meditation is. There are things which are known only existentially.

Sannyas is not a philosophical phenomenon, it is something existential. You have to take the jump... then think later on, then think as much as you want, to your heart's content. But once you have tasted it, then there is no way of going back. Thinking is part of the head and sannyas happens in the heart; it is a love affair. It is utterly mad, as mad as love or even madder, because love happens biologically and sannyas happens spiritually.

Sannyas happens only to a very few, rare human beings. Love is ordinary; it happens to animals, to birds, even to trees. It is nothing special. Religion is absolutely supernatural: it surpasses your instinctive world. But our hearts are not functioning, and the head cannot work in the place of the heart.

That's what you are doing, Richard. You can go on doing it, but you will never arrive in the world of sannyas. The head

is impotent; it cannot act because it is never spontaneous. It is only the heart that acts. The head only reacts; the head only goes on repeating the past. You have not been a sannyasin before, so how can you think about it? What can you think about it? There is no base to begin with.
Only the heart is courageous enough to take a jump into the unknown, into the unfamiliar. But with the unfamiliar open up millions of possibilities. With the unknown you start growing. With the known you go on moving in circles. Be a little heartful, not so thoughtful.
Richard, your name means hard. Transcend hardness, become a little soft, a little more feminine, a little more round. Losing a few corners will be of tremendous help. Logic is hard, love is soft. Logic is square, love is hip! Logic is always a coward; it thinks and thinks before it acts. And, in fact, by the time it comes to act it is already too late; the moment has passed.
Life is not static. It won't stand still for you, it won't wait for you. Who knows? Tomorrow I may stop giving sannyas -- then what? Then you will have missed the train! And remember, the sannyas I am giving to you nobody else can give to you. Gather a little courage. Today is the day!

The two skeletons in the corner closet were grumbling about the heat, the dust, the boredom.
"What are we staying here for anyhow?" one asked.
"Damned if I know," the second skeleton answered. "I would leave in a minute if I had any guts."

The second question:
Question 2

BELOVED MASTER,
I AM MORE AFRAID OF LIVING THAN OF DYING. IS IT POSSIBLE?

Yogananda, it must be possible if it is happening to you! Do you think you are managing the impossible? In fact, it is a very common phenomenon, nothing extraordinary about it -- very normal. Nobody is more afraid of dying than of living. The fear of death is nothing compared to the fear of life.

That's why thousands of people around the earth commit suicide, and many more think many times in their lives of committing suicide. Many try but are prevented; many try but try halfheartedly. But very few people try to live. The number of people who try to live life is much less than those who try to commit suicide or actually commit suicide. The man who lives life becomes a buddha. How many buddhas do you have? They can be counted on your fingers. Only once in a while is there a man like Jesus, Zarathustra, Lao Tzu. Centuries pass; millions of people come and go, then only is there a man who really lives, authentically lives, lives to the utmost, lives fearlessly. Then what are the others doing? Their life is not life; on the contrary, it is a constant avoidance of life. They are simply protecting themselves from life. They are hiding in their black holes in the name of security, safety, comfort. They are simply trying to evade life.

You can watch yourself -- have you lived? You can watch others around you -- are they really living? People only become aware that they were alive when they die. When death knocks on your door, suddenly you become aware:

"My God, I was alive! And now death has come." But when death comes, millions of people feel relieved -- relieved of the burden, of the anxiety, of the constant fear of life.

Death has no fear in it. When you are no more, what fear can there be? Death cannot hurt you -- life can hurt you. Life hurts because one needs to be very intelligent, alert, to live. If you live unconsciously, life is bound to be a painful experience, an agony. Life can be ecstatic too, but only when you are alert, aware. Life is an opportunity, but it demands; it is a challenge, it is an adventure, a moment-to-moment adventure into the uncharted.

You cannot be imitators if you really want to live. You cannot be Christians and Hindus and Mohammedans. If you really want to live you have to be yourself -- simply yourself. You cannot be anybody else; that is a way of avoiding true life.

God never repeats. He creates each and every individual unique, absolutely unique. You are not manufactured like cars on an assembly line. Hence Jesus will never be again, Krishna will never be again, howsoever beautiful they were. God does not believe in carbon copies; he always creates individuals. He is a creator and no creator would like to repeat.

But that's what you have been told to do, and you are doing it. Somebody is trying to be like Krishna or like Confucius or like Mohammed; these have become your ideals. Then you go on missing that which you are -- and that is the only way you can be. You become pseudo. Yes, to be pseudo seems to be a little more comfortable than to be original, because you can adjust to a pseudo society more easily,

more comfortably. When everybody is false like you, you can easily become part of the crowd. When you are true and authentic, living your life on your own, in your own light, with no blueprints given by others to you -- by the parents, by the priests, by the politicians -- when you are moving every day into the unknown with no idea of what is going to happen, with great creativity, sensitivity, awareness, but with no fixed ideology; when you are exploring newer pastures, new peaks of being, then certainly you are no more a part of the crowd.

And the crowd hates individuals for the simple reason that they are so different. It hates them because they are rebels. It hates them because they cannot be enslaved easily; in fact, it is impossible to enslave them. It hates them for their intelligence, it hates them for their joy, it hates them for their creativity. It wants to destroy them.

Yogananda, that's why people are afraid of life: life has many dangers. The path of life is full of hazards. One never knows what is going to happen the next moment; everything is possible. You cannot live with expectations because life has no obligation to fulfill your desires. You can live with an open heart, but you cannot live with expectations. The more expectations you have, the more frustrated you will be.

And then you can go astray. In death, nobody can go astray; in life you can go astray. In life you can commit errors, mistakes. In fact, if you really want to live you will have to commit many errors and many mistakes.

Remember it: never be afraid of committing errors and mistakes; otherwise you will be paralyzed because of the fear. Go on committing mistakes and errors. Remember

only one thing: don't commit the same mistake again. Once is enough. Invent new mistakes, discover new errors! Don't go on falling in the same ditch -- find new ditches! By committing mistakes, by going astray, you grow. That's the only way to grow.
Life is dangerous; death is very cozy, very comfortable. Lying down in your grave, what danger is there? There is no problem, no anxiety. You can't go bankrupt, your wife cannot leave you, you cannot die anymore. You are so safe in death! Life is not safe -- anything is possible. Life is full of accidents. Some madman may cut off your head...!

I have heard:
A great psychoanalyst was reading, sitting in his garden underneath a tree, and his only daughter, just eight, nine years old was playing with one of her friends on the lawn. Suddenly she hit her friend on the head with a stick so hard that blood started coming out of her head. The psychoanalyst rushed over, but before he could say anything his daughter turned towards him and asked, "Daddy, now tell me why I did this!"

She must have been hearing again and again that her father goes on finding reasons for every act, unconscious reasons and this and that, so now she asks, "Now tell me WHY I have done this."
Life can do anything and you cannot even ask why: you have to accept it. There is nobody to answer. Hence the fear, Yogananda. You say, "I am more afraid of living than of dying."

Everybody is more afraid of living; that's why people are dead. People die nearabout the age of thirty. Of course, they are not put into their graves at that time; they go to their graves nearabout seventy, eighty. The fifty years between their death and their entry into the grave are just a drag. It is a miracle to see dead people walking, talking, doing all kinds of things. It certainly is a miracle!
Love life. That's why to me life is the only religion, the only god. Live life in its totality. And the beauty is that if you live life in its totality there is no death. The body is bound to die one day, but you are not the body. If you have lived your life totally, if you have loved your life totally, you will have come across the eternal in you. That is the meeting with God. That is the encounter with truth that transcends time. And to know it is to know bliss; to know it is to know all that is worth knowing.

The third question:
Question 3
BELOVED MASTER,
DO YOU CALL THIS PLACE A PUB? A PUB! I HAVE BEEN HANGING AROUND THIS PUB FOR TWO YEARS AND I STILL CAN'T GET THE RIGHT BEER!

Niranjan, Perce walked in to where the Last Supper was being held, sat down at the table and said to the waiter, "Give me a scotch and soda!"
"I am sorry, sir," said the waiter, "all we are serving is wine."
"Okay, give me a nice steak with a baked potato and salad."
"Sorry, but all we are serving is bread."

"Holy mackerel! Only bread and wine! The guy who is giving this party ought to be crucified!"

Niranjan, please don't crucify me! This is not the Last Supper! And if you cannot find the right beer, the reason is because you are not the right person. You are so full of beer already, how can you find the right beer? How can you manage to know what is right and what is wrong? I don't think that in Niranjan's veins there is blood -- just beer! Go to the Medical Center and be examined. You can't have blood in your veins: you are really full of beer!
If some cannibals ever find you they will dance with joy. They will have found the right beer! And they are not going to kill you or cook you -- they will sip you!

Michael picked up a blonde at a bar and after quite a few drinks they went to a hotel room and made love. In the middle of the night Michael woke up to go to the bathroom and noticed that the woman had taken off a wooden leg and laid it by the bed.
As the girl slept Michael began fiddling with its springs and braces and finally found he had taken the wooden leg apart and could not put it back together again.
He went out into the hall and stopped a man perfumed with booze, saying, "Can you help me? I've got a woman in my room with one leg apart and I can't seem to get it back together."
"Hell!" said the drunk, "I got a woman in my room with BOTH legs apart and I can't even find the goddamn room!"

The fourth question:

Question 4
BELOVED MASTER,
DOES THE SEEKER HAVE TO SUFFER INEVITABLY ON THE WAY?

Deva Louis, it all depends. Growth in itself has no suffering in it; suffering comes from your resistance towards growth. Suffering is created by you because you resist continuously, you don't allow it to happen. You are afraid to go totally with it; you go only halfheartedly. Hence the suffering -- because you become divided, you become split. A part of you cooperates and a part of you is against it, resists it. This conflict inside you creates suffering.
So drop the idea -- many people have that idea -- that you have to suffer if you are to grow. It is sheer nonsense. If you cooperate totally there is no suffering at all. If you are in a let-go, instead of suffering you will rejoice. Every moment of it will be a moment of bliss and benediction.
So don't throw the responsibility on growth. Our mind is very tricky and cunning: it always throws the responsibility on somebody, on something; it never takes the responsibility on itself. YOU are the cause of suffering.
If you can remember three things.... The first is: drop the past if you want to grow, because it is from the past that resistance arises. You are always judging from the past. The past is no more, it is absolutely irrelevant, but it goes on interfering. You go on judging according to it; you go on saying, "This is right and that is wrong," and all those ideas of right and wrong, all those judgments are coming from something which is dead. Your dead past remains so heavy on you that it does not allow you to move.

Drop the past completely and you will be surprised: much of the suffering has disappeared.

The second thing to remember is: don't create expectations for the future. If you are expecting, then again you will create suffering, because things are not going to happen according to YOU; things are going to happen according to the whole. The wave, the small wave in the ocean, cannot be the deciding factor. The ocean decides; the wave has to be in a state of let-go. If the wave wants to go to the east, then there is going to be trouble, then there is going to be pain. If the winds are not going to the east, if the ocean is not willing, then what is the wave going to do? It will suffer. It will call it fate, it will call it circumstances, social conditions, the economic structure, the capitalist society, the bourgeois culture, the Freudian unconscious... and now you will call it growing pains. But you are simply shifting the responsibility.

The real thing is that you are suffering from your expectations. When they are not fulfilled -- and they are never going to be fulfilled -- frustration arises, failure arises, and you feel neglected, as if existence does not care for you.

Drop expectations for the future. Remain open, remain available to whatsoever happens, but don't plan ahead. Don't make any psychological, fixed ideas about the future -- that things should be like this -- and much more suffering will disappear. These two are the root causes of suffering.

And the third is: the Human Potential movement lacks something essential. It tries to help you to grow, but it has not yet been able to create a meditative space in you. So there is constant struggle, effort, will, but no relaxation, no

rest. Hence the third thing to be remembered and all suffering will disappear: create meditative energy, create a meditative space within you. Western methods lack that something which is very essential.

That's why here in my commune the effort is to use all the Western methods side by side with all the Eastern methods. This may be the only place in the whole world today where East and West are REALLY meeting, and not meeting in a diplomatic way as they meet in the UNO. Here they are really merging -- not politically, not diplomatically, because a diplomatic meeting is not a meeting, it is only a facade, it is pseudo. It is a love meeting that is happening here. For the first time East and West are in a love affair. The West has grown a few very important methods: gestalt, encounter, primal, bioenergetics and many more. The East has also grown many methods: zazen, vipassana, Sufi whirling, yoga, tantra. Their approaches are different, so different that both are only halves of one whole; hence both lack something. The Eastern methods can create a meditative space, but they make you so introverted that you start escaping from life; all Eastern methods have proved escapist in the past. You want to go to a monastery, you want to go to the Himalayas, you want to go to a cave somewhere and to live alone. They teach you how to be alone, joyously alone -- but then something is missed. Life is also relationship, life is also togetherness, life is also communion. It is beautiful to be blissful when you are alone, but that is only half the story; you should be blissful also when you are together with someone. And when you are blissful with someone, the bliss reaches a higher peak. When you are alone you are like a solo flute player; when

you are blissful together in relationship, the music is more like an orchestra.

The West has created methods which give you more impetus to be extroverts. They allow you methods, skills to relate, and to enjoy relationship. They are love methods, but something is missing. You enjoy relationship, but whenever you are alone... and essentially you ARE alone. You are born alone and you will die alone, and at the deepest core of your being you are always alone. So on the surface you remain happy, but deep down a subtle current of misery continues. You cannot encounter yourself, you cannot face yourself, you cannot meet yourself.

The West has failed because all that it has developed is extroversion; the East has failed because all that it has developed is introversion. And man is neither extrovert nor introvert.

I would like it to be on record that Carl Gustav Jung's typology is absolutely wrong. Man cannot be divided so easily into categories -- that somebody is an extrovert and somebody is an introvert -- because man is a totality, a wholeness. He has an inside and he has an outside, and both have to be nourished and both have to be fulfilled.

So if you are only following Western methods you will be going through much pain because you will not be able to create a meditative space through them. If you are following only Eastern methods you will be able to create a meditative space, but you will become absolutely useless in the world, and you will miss the enrichment that comes with communion with other human beings.

My effort here is to create the first synthesis between extroversion and introversion and help man to become so

capable of both, together, simultaneously, so easily able to move from extroversion to introversion and from introversion to extroversion, that there is no need to divide man into such categories. Man can become so fluid.

It is as simple as when you come out of your house: you don't think that you are becoming extrovert coming out of your house. When you feel it is cold inside and outside there are no clouds and it is so sunny, you come out, but you don't think at all. You don't decide, "Now I want to be an extrovert." Or when the sun becomes too hot and you start feeling the heat, you don't make a deliberate decision, "I should go in. Now I want to be an introvert." No, when the sun is too hot you simply move in! And when inside it is cold you come out. Coming out of your house or going into the house is not a problem at all, because you are free from the inner and the outer.

My effort here is to help you to be free from the inner and the outer, because you are neither the inner nor the outer, you are something transcendental to both. The inner and the outer are just parts of your personality; it is the house in which you live which has an outside and an inside. But your awareness has no inside and no outside.

So these three things are to be remembered: drop the past, drop future expectations, and third, create a synthesis between extroversion and introversion... and all misery disappears.

Deva Louis, it is not inevitable for a spiritual seeker to suffer. You suffer because you are not aware of your own responsibility. It is not because of growth that you suffer. You suffer because you are unconscious of your resistance, of your past-orientation, of your future expectations, and

you are unaware that you don't have any meditative space within you.

The fifth question:
Question 5
BELOVED MASTER,
IS IT POSSIBLE TO MISS THE PERFECT JEWEL? IS IT POSSIBLE?

Prem Maitri, it depends how conscious you are. If you are conscious it is impossible to miss. If you really know the perfect jewel, if you recognize it, if it is your own vision, your own understanding, it is impossible to miss it. But it may not be so. You may have heard others say, "This is a perfect jewel"; it may be a borrowed understanding. Then it is not only possible to miss it, it is absolutely inevitable that you will miss it -- it is impossible not to miss it.
If you come across a buddha and you pay your respects just because others are paying their respects, because others are saying, "He is a buddha, he is enlightened, he is awakened," you will miss. But if you have even a glimpse of your own into the being of the buddha, just a little taste of his milieu, just a small experience of his perfume, that's enough; it is impossible to miss. Then no force in the world can distract you. But it has to be your own experience. And we are so unconscious that nothing seems to be our own experience.
People say that Jesus is Christ, so you believe it. But the people who crucified him, they could not see anything in him; otherwise, do you think it would have been possible for them to crucify a man like Jesus? They crucified him so

easily. No problem was felt; their conscience was not disturbed. They did it just as they used to kill criminals every year. The day they crucified Jesus they also crucified two thieves. They treated all three persons in the same way; in fact, they treated the thieves in a far more human way because the thieves were more like them.

Thousands of people had gathered to see. Nobody was crying, nobody was weeping, nobody had any pain in the heart. Even Jesus' own disciples had escaped, fearing that they may be caught.

When the people had gone -- when the show was over -- and Jesus was almost dead on the cross, three soldiers were there just playing cards. They were on duty so nobody could steal the dead body of Jesus. So just sitting underneath the cross they were playing cards!

And Maitri, you ask, "Is it possible to miss the perfect jewel?"

Those three soldiers were just people like you. Of course, now you will think, "Those soldiers must have been utterly stupid, great sinners, unconscious, not knowing what they were doing -- we could not have done it," because now you have heard for two thousand years continuous propaganda that Jesus was Christ. But Jews still don't think that he was Christ; they still think that he was a charlatan, that he was a deceiver, that he was a false messiah. Two thousand years' continuous propaganda has not helped at all; they have kept on clinging to their idea.

Do you think you would have recognized Buddha? Now, of course -- because now twenty-five centuries have passed and Buddha has become bigger and bigger, so huge; he looms large on the horizon like a beautiful sunrise -- you

cannot believe that people could have missed him. But they were missing him! Even his own father could not recognize that he was enlightened; even his own wife could not recognize that he was enlightened. There were only a few people who had the courage to recognize him -- because to recognize him means you have to change your life-style, to recognize him means you can't remain the same anymore. To recognize a buddha as a buddha means you are waking up.

The big cafeteria was crowded. A long line of people carrying trays was slowly moving along the counter when someone shouted, "Fire! McGinty's house is on fire!" Came the crash of a tray of dishes as an Italian near the front of the line made a mad dash out of the restaurant, around the corner, and up the side street, bumping into people and knocking several of them down as he worked his way homeward.
Then, just as suddenly, after he had narrowly escaped death several times, the man stopped short, clapped his hand to his head and moaned, "Hey, what am I doing? My name ain't McGinty!"

People are living in such unconsciousness. What to say about recognizing a buddha? -- you don't even know who YOU are!
Maitri, it is possible to miss the perfect jewel if you are not aware. But if you are aware then it is impossible. It all depends on your awareness.

The sixth question:

Question 6
BELOVED MASTER,
DID GOD REALLY MAKE THE WORLD, AND JUST IN SIX DAYS?

Sujata, looking at the world, one thing is certain: it has been made in a hurry. Whoever made it, it is in such a mess that it must have been made in six days. Whether God made it or not I cannot say, because if you look at the world it seems more like a creation of the Devil than of God! Man is so destructive, so violent, so mad, that it is very improbable that God made this kind of mind. Either the Devil made it or it was only the first time that God was making it so he made many mistakes. And he became so afraid of his own creation that he has not tried again. It seems he has escaped! Seeing what he has done he must have become frightened.
The story is that he made trees and mountains and rivers and animals. On the sixth day he made man and since then he has not made anything. It seems man brought him to his senses: "What are you doing?" He simply stopped absolutely.
But, Sujata, why do such questions bother YOU? It is none of your business! One thing is certain: you have not made it, so why should you be worried? You are not responsible, I am not responsible either -- I have not made it. So why should we waste our time with it? There are many crazy people who have nothing else to do -- leave it for them to think about. These are great subjects; one can go on thinking about them for ever and ever; they are unending. That's why philosophy begins but never ends, theology

begins but never ends. It goes in circles. Each answer brings more questions than it answers.
If I say, "Yes, God made it," then immediately many questions will arise: "Why did he make it in the first place? Why did he not ask us whether we wanted to be made or not? This seems to be such a dictatorial act, not democratic at all -- people are being made without even asking them! And why did he make THIS kind of world when he is omnipotent, omnipresent, omniscient? He must have seen what was going to happen, he must have seen the future. He must have seen that there would be Genghis Khan and Tamerlane and Adolf Hitler and Mussolini and Tojo; he must have seen all these people. He must have seen that man would fight thousands of wars. He must have seen that sooner or later man would discover atomic bombs and hydrogen bombs and deathrays and whatnot. Then why did he create this world? Is he a sadist? Is he enjoying all this misery? And millions of people live in such misery -- and what does he go on doing? Can't he come and help?"
In scriptures it is said... in the SRIMAD BHAGAVADGITA Krishna declares: I will come whenever there is too much misery. Is it not enough, the misery that man is living in now? When is he going to come? And what did he do when he really came? He didn't help anybody. In fact, in his days the greatest war in India was fought. If we believe the scriptures, so many people died in that war... the whole of India could not have contained so many people. Even now the whole world contains only three times as many. It must have been some war! Today it would have been one person out of three; in those days, five thousand years ago, the population was not

so large. It could have been the end of the whole of humanity. What kind of help was that?
And God comes in Jesus: he sends his only begotten Son to save humanity. Nobody seems to have been saved. Jesus could not even save himself -- he was crucified! The savior was crucified by those for whom he had come; he had come to save them.
Thousands of questions will arise. Leave these questions to mad people.

Two inmates of a Michigan mental institution were chatting in the recreation room. The first loony said, "Don't talk to me, I am Napoleon!"
"What do you mean, you are Napoleon?" asked the second nut.
"I told you not to speak to me. I am Napoleon."
"How do you know you are Napoleon?"
"God told me I am Napoleon."
A little voice from the corner piped, "I did not!"

Leave such theological problems to nuts!

Some visitors to an insane asylum were being shown around by a guard.
"You see that man over there?" said the guard. "He thinks he is the Lord."
One of the visitors approached the lunatic and asked, "Did you really make the earth in seven days?"
The nut sneered at him, "I'm not in the mood to talk shop!"

Sujata, these are not really religious questions, although religious people have been talking about these questions for centuries -- because religion has been dominated by lunatics for centuries.

The really religious questions are concerned with YOU, with your unconsciousness and how to transform your unconsciousness into consciousness. Real religion is not metaphysical; it is rooted in psychology, it is psychological, because real religion means a way to transcend the mind. Unless you understand the mind you cannot transcend it.

The seventh question:

Question 7

BELOVED MASTER,

"HOLD YOUR MOUTH," YOU SAID.

DIFFICULT! ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE FOR AN ITALIAN. MY APPROACH TO THE BODHISATTVAHOOD IN THESE DAYS IS CONTAINED IN THIS LITTLE STORY THAT HAS BEEN HAUNTING ME FOR MONTHS:

THERE IS THIS LITTLE MAN (ANYONE) THAT I MEET IN A STREET (ANYWHERE) AND HE LOOKS VERY MISERABLE, LIKE ALL THE LITTLE MEN EVERYWHERE... AND SEEING ME AFTER A LONG TIME, HE SAYS, "HEY, YOU LOOK GREAT!"

"HMM," I REPLY, "I WOULD LIKE TO SAY THE SAME THING ABOUT YOU, BUT YOU LOOK SO SAD!"

"WELL, YOU KNOW MY LIFE... I FEEL SO MISERABLE. BUT WHAT ABOUT YOU? HOW COME YOU LOOK SO RADIANT?"

"WELL," I SAY TO HIM WITH A SMILE, "I HAVE FOUND A MASTER."
"AH!" HE LOOKS AT ME SADLY. "AND WHY DIDN'T YOU TELL ME?"
SO PLEASE, YOU AND THE OTHER GUY, BUDDHA, DON'T TELL ME TO HOLD MY MOUTH. I CAN'T BEAR THIS LITTLE MAN KNOCKING EVEN WHEN I AM DANCING, AND ASKING, "WHY DIDN'T YOU TELL ME?"

Sarjano, now you have told him, what happened? The little man has not come to me yet. Just your telling him is not going to make any difference; he will simply think that you are crazy.
The miserable people think that if you are looking blissful you are mad. They can't believe that anybody can be blissful; that is beyond their grasp. Their whole life is such a misery, how can they believe there is any possibility of being blissful? -- unless you are mad. If you tell them that you have found a master they may not say anything to your face, but behind your back they will laugh at you; they will think something has gone wrong. They are not going to believe you. How can one become blissful by finding a master? They can't see any relatedness between their problems and finding a master. If their wives are nagging them to death, how is finding a master going to change it? Now the master will nag you more! If they are suffering from nightmares -- and everybody is suffering from nightmares, day in, day out -- how is finding a master going to help? They can't make any sense out of the statement.

I can understand your difficulty, Sarjano. It is very difficult to keep silent when you know the answer, but part of being a bodhisattva is to learn the art of being silent. Let them ask again and again. Let them feel that your bliss is not just something crazy, that your bliss is something real, authentic. Let them feel it of their own accord. Let them come and knock at your doors again and again.

Only in a right moment, when you see that they can understand, when you feel that their hearts are open, when you see a real thirst, a longing in them, when a search has arisen in them, only then tell them; otherwise you will simply be wasting your breath. And if you go on telling everybody and nobody listens, sooner or later you will feel very tired of the whole thing.

Buddha is right -- that guy is almost always right. Of course, he was not talking to Italians! That was not his problem, that is MY problem! But I know how to manage it.

Truth insists that it should be spoken, although it cannot be spoken -- that is the paradox -- but it insists that it should be spoken.

When you know and you see that others can be helped, it is impossible to resist the temptation to tell them -- but that is part of being a bodhisattva.

Somebody else has asked: "Beloved Master, you say fifty percent of enlightened people become arhatas and fifty percent become bodhisattvas. Still you say again and again that there are many mystics but very few masters -- there seems to be a contradiction in it...?"

There is no contradiction in it. Yes, apparently there is, but only apparently. Not all bodhisattvas are masters. The

bodhisattva is one who tries to help others; the master is one who SUCCEEDS in helping others. Just trying does not mean that you will succeed. Many try, very few succeed. Whosoever attains truth is bound to have the temptation to tell it. If he is not by nature an arhata then he will try to say it to each and everybody, and he will be thought just crazy. Communication is a difficult art, and communicating the ultimate truth is the most difficult phenomenon in the world. A master is one who waits for the right time.

Many people have asked me why I kept silent although I became enlightened in 1953. For almost twenty years I never said anything about it to anybody, unless somebody suspected it himself, unless somebody said to me on his own, "We feel that something has happened to you. We don't know what it is, but one thing is certain: that something has happened and you are no more the same as we are -- and you are hiding it."

In those twenty years not more than ten people asked me, and even then I avoided them as much as I could unless I felt that their desire was genuine. And I told them only when they had promised to keep it a secret. And they all fulfilled it. Now they are all sannyasins, but they all fulfilled it, they kept it a secret. I said, "You wait. Wait for the right moment. Only then will I declare it."

I have learned much from the past buddhas. If Jesus had kept a little quieter about being the Son of God it would have been far more beneficial to humanity. I had made it a point that until I stopped traveling in the country I was not going to declare it; otherwise I would have been killed -- you would not be here.

Once I had finished with traveling, mixing with the masses, moving from one town to another.... For twenty years continuously I was moving, and there was not a single bodyguard. Shiva and his samurai had not yet arrived! And I was in constant danger. Stones were being thrown at me, shoes were being thrown at me.

I would reach a town after traveling for twenty-four hours in a train and the crowd wouldn't allow me to get down at the station; they would force me to go back. A fight would ensue between those who wanted me to get down from the train and those who did not want me to get down, in their town at least.

If I had declared it I would have been killed very easily. There would have been no problem in it; it would have been so simple. But for twenty years I kept absolutely silent about it. I declared it only when I saw that now I had gathered enough people who could understand it. I had gathered enough people who were mine, who belonged to me. I declared it only when I knew that now I could create my own small world and I was no more concerned with the crowds and the masses and the stupid mob.

Sarjano, there IS a difficulty. I can understand your difficulty. But please keep your big mouth shut -- Italian or not Italian! Otherwise you will simply be thought crazy. And if you cannot keep your mouth shut, then I will declare, "He is crazy!" Then nobody will listen to you. Then you can go on saying to these little men, "I have found the master," but they will say, "The master says you are crazy!"

The last question:

Question 8
BELOVED MASTER,
WHY IS EVERYTHING TOPSY-TURVY HERE?

Anurati, it must be because of the Italians! One has to find some reason....

The Italian died and went to the Pearly Gates where he was greeted by Saint Peter and his impressive Golden Book. After staring intently at the new applicant's sallow face, weak chin and shifty eyes, Saint Peter declared in thunderous tones, "I trust you are not Italian?"
Saint Peter's voice became stentorian, "Are you Italian?"
The Italian's reply was meek, "No, sir, I am Puerto Rican."
Saint Peter smiled. "Pass, friend," he said, "Come in."

Even Saint Peter is afraid!

And then there was one Italian chick -- so ugly that when she came into a room all the mice jumped up on the chairs.

Can anyone doubt that New York is a great city?
The Jews own it, the Irish run it -- and the Italians after fifty years are still wondering what happened!

How did Columbus happen to discover America?
He was trying to get away from Italy.

What did God say when he made the first Italian?
"Shit! I fucked up again!"

Enough for today.

The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 11

Chapter #3

Chapter title: The quiet way to the happy country

13 April 1980 am in Buddha Hall

YOU HAVE NO NAME AND NO FORM.
WHY MISS WHAT YOU DO NOT HAVE?
THE SEEKER IS NOT SORRY.

LOVE AND JOYFULLY
FOLLOW THE WAY,
THE QUIET WAY TO THE HAPPY COUNTRY.

SEEKER!
EMPTY THE BOAT,
LIGHTEN THE LOAD,
PASSION AND DESIRE AND HATRED.

AND SAIL SWIFTLY.

THERE ARE FIVE AT THE DOOR
TO TURN AWAY, AND FIVE MORE,
AND THERE ARE FIVE TO WELCOME IN.

AND WHEN FIVE HAVE BEEN LEFT
STRANDED ON THE SHORE,
THE SEEKER IS CALLED OGHATINNOTI --

"HE WHO HAS CROSSED OVER."

A new inmate checked into a California asylum. He seemed quite happy -- in fact, he was laughing uproariously.
"Nearest kin?" asked the examining physician.
"Twin brother," responded the fellow. "We were identical twins. Couldn't tell us apart. In school he would throw a spitball and the teacher would blame me. Once he was arrested for speeding and the judge fined me. I had a girl, he ran off with her."
"Then why are you laughing?"
"Because I got even with him last week."
"What happened?"
"I died and they buried HIM."

Man IS mad. Madness is not a disease, it is the normal condition of mankind. Yes, people differ in degrees, but that is not much of a difference. Man as he exists on the earth is insane.
The effort of all the buddhas is to bring sanity to you, to dispel your madness. But because everybody is mad, just like you, you remain oblivious of the fact your whole life. Unless you come across a buddha you will never be aware of the fact that you are mad. The buddha becomes a mirror: he reflects your reality, he shows you your face as it is -- and it is utterly distorted. It is not the way you are meant to be. Something has gone fundamentally wrong, something very basic is missing.
Man is born in such a state of unconsciousness that whatsoever he does brings more and more misery to him and to others. He goes on blaming fate, he goes on blaming

nature, he goes on blaming the society -- but he always goes on blaming others, he never blames himself. The moment you gather courage enough to blame yourself, the moment you accept the responsibility of whatsoever you are, a ray of light enters into your being. You are on the path of inner transformation.

These sutras are for the bodhisattvas. Now Buddha is saying to his bodhisattvas -- to those disciples who are going to become helpers to mankind, who are ready to go into the world and to help people who are drowning in their own insanity -- Buddha is saying to his bodhisattvas, "These are the basic things you have to start your teaching with."

The first thing he says: Tell the people that... YOU HAVE NO NAME AND NO FORM -- because that is where millions are stuck. People live and die for name and fame. It seems their life purpose is to have a name known to the whole world, a name which is going to be written in golden letters in history, a name which will go on resounding down the corridors of time for ever and ever.

And the whole thing is so stupid, so ridiculous, because you don't have any name in the first place. You are born nameless, you are nameless. All names are arbitrary. Don't sacrifice your life for a name. Don't sacrifice the real for something unreal. We are sacrificing something true for something which is untrue and cannot be made true.

When a child is born, you know he does not bring a name with him; he is born as namelessness. But of course a name is needed; it has a certain utility but no reality. It is arbitrary. You can call him anything, any name will do -- X, Y, Z will do. In a more scientific age there is every

possibility that we will drop these old names. Somebody will be O-11, somebody will be X-13. Names are going to be more mathematical one day because they will be more precise. And there is no need to have the same name for two persons; computers can decide. The computer can say that this is a new name, nobody has it all over the world. Right now so many people have the same name; it is bound to happen. It is not very scientific, but it works.

Buddha wants his bodhisattvas to tell the people the first thing: You are nameless. So don't be worried about your name or your fame. You are also formless: your innermost being has no form. Your body has a form, but your body goes on changing; every day it changes. Within seven years your body is completely new, entirely new. Not even a single cell of the old exists in it, everything goes on changing.

If you come across the first sperm of your father that started your life, will you be able to recognize it as yourself? Impossible. Will you be able to recognize your mother's egg as yourself? Impossible. That was your form one day, but you were not it. And then in nine months' time in the mother's womb you passed through many forms. The scientists say that each child passes quickly, very speedily, through the whole evolution of humanity. From the fish to the monkey to the man, he passes through all the phases -- of course in very quick succession because he has to fulfill the whole evolution in nine months. That's why a premature child is a little retarded, because he has not evolved yet completely; he has not been able to complete the whole cycle of evolution. Every child begins as a fish in the mother's womb. Will you be able to recognize that fish

as you? But one day that was your form. Will you be able to recognize your face the day you were born? If a picture is shown to you it will be impossible for anybody to recognize that, "This is me." Right now you have a certain form; that form will also go down the drain in the same way. Every moment it is changing.

But there is something eternal in you: your consciousness, your being, your awareness. You can call it your soul, whatsoever you want to call it; names don't matter. But one thing is certain: that you don't have any particular form; you pass through many forms. You can pass through many forms only because you don't have any form, so don't become attached to any form. Don't become attached to any name and don't become attached to any form.

This is the beginning of sannyas. This is the beginning of initiation into the path.

In fact, you don't have any father, you don't have any mother; you can't have. The father fathered your body and the mother mothered your body; they both contributed to your body, to your form, but not to your essential core. Your body is accidental. You have been in many bodies before, thousands of bodies. You have passed through, you have lived in many many houses, and when you were living in a certain house you became identified with it.

Hence the pain of death. It is not because of death, remember; it is just because of your identification with the body, with the form. If you understand the message of Buddha, there is no pain in death. If you are not identified with any name or form there is nobody who is born and there is nobody who is dying.

In fact, that should be the real meaning of Jesus' virgin birth. Everybody is born in the same way. It is not only that you don't have a father, you don't have a mother either. The day you discover your original being you will know that you pass through the mother and the father, you come through them, but you are not created by them.

A snoopy social worker investigating conditions in an old tenement stopped a ragged, neglected-looking youngster and asked him where his mother lived.
"Ain't got no mother," replied the child.
"What about your father, then?"
"Ain't got none, lady."
"What, both your father and your mother dead!" exclaimed the social worker.
"Nope, never had any."
"Good grief, but that's impossible, my boy!"
"If you've gotta know, lady," said the urchin contemptuously, "some damned racketeer played a dirty trick on my aunt."

In fact, nobody has a father or a mother -- and no dirty racketeer has played any trick on your aunt either. You are eternal beings: you are never born and you never die. Death and birth are episodes in the long journey, in the eternal journey of your life. Life does not begin with birth and does not end with death.
But this is possible to know only if you become a little detached from the form with which you have become so much attached. You are not man and you are not woman either; your body is male or your body is female. You are

not man, you are not animal, you are not vegetable. These are all forms, accidental forms, just circumferences, not the centers of your being. The centers of your being are totally different from the circumferences. And we have become so attached to the circumferences that we have completely forgotten the centers.
This is the basic and fundamental cause of our insanity. A man who does not know his center is insane.

Buddha says, tell the people:

YOU HAVE NO NAME AND NO FORM.
WHY MISS WHAT YOU DO NOT HAVE?

How much people suffer if they are not famous, if they are not well-known! To be anonymous feels so humiliating. If nobody knows you, you feel as if you are no longer alive. The more people know you, the more alive you feel. If the whole world knows you, your ego is puffed up to the extreme, it is bursting.
That's why politics has so much interest for people, because that is the easiest way to become world-famous. You don't need to be very intelligent to be a politician; in fact, if you are very intelligent you cannot be a politician. You need a certain stupidity, in good quantity, to be a politician. You need to be stubborn, you need to be violent, you need to be utterly mediocre -- so that you can't see what you are doing, so that you can't see how you are wasting your life, and you go on and on.... You have to be utterly blind, you have to be very gross. Politics has great appeal because it can give

you both a great name and great fame; it can make you a world figure.

I have heard:
A pope and a politician both showed up in heaven one day. Saint Peter greeted them and led the pope to his quarters where he would be spending eternity. Upon opening the door, the pope found a small, plainly furnished room with but one window. When he looked out he noticed the politician being shown to the luxury apartments across the way, which were equipped with hot tubs, saunas, swimming pools, tennis courts and the like.
Filled with righteous indignation, he turned to Saint Peter and protested vehemently, "I am a pope! Why is this politician being treated like this while I get almost nothing?"
"Well," replied Saint Peter, "we have over two hundred popes up here, but this is the first time we've seen a politician!"

But here on the earth the politicians make much fuss. Politics has become the center of life; your newspapers are full of it, your radio programs are full of it. Everything seems to be colored by politics for the simple reason that these people have got something which you are all hankering for -- they have got name and fame.
But Buddha says: WHY MISS WHAT YOU DO NOT HAVE? And, in fact, why miss that which you do not have and can never have? To believe that you are famous is to live in a fool's paradise. And even if your name is going to be written in history... you can make so much nuisance that

they will have to write it down in history. Adolf Hitler and Joseph Stalin and Mao Zedong, of course their names will remain in history, but not in golden letters. History is not written in golden letters at all, and their names will be only in some footnotes. And even if they are there, what does it matter? Your whole history is bunk! It is less history and more hysteria! Of course, if you are very hysterical you will become historical. But what is the point of it all? You would have missed a great opportunity.
The real man does not care about name and fame. The authentic man lives his life irrespective of name and fame; he does not care a bit whether anybody knows him or not.

THE SEEKER IS NOT SORRY.

Buddha says: Teach people that the search for truth should not be a sad search. This is one of the things which has been very much misunderstood. Somehow the sad people have dominated the whole religious scene down the ages. Only once in a while do you find a Buddha or a Jesus or a Zarathustra who talks about joy, who talks about living in bliss. Only once in a while do you find a Krishna -- who not only teaches dance but dances himself, who not only teaches singing but sings himself. Otherwise the scene is dominated by pathological people, either by masochists or by sadists.
Ninety-nine percent of so-called religious people are ill, seriously ill people. They have gone into religion because they have failed in life, they have gone into religion because they could not cope with life. It is an escape -- and the escapist can never be happy.

Christians say that Jesus never laughed. Now, there cannot be a greater lie than that. Jesus, and never laughed? Then who will be able to laugh? Then nobody will be able to laugh at all! And the whole life of Jesus proves that he must have been a man of very joyous nature. He must have been really spiritual -- in the sense the French use the word SPIRITUEL. In French this word 'spirituel' means both "spiritual" and "humorous." There seems to be a great insight in it -- the same word meaning both. He must have laughed with his companions. It is well known that he used to enjoy eating and drinking, and when a man enjoys eating and drinking it is difficult to think of him never laughing. People who enjoy eating and drinking, people who enjoy parties, also enjoy dancing and singing and joking. He must have laughed, he must have joked. One cannot believe that twenty-four hours a day he was delivering only gospels -- he must have gossiped!

But the people who are sad, they would like him also to be sad. All the figures, statues, paintings of Jesus seem to be false. And they have been changing down the ages. In the earliest pictures he was shown without beard and mustache. After two centuries, suddenly the beard and the mustache appeared -- because without a beard and a mustache he did not look like a prophet; he looked too young, not mature enough. A face without a beard and without a mustache looks a little boyish... suddenly the beard appeared.

In the East just the opposite has been the case. Buddha is never painted with a beard, neither is Krishna or Mahavira, neither is Rama or Patanjali... nobody. Why? -- because the Eastern idea is that these people were so young, spiritually

young, that it is better to let them appear young from the outside too. The outside should represent the inside. Buddha became very old, he died when he was eighty-two, but still he is never depicted as having a beard. Jesus died when he was only thirty-three, but the beard appeared after two centuries. Still his face was not sad. After two centuries even that face changed. He became more and more sad -- as if he were carrying the whole burden of the earth. Now they have changed him into the savior; he is carrying the cross. He has come to deliver you from your sufferings, he is taking your sufferings on himself. And they have falsified this beautiful man who used to enjoy the company of very ordinary people -- carpenters, laborers, gardeners, fishermen, gamblers, prostitutes, drunkards, tax collectors, every kind of people -- even tax collectors! They are making him more and more abstract; he is losing his earthliness. He is becoming more and more a concept rather than a real human being; he is losing his humanity. He is no more the Son of Man, he is becoming only the Son of God. These are the sad people who are projecting their sadness on him. They say he never laughed -- I can't believe it. I can believe a far more impossible thing....

The followers of Zarathustra say that he laughed the very moment he was born -- I can believe that, that he was born laughing. It looks absolutely impossible -- no child is ever born laughing -- but it has something beautiful about it. Zarathustra getting out of the womb, laughing, appeals to me more. Such a joyous spirit! That's why Zarathustra could not become a world religion. The followers of Zarathustra are confined to Bombay only. And they are good people -- not religious in the ordinary sense, not at all.

Nobody thinks that Parsis are religious; in India nobody thinks them religious. They enjoy eating, they enjoy beautiful clothes, they enjoy the beautiful things of life, they enjoy beautiful houses... they enjoy everything! And we have the idea of religion as renunciation.

I can believe Zarathustra coming into the world laughing, but I cannot believe Jesus never laughing, because to me sadness can never become the source for the search -- although millions of people go in search of God just because they are sad. You remember God only when you are unhappy, miserable; when you are in deep anguish then you remember God, otherwise who cares?

But let me tell you: if you remember God only when you are miserable, your remembrance is not worth anything. It is almost a complaint; it is not a prayer, it cannot be. You cannot be grateful for being miserable, and prayer needs to be essentially gratitude.

Buddha says: THE SEEKER IS NOT SORRY. He is telling his bodhisattvas: Go to the people and tell them that if you don't drop your being sorry you can never become a real seeker. Seek God out of happiness, seek God out of joy, seek God because this call of the cuckoo is so beautiful, because the songs of the birds are so joyous, because the flowers are so ecstatic, because life is such a blessing. Look at the blessing that life is and then go for the source of it. From where are all these songs and all these flowers and all these stars born? What is the cause of it all, of this mysterious existence?

Don't go in search because you are sad, miserable, a failure. If you go with failure in your heart you will be simply repressing your sadness. You may start smiling, but that

smile will be only a painted smile. You can see the priests smiling, but that smile is not true, it can't be true. They have never loved life enough for their smile to be true, they have never lived life enough for their smile to be true. They are escapists, they are afraid of life. And the people who are afraid of life, their search is wrong from the very beginning. But this misunderstanding has happened and this misunderstanding has to be dispelled.

A policeman patrolling lovers' lane late at night shines his flashlight in the window of a car and sees a couple making love. He taps on the window and says, "I am next!" In ten minutes he comes by again and the couple is still making love, so he taps on the window again and says, "I am next!" In twenty minutes he comes by again and the couple is still making love. Again he taps on the window and says, "I am next. What's taking you so long anyway?"
The man looks up and says, "Man, I'm really nervous. I've never screwed a cop before!"

Misunderstandings and misunderstandings....
Buddhas have been misunderstood so much that whatsoever you think about Jesus, Krishna, Buddha, Lao Tzu, be very cautious -- ninety-nine percent of it is going to be a misunderstanding. If you ask me, "Who are Christians?" I say "The people who have misunderstood Christ." If you ask me, "Who are Buddhists?" I will say, "The people who have misunderstood Buddha." Misunderstanding is so easy because if you want to understand a buddha you will have to rise a little higher to see what he is showing. But if you want to misunderstand

you need not move anywhere; wherever you are, remain there and you can misunderstand. To misunderstand is so comfortable, so cozy. You can misunderstand without any effort; it requires no change on your part. But it will show in your life.

People go to the temples, but there is no dance in their eyes. Going to the temple and no dance in your feet and no dance in your eyes -- then why are you going? What is the point? Why are you wasting your time? People are praying, but there is no joy, there is no light on their faces. Then why are you wasting your time and God's time? But one thing is good: that God is utterly deaf -- deaf to all languages. He listens only to silence, he is available only to silence. So you can go on praying -- nobody is listening. It is a monologue.

Martin Buber says that prayer is a dialogue. I say no, unless a prayer is absolutely silent it is not a dialogue. Martin Buber says a prayer means an I/Thou dialogue. If there is I, then there can be no Thou; these two things can't exist together. If there is I AND Thou, then the Thou is only a projection and there is no dialogue at all; it is a monologue. You can believe that somebody is listening -- nobody is listening. You are simply wasting your time, your breath. Do something else, anything will be better. Even playing cards will be far better, drinking Coca-Cola will be far better!

Your prayers are meaningless. You cannot hide the fact. If you move towards God or truth in sadness, in misery, in some way or other, your life will show it. Truth cannot be repressed.

The Gladwells had a baby born without ears. They brought it home and their neighbors, the Petersons, were preparing to visit it. "Now, please be careful," said Mrs. Peterson to her husband. "Don't say anything about the baby not having any ears."
"Don't worry," said Peterson. "I won't do anything to hurt their feelings."
So they went next door, up into the nursery and stood over the new baby's crib with the Gladwells. "He's so cute," said Mrs. Peterson to the baby's mother.
"Yeah," agreed Mr. Peterson. "What strong arms and legs the kid has -- he's gonna grow up to be a bruiser."
"Thanks," said the baby's father.
"How's the kid's eyes?"
"They're perfect!" said Gladwell.
"They'd better be -- he won't ever be able to wear glasses!"

Somehow or other it is going to come up. How can you avoid it? The more you avoid, the greater is the possibility you will stumble upon it. In fact, the very effort to avoid it makes you focused on it; then you can't see anything else.

A very holy man went into an optician's one day to order a new pair of spectacles. Behind the counter was an extremely pretty girl, which reduced the customer to total confusion.
"Can I help you, sir?" she asked with a ravishing smile.
"Er -- yes -- er... I want a pair of rim-speckt hornicles... I mean I want a pair of heck-rimmed spornicles... er... I mean...."
At which point the optician himself came to the rescue.

"It's alright, Miss Jones. What the holy man wants is a pair of rim-sporned hectacles."

Hence Buddha says the seeker has to start his journey not out of misery but out of joy. Rejoice in life. He says:

LOVE AND JOYFULLY
FOLLOW THE WAY,
THE QUIET WAY TO THE HAPPY COUNTRY.

When one first comes across these words one feels a little surprised. Buddha, and saying: LOVE AND JOYFULLY FOLLOW THE WAY, THE QUIET WAY TO THE HAPPY COUNTRY...? Yes, one is a little shocked because the Buddhist priests have been avoiding these beautiful sayings, they have been bypassing them. They have been emphasizing those words of Buddha which emphasize pessimism. And he was not a pessimist at all, he could not be. One who knows, how can he be a pessimist? It is impossible. He is not even an optimist, remember, because the optimist is connected with the pessimist; he is the other extreme.
Buddha is beyond both; he is neither a pessimist nor an optimist. He simply wants you to see that which is -- and that is enough to make you love life. It is enough, more than enough, to make you dance with joy, with gratitude. And the way is silent, very quiet. Hence Buddha has not taught any prayer, he only teaches meditation. When prayer is silent it is meditation; when meditation becomes eloquent it is prayer. But first you have to learn meditation; otherwise you will move in a wrong direction. Without

knowing meditation all your prayers are going to be false. You will be pouring your rubbish on God -- holy rubbish, but it is all holy cow dung!
First learn to be silent. And yes, out of silence some songs are born, out of silence some flowers bloom. Then offer those songs, those flowers to God. But they will be of joy, of tremendous joy.

SEEKER!
EMPTY THE BOAT,
LIGHTEN THE LOAD,
PASSION AND DESIRE AND HATRED.

Let me remind you again and again: Buddha is talking to his bodhisattvas, to his messengers, to his apostles, who are going to the masses. He is helping them with what to say, from where to begin. He is saying the first thing a seeker has to fulfill is, the first requirement of a true seeker is, that he should not have any belief system, that he should not have any philosophy, any ideology. If you already believe then there is no question of seeking, inquiring. Inquiry means you start with a state of not-knowing. Hence: SEEKER! EMPTY THE BOAT.... Empty your mind of all the baggage that you have been carrying all along. Become utterly empty. Then the same mind that has been causing you so much insanity, so much turmoil, so much anguish... the same mind when empty becomes the boat for the other shore, for the further shore. Empty, it becomes a vehicle; burdened with all kinds of thoughts, with all kinds of beliefs, scriptures, which each generation goes on handing over to the next generation.... We are so much burdened

that we are carrying almost Himalayas of weight on our heads; it is not possible to move with such a load. You need unlearning. You already have too much knowledge; all this knowledge has to be dropped.

EMPTY THE BOAT, LIGHTEN THE LOAD.... When you are utterly empty, when you say, "I know nothing," then the inquiry starts. It is fresh, it is young, it is authentic, because there is a fundamental law of life that if you are in a state of not-knowing, a great urge will arise in you to know. Just as nature abhors a vacuum and it rushes to fill it, exactly in the same way if your mind is totally empty, truth rushes in and fills it.

But right now there is no space. Your mind is so full, even YOU cannot go in. You have to live somewhere on the outside. People are living in their porches; their houses are so full of junk that they are afraid to go in. They may get lost, and there is no space either.

And three things Buddha mentions particularly which are making you loaded, much too loaded. The first he calls passion, the second, desire and the third, hatred.

Passion means animal lust, biological, unconscious lust. Every animal has it, there is nothing special about it. If man has it he simply remains part of the animal kingdom; it is an animal heritage. You don't really become human unless you go beyond lust. You think that it is your love and you have great, romantic words to describe it and you use great poetry, but that is all rubbish. If you look deep down it is biology, it is chemistry, it is hormones and nothing else. If your hormones are changed you will not be interested in any woman anymore, or if you are a woman and your hormones are changed you will not be interested in any

man anymore, and all poetry and all romance will disappear. The Don Juan simply needs a small operation... and he will disappear.
Buddha says the first thing that keeps your mind full of junk is lust. And it is, in a way, natural because for millions of years we have been in animal bodies; we are still carrying those imprints, we are full of animal heritage. We are ninety-nine percent animals; only one percent perhaps -- that too is a perhaps -- are we human beings. Just a little part of us has risen a little above.

A fiery-tongued Italian priest was laying down some heavy stuff about sex and morality. Stabbing his bony finger at his Little Italy congregation, the guinea padre bellowed, "Sex is-a dirty! I want-a see only good-a girls tonight. I want-a every virgin in-a church to-a stand up."
Furious at the lack of his parishioners' response, he repeated the exhortation.
After a long pause, a sexy-looking chick with an infant in her arms got to her feet.
"Virgins is what I want-a!" the outraged preacher said.
"Hey, Father," the lady asked, "you expect a two-month-old baby to stand by herself?"

It is said that's why Jesus chose to be born two thousand years before us, because now where can you find a virgin? And, moreover, where will you find three wise men? Even if you find a virgin -- a two-month-old baby, okay -- but three wise men? The conditions cannot be fulfilled now. People tell me again and again, "Jesus has promised he will come again." I say to you, forget all about it! -- he cannot

come. The conditions cannot be fulfilled. If he drops his conditions, then it is okay. But then he won't be a Jesus, remember -- he will be just another hippie, maybe a Jesus freak but not Jesus!

Remember, Buddha does not want you to repress your lust, he wants you to understand, he wants you to meditate over it. He wants you not to repress it, because repression has never helped. It is repression that has made this sad situation in which humanity is living. It is repression that has driven humanity mad.

Buddha wants you to transform sex energy, not to repress it, because it is the only energy you have got. It can be refined, it can be uplifted, it can be channeled in new directions; it can be moved towards higher planes of being. And it all happens through a simple process of meditation. The process of meditation is not complicated at all. If your mind can drop its load and if it can become absolutely empty, immediately your sex energy starts rising upwards to fill the gap, as if the emptiness pulls it upwards. A new law starts functioning: the law of levitation. Ordinarily we live under the law of gravitation: everything goes downwards. And you are so top-heavy that nothing can go towards the top; the top is already full, everything goes downwards. Make the top light.

In Japan they make a DARUMA doll. Daruma is the Japanese name of Bodhidharma, one of Buddha's greatest disciples, who founded Zen in China; he is the first patriarch of Zen. Bodhidharma was his Indian name, Daruma is his Japanese name. They have made a doll in his name, in his memory; for centuries the doll has been made. It is one of the most beautiful dolls; it has a great message.

You throw the doll any way, it always sits back in a Buddha posture; you cannot put it upside-down. You can throw it, you can tilt it, you can do anything with it, but you cannot shake or make Daruma fall. He always sits back again in the lotus posture, as Buddha used to sit.

The secret is: his top is not heavy, his bottom is heavy. He has a hollow head, an empty head; there is nothing inside. The head is so empty and the bottom is so heavy that naturally he settles back again into the Buddha posture. It is a beautiful doll. It was invented by the Zen monks for children to play with, and the children are bound to ask, "What is the secret?" And the secret is that the head is totally empty -- the secret is meditation.

The second thing is desire. Desire is psychological; just as lust is biological, desire is psychological. Desire means more and more, always for more. Nothing satisfies, nothing fulfills; you go on running for more and more. And you know it, because many times you have achieved your target but your discontent remains the same. Again the desire arises for more, and you start running without giving it a second thought.

Buddha says: Wait, contemplate. Where is it going to end? You are chasing an illusion. The desire for more can never be fulfilled. You can have ten thousand rupees and your mind asks for one hundred thousand; you can have one hundred thousand, the mind starts asking for more -- and so on and so forth. Whatsoever you have, the distance between what you have and what the mind asks for remains the same. It is unfulfillable. It is driving people crazy. Seeing it, seeing the point of it, one drops it. Or it would be

better to say: the moment you see the futility of it, it drops of its own accord.

And the third thing is hatred. Hatred arises because of these first two, passion and desire. Whosoever comes in the way of your passion or in the way of your desire, whosoever becomes a hindrance, whosoever becomes a competitor, becomes your enemy. Whosoever tries to grab something that you wanted creates hatred in you. If the first two disappear, the third disappears on its own.

The first two are like fire and the third is just smoke. If you are still feeling hatred for something, for somebody, then remember somewhere there is fire still. Wherever there is smoke there is fire. Hatred and anger simply show that you are still living through lust and desire, consciously or unconsciously. But your smoke shows that the fire has not been put out. Go back deep into your being and put out the fire. And it can be put out not by repressing but by understanding.

Understanding is the most fundamental message of Gautama the Buddha. If it happens, you can SAIL SWIFTLY.

THERE ARE FIVE AT THE DOOR
TO TURN AWAY, AND FIVE MORE,
AND THERE ARE FIVE TO WELCOME IN.

AND WHEN FIVE HAVE BEEN LEFT
STRANDED ON THE SHORE,
THE SEEKER IS CALLED OGHATINNOTI --
"HE WHO HAS CROSSED OVER."

These fives have to be understood. THERE ARE FIVE AT THE DOOR....

The first five: Buddha says the first is selfishness, the second is doubt, the third is pseudo spirituality, the fourth is passion and the fifth is hatred. They are always standing at the door. You have to be very conscious; otherwise they will jump upon you.

Even the people who think they are doing selfless service -- their service is selfish. They are hoping to gain some reward in the other world, in paradise; hence they are serving. Their service is not just out of love, their service is a bargain. It is a search for some great reward -- heaven, paradise and the heavenly joys. Beware of selfishness.

Second is doubt. Even people who believe are full of doubt; in fact, if you are not full of doubt there is no need to believe. Belief simply means you have covered up a doubt. You have a wound, you cover it up with a beautiful flower, but the wound remains.

Third is pseudo spirituality. When people want to be spiritual it is easier to be pseudospiritual because it costs nothing. You can be a Christian, you can be a Hindu, you can be a Mohammedan; it is so easy, it is so formal. You go and do certain rituals in a temple and you are a Hindu, or you go to the church every Sunday and you are a Christian -- and it is so easy!

But real spirituality is going through fire. Real spirituality is rebellion against all that is rotten, against all that is past, against all that is being forced on you by others, against all conditionings. Real spirituality is the greatest rebellion there is. It is risky, it is adventurous, it is dangerous.

So beware of pseudo spirituality which is always there, available, easily available at the door.
And passion.... You can drop passion here, you can repress it here, but then you are asking for it somewhere else. In heaven, all the religions have provided for your passion -- beautiful women are available there. Of course, because these stories have been written by men they talk only about beautiful women. Now I think some liberated woman is going to write a few scriptures; then they will manage some beautiful men, very beautiful men who always remain young, never become old, are always nice....
Your so-called mahatmas and saints, all have been hoping that beautiful women are waiting; it is only a question of a few days. Just torture yourself a little more and you will get an even better one. Just go into the scriptures of your religions and look and you will be able -- it is so clearly there -- to see the projections.
In the Hindu heaven the girls never grow older than sixteen, because in India that is thought to be the best age. So thousands of years have passed, but in heaven the same beautiful women are still hanging around at sixteen. They don't perspire; in heaven you don't need deodorants, you need not use perfumes, etcetera! Their bodies are made of gold. I think if right now you write the scriptures again you will not make the bodies of gold because they will be too heavy. Carrying a golden woman will give you a heart attack! A plastic one will be far better -- with washable, exchangeable parts! And just a few buttons... so you push one button and the woman smiles and you push another button and the woman goes into an orgasm and you push another button... and it will just be far more scientific now.

In the old days those old fools could not think of anything better -- gold bodies! And if it is solid gold it is going to be really difficult.
But you can see the desire.... So Buddha says: Beware! You can repress here, but you will be desiring somewhere else. Passion is not going to leave you so easily.
And hatred: all your saints are full of hatred -- hatred for the sinners. That's why they have created hell: heaven for themselves and hell for the sinners; heaven for themselves and hell for people who don't follow their religion. If you are a Catholic you will go to heaven -- according to Catholic priests. The Hindu has no hope. First he has to become a Catholic, then he can hope; otherwise he is bound to go to hell. And ask the Hindus: they laugh at the whole idea! Their scriptures are far more ancient and they have a longer tradition -- and a longer propaganda. They think that except Hindus nobody is going to heaven; and not even all the Hindus -- the SUDRAS, the untouchables, have no place there.
This is hatred! This is still the same mind, the same ugly mind playing new games, but nothing has changed.
THERE ARE FIVE AT THE DOOR TO TURN AWAY.... These are the five. Buddha says: Turn them away. Be watchful so they don't catch hold of you.
AND FIVE MORE.... These five are very visible, and there are five more which are not so visible, but they are also there hiding behind these five. Those five are: first, lust for life.... It is easy to drop the lust for a woman or the lust for a man, but it is very difficult to drop the lust for life itself. Everybody wants to live and to live as long as possible.

You can ask in India -- yogis are trying hard to live as long as possible. Now what is that? Why should they be so much concerned about living long? And what is going to happen even if you live long?
Before Bernard Shaw died he left a message to be engraved as an epitaph on his grave. The message was, "I knew all along that if I lived long enough, something like this was going to happen."
So whether you live ninety years or a hundred years or two hundred years, what is the point of it? Death is going to happen. But lust for life.... Buddha says that ordinary people lust for money, power, prestige, and your so-called saints lust for life, long life. And the yogis go on pretending that they are more aged than they are.

I have heard:
One yogi was telling people that his age was seven hundred years, and all the Indians were nodding their heads. One Westerner was also there, a tourist, who could not believe this. The man looked not more than seventy -- and he was saying he was seven hundred years? Impossible! He wanted to find out so he remained there.
He saw one man who used to serve the old man; he bribed the young man. And it is so easy in India to bribe anybody! In fact, nobody feels offended by it; it is absolutely accepted. It is a way of life in India, no problem in it.
And the young man was happy. He said, "What do you want?"
The Westerner said, "I want to know only one thing. Is your master really seven hundred years old? -- because only you can tell me; you have been with him."

He said, "Yes, I can tell you only one thing, more than that I don't know. I have been with him for only three hundred years."
And the man was not more than thirty years old!

And there are books -- now they are being translated into all the languages of the world -- saying that if you practice yoga you will prolong your life. And if you eat this and if you eat that, and if you do this ASANA, this posture, your life will be prolonged. If you breathe in this way or that way....
Buddha is saying this is the same lust. So the first subtle thing is lust for life.
And second: longing for birth in higher realms. Even if you drop it from here -- "Okay, I don't want to live long here" -- then you have a deep desire to be born on some subtle planes, some higher planes, bodiless planes. You would like to be angels. Beware of all these games!
The third is vanity. The people who are virtuous are very vain, they are not humble. In fact they may have practiced humbleness for years, but their practicing of humbleness has given them only a new kind of vanity, a new kind of ego.
Fourth: restlessness. These people are restless, they are not at ease herenow, they can't be. All their hopes are somewhere else, beyond death, in heaven, in paradise. How can they be at ease herenow?
A really spiritual man is absolutely at ease herenow. He has no other time; his only time is now, and his only place is here. And he is utterly at ease, at home. He does not hanker for anything.

And the fifth is self-ignorance. These people go on practicing yoga... a thousand and one methods are available. You can distort your body this way and that -- you can become a good performer in a circus -- but that will not help you to know who you are. And unless you know "Who am I?" all your knowledge and all your cultivated virtues and practices are simply futile -- exercises in utter futility.

AND THERE ARE FIVE TO WELCOME IN. And what are those five? Faith.... Remember, by faith Buddha does not mean belief; by faith he means trust, a loving trust, a trust in existence -- not in theories, not in scriptures, not in dogmas and creeds, but in existence itself, a trust -- because this is our home, we are part of it. If we live in doubt, we live disconnected from the whole; if we live in trust, a bridge is slowly slowly made between the part and the whole. Only with trust can one know what one is and what the whole is; and they are not different. The dewdrop contains the whole ocean; in exactly the same way, every man contains the whole of God.

Second: vigilance. One has to be very alert. Alertness is Buddha's method; his only yoga that he has taught is that of being alert. We are living almost mechanically, robotlike. Bring alertness to your actions, to your thoughts, to your feelings.

And the third is energy. We go on dissipating energy in stupid things -- quarreling, arguing, for no reason at all. Preserve your energy because unless you have an overflowing energy you will not be able to take the ultimate jump. The ultimate jump means the river entering into the ocean, the river disappearing into the ocean and becoming

the ocean. If you are not full of energy you will not be able to reach the ocean; you will be lost somewhere in a desert.
And the fourth is meditation. By "meditation" he means remaining more and more silent so slowly slowly, a shift happens from mind to no-mind, so slowly slowly, the gestalt changes from noise to silence.
And fifth: wisdom. Wisdom is not knowledge. Knowledge is borrowed, wisdom is yours. Knowledge can be gathered from a library; you can contain the whole library in your mind. Still you will remain as ignorant as before; in fact, you will be far more ignorant than before because now the load is bigger. Wisdom comes from your own heart; it is the voice of our own inner being. It happens in meditation: when you are silent you start hearing the still, small voice within. That is wisdom.
AND WHEN FIVE HAVE BEEN LEFT STRANDED ON THE SHORE.... What are those five? Greed, anger, delusion, ego, false teachings. ... THE SEEKER IS CALLED OGHATINNOTI -- "HE WHO HAS CROSSED OVER."
This is Buddha's message for the seekers. He is telling his bodhisattvas to go and give it to the people who are ready, to the people who are prepared, to the people who are willing to listen, to understand, to follow the path.
Meditate over these sutras -- they are for you. Everything that Buddha says is very significant. It is no ordinary religion, it is pure religiousness.
Enough for today.

Chapter #4

Chapter title: I goofed again!
14 April 1980 am in Buddha Hall

The first question:
Question 1
BELOVED MASTER,
THERE IS SOMETHING THAT EVEN YOU CANNOT DO. YOU CAN'T PUT AN ITALIAN IN AN IRISH JOKE. IT IS AGAINST THE DHARMA.

Dharma Chetana, it is true, I goofed again! Go on reminding me. These goddamned jokes are dangerous! And I love the Italians so much that wherever I can find a place for them I try to manage. Sometimes I succeed, sometimes I fail, but you caught me.
To put the record right, the joke is:

Two gentlemen are sitting in a garden, one British, one Irish.
The British gentleman asked the Irish, "If you were not Irish, what would you be?"
The Irish says, "Of course I would be British."
And then he asks the British, "If you were not British, what would you be?"
And the British said, "I would be ashamed."

But I got mixed up. That's why I have all my jokes typed with me. That one was not typed with me. About God and

about truth and about religion there is no trouble -- I know them from my personal experience. But these jokes!
Yes, Chetana, it is against the Dharma. And I hope it is not going to happen again.

The second question:
Question 2
BELOVED MASTER,
WHY CAN'T I SEE MY OWN FAULTS WHILE I AM IMMENSELY CAPABLE OF SEEING OTHERS', EVEN THEIR SMALLEST ONES?

Prageeta, it is very normal. It is not something exceptional. Our eyes are focused on others; we are other-oriented. We only see the others -- it is not only a question of faults -- we never see ourselves. Even if we want to see ourselves we have to look in a mirror, we have to create the image. When the image is there the other has appeared. The mirror helps us to see ourselves because it creates the other. Otherwise we are absolutely extroverts; we have forgotten the language of how to look in. Hence, as a consequence, you cannot see your own faults; nobody can.
The moment you start seeing your faults they start dropping like dry leaves. Then nothing else has to be done; to see them is enough. Just to be aware of your faults is all that is needed. In that awareness they start disappearing, they evaporate. One can go on committing a certain error only if one remains unconscious of it. Unconsciousness is a must to go on committing the same errors. Even if you try to change you will commit the same error in some other form, in some other shape. And they come in all sizes and all

shapes. You will exchange, you will substitute, but you cannot drop it because deep down you don't see that it is a fault. Others may be telling you because they can see. That's why everybody thinks himself so beautiful, so intelligent, so virtuous, so saintly -- and nobody agrees with him! The reason is simple: you look at others, you see their reality, and about yourself you carry fictions -- beautiful fictions. About yourself you are very fictitious. All that you know about yourself is more or less a myth; it has nothing to do with reality.

The moment one sees one's faults, a radical change sets in. Hence all the buddhas down the ages have been telling only one thing: awareness. They don't teach you character. Character is taught by priests, politicians, but not by the buddhas. Buddhas teach you consciousness -- not conscience. Conscience is a trick played upon you by others. Others are telling you what is right and what is wrong; they are forcing their ideas upon you. And they go on forcing them from your very childhood, when you were so innocent, so vulnerable, so delicate, that there was a possibility to make any impression on you, any imprint on you. They have conditioned you from the very beginning. That conditioning is called conscience and that conscience goes on dominating your whole life. Conscience is a strategy of society to enslave you.

Buddhas teach consciousness. Consciousness means you are not to learn from others what is right and what is wrong; there is no need to learn from anybody. You have simply to go in; just the inward journey is enough. The deeper you go, the more consciousness is released. When you reach the center you are so full of light that darkness

disappears. When you bring light into your room you don't have to push the darkness out of the room. The presence of the light is enough because darkness is only an absence of light. So are all your insanities, madnesses.
But everybody can see others' faults, so don't be worried about it, Prageeta. This is the situation in which everybody is living.

A man dressed as Adolf Hitler visited a psychiatrist.
"You can see I have no problems," he said. "I have the greatest army in the world, all the money I will ever need and every conceivable luxury you can imagine."
"Then what seems to be your problem?" asked the doctor.
"It's my wife," said the man. "She thinks she's Mrs. Weaver."

Don't laugh at the poor man. It is nobody else but you.

A man went into a tailor's shop and saw a man hanging by one arm from the center of the ceiling.
"What is he doing there?" he asked the tailor.
"Oh, pay no attention," said the tailor, "he thinks he's a light bulb."
"Well, why don't you tell him he's not?" asked the startled customer.
"What?" replied the tailor. "And work in the dark?"

The moment you know you are mad you are no longer mad. That's the only criterion of sanity. The moment you know you are ignorant you have become wise.

The Oracle at Delphi declared Socrates the most wise man on the earth. A few people rushed to Socrates and they told him, "Be pleased, rejoice: the Oracle at Delphi has declared you the wisest man in the world."
Socrates said, "That is all nonsense. I know only one thing: that I know nothing."
The people were puzzled and confused. They went back to the temple, they told the Oracle, "You say that Socrates is the wisest man in the world, but he himself denies it. On the contrary, he says he is utterly ignorant. He says he knows only one thing: that he knows nothing."
The Oracle laughed and said, "That's why I have declared him the wisest man in the world, the greatest wise man in the world. That's why -- precisely because he knows that he is ignorant."

Ignorant people believe they are wise. Insane people believe they are the sanest.
Yes, Prageeta, it happens; it is part of human nature that we go on looking to the outside. We watch everybody except ourselves. Hence we know more about others than about ourselves; we know nothing about ourselves. We are not witnesses to our own functioning of the mind, we are not watchful inside.
You need a hundred-and-eighty-degree turn -- that's what meditation is all about. You have to close your eyes and start watching. In the beginning you will find only darkness and nothing else. And many people become frightened and rush out because outside there is light. Yes, there is light outside but that light is not going to enlighten you, that light is not going to help you at all. You need inner light, a

light which has its source in your very being, a light which cannot be extinguished even by death, a light which is eternal. And you have it, the potential is there! You are born with it, but you are keeping it behind you; you never look at it.

And because for centuries, for many lives, you have looked outside, it has become a mechanical habit. Even when you are asleep you are looking at dreams. Dreams mean reflections of the outside. When you close your eyes you again start daydreaming or thinking; that means again you become interested in others. This has become such a chronic habit that there are not even small intervals, small windows into your own being from where you can have a glimpse of who you are.

In the beginning it is a hard struggle, it is arduous, it is difficult -- but not impossible. If you are decisive, if you are committed to inner exploration, then sooner or later it happens. You just have to go on digging, you have to go on struggling with the darkness. Soon you will pass the darkness and you will enter into the realm of light. And that light is true light, far truer than the light of the sun or the moon, because all the lights that are outside are temporal; they are only for the time being.

Even the sun is going to die one day. Not only do small lamps exhaust their resources and die in the morning, even the sun with such an immense resource is dying every day. Sooner or later it will become a black hole; it will die and no light will come from it. Howsoever long it lives it is not eternal. The inner light is eternal; it has no beginning, no end. It is synonymous with God.

And I am not interested in telling you to drop your faults, to make yourself good, to improve your character -- no, not at all. I am not interested in your character at all; I am interested only in your consciousness.
Become more alert, more conscious. Just go deeper and deeper into yourself till you find the center of your being. You are living on the periphery, and on the periphery there is always turmoil. The deeper you go, the deeper the silence that prevails. And in those experiences of silence, light, joy, your life starts moving into a different dimension. The errors, the mistakes start disappearing.
So don't be worried about the errors and the mistakes and the faults. Be concerned about one single thing, one single phenomenon; put your total energy into one goal, and that is how to be more conscious, how to be more awakened. If you put your total energy into it, it is going to happen, it is inevitable. It is your birthright.

The third question:
Question 3
BELOVED MASTER,
WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY CALLING SARJANO A BIGMOUTH?

Nirmal, exactly that: a big mouth!
I will tell you a fictitious story:

I was going to the Himalayas; Radha was accompanying me. The train was stopped in the middle of the night in the jungle and the whole train was robbed. The robbers came to our compartment also.

I told them, "Don't disturb us. Take whatsoever you want." So they carried away the two suitcases. I was worried about Radha, that she might get very much frightened, might become very much concerned about her things, but I was surprised. When they left she started laughing, "Ha, ha! Ha, ha!"
I said, "What is the matter, Radha? What's-a matta?"
She said, "I befooled them! I have saved your fifty-thousand-dollar diamond watch, I have saved my Rolex, I have saved my earrings, I have saved my gold and diamond ring, and all the valuables."
I said, "How did you manage?"
She said, "I kept all of them in my mouth."
I said, "That makes me feel very sad."
She said, "Why?"
I said, "If we had brought Sarjano with us, he would have saved the two suitcases! Next time we come to the Himalayas never forget: Sarjano has to accompany us!"

The fourth question:
Question 4
BELOVED MASTER,
DOES IT MEAN THE SAME TO WEAR A MALA OR A CROSS?

Jan, it does not mean the same -- they are polar opposites. The people who have become interested in the cross are pathological. They are not interested in Christ, they are interested in the cross. If they were really interested in Christ they would have also been interested in Buddha, in

Lao Tzu, in Krishna, in Kabir. But they are not interested in Christ, they are interested in the cross.

Hence I don't call Christianity "Christianity," I call it "Crossianity." If Jesus had not been crucified there would have been no such thing as you find all over the world in the name of Christianity. These people became interested in death; this interest is morbid. They became interested in worshipping death. Jesus is secondary, the cross became primary. Because he was crucified, because he suffered, he caught their attention. There are people who are always interested in suffering, in misery, in death.

My interest is not death, my interest is life. I love life unconditionally. I celebrate death too, just because it is part of life -- not as death but as part of life, as the finishing touch, as the crescendo, as the ultimate flowering of life. If you have lived rightly, your death is a beautiful phenomenon. But my interest basically, intrinsically, is life.

The mala represents life, the cross represents death. The mala represents a certain art of making life a garland. The beads are the moments. Each bead has to be perfect; each moment has to be lived in its perfection. And there is a thread running through them which is invisible, passing through each bead; that thread is of eternity. Each moment is threaded with eternity.

Unless your life knows what eternity is your life will be just a heap of beads or a heap of flowers, but it will not be a garland, it will not be a mala. It will not have any inner harmony -- the beads will remain unrelated. It will be a chaos, it will not be a cosmos; there will be no order, no discipline. But the discipline should be invisible like the thread.

And how does one come to know eternity? The only way to know the thread is to go inside the bead. There, at the very center of the bead, you will find the thread passing. Going deep into each moment, going totally into it, you will find eternity. Each moment is part of an eternal procession, of an eternal celebration.

The mala represents time as beads, visible, and the thread as eternity, the invisible. There are one hundred and eight beads in the mala. One hundred and eight beads represent one hundred and eight methods of meditation; all the methods of meditation can be reduced to one hundred and eight -- one hundred and eight methods are the fundamental methods of meditation. Then they can have thousands with little differences, little changes -- joining two methods or three methods or a few parts of one method and a few parts of another method. One can make as many methods as possible, but the fundamental methods are one hundred and eight.

The mala has one hundred and eight beads and a locket with a picture of somebody... nobody knows who he is. Somebody anonymous, somebody who is more a nobody than a somebody; a man who has died long ago as a separate entity, who does not exist anymore as an 'I' but is only an open space. That is where you have to reach, that is where you have to arrive. That is your ultimate home.

The mala is not a cross. Christianity worships death and that is where it has gone wrong. It has lost the joy of life, the laughter, the humor. It has lost contact with Jesus. It goes on worshipping the crucified Jesus, but it is not capable of worshipping the alive Jesus.

And my effort here is to help you to worship life, to live so joyously, with such humor, that your life becomes a dance. I don't want you to become sad and serious -- sincere of course, but serious, never. I would like you to go deeper into existence. Dance with the flowers! Have dialogues with the stars! Look into people's eyes and love and don't hold back. The only unspiritual people are those who are holding back, who are living in a miserly way, who are living only partially, fragmentarily, who are not integrated. And don't live an accidental life; let there be a thread running through it. The Sanskrit word for thread is SUTRA. That's why these great sayings of Buddha, Patanjali, Krishna, Mahavira are called sutras: these are threads. If you understand them your life will not remain just a heap, an accidental heap. You will not be just driftwood at the mercy of unconscious forces. Your life will become a conscious movement, your life will become an art. It will have a sense of direction, and each act will be connected with every other act of your life. You will not be accidental. If you are accidental you will be only a noise; if you are not accidental you can become music.

The mala represents music, it represents harmony. It shows that you have found the sutra, the thread that makes your life one whole, one piece. Life is beautiful when it is one piece; life is ugly when it is fragmentary -- when you are just a crowd and when the crowd is always fighting within you, when there is always a civil war.

Of course, the cross has influenced humanity very much, because millions of people find meaning in the cross -- because it fits with their lives. Their lives are almost on the

cross: they are living in agony, they have never tasted what ecstasy is.

It is not an accident that Krishna's message has not reached millions. Just the other day I was telling you that Zarathustra has not reached millions for the simple reason that he loved life. Jesus has reached millions not because of himself but because of an accident in his life. It is because of the Jews and the Romans: if they had not crucified him, if they had tolerated him, he would have died by himself and then nobody would have heard anything about him. All these churches and thousands of monks and nuns would not have been seen at all -- they gathered around the cross. The cross became significant because it synchronizes with something in their life. Their life is of suffering and the cross represents it. They are also on the cross. Their whole life is agony, their whole life is hell.

What I am saying is not going to appeal to many people. It is going to appeal to only a few intelligent ones, courageous ones, to only a few who are really healthy and whole. This is unfortunate, but this has been so up to now. Whenever somebody comes here to teach life to you he seems far away; there seems to be no dialogue happening between him and you. He talks about dance and you don't even know how to walk! He talks about ecstasy and you don't know what that word means.

One of my sannyasins has just come from Greece. She has informed me that in Greece 'ecstasy' -- EKSTASIS -- means bus stop! That seems to be more meaningful. And in a sense it is a bus stop, in fact the terminus, the last stop. Beyond that there is no way to go -- the last bus stop. You hear the word 'ecstasy', the sound comes to you, but the

meaning is missed. But when you hear the word 'suffering' it is not only the sound that comes to you, you know the meaning too. When you know what the cross is, you perfectly agree; your life agrees with it.
But your life is wrong. Your life is not yet life, you are not yet born. That's why Jesus goes on saying again and again: Unless you are born again....
My whole effort here is to give you a rebirth. The mala is not a cross.

The fifth question:
Question 5
BELOVED MASTER,
WHY ARE THE JOURNALISTS ALWAYS WRITING AGAINST YOU?

Sudarshan, feel happy that they are always writing; don't be worried about what they write. It they are writing that means something is happening here. And they can only write against because when you write something in favor you have to experience what is happening here; without experiencing it you cannot write a favorable report about it. You have to be here for a few months.
They come only for one day, they look around, they see the meditators -- but by seeing the meditators you can't see meditation. They see that something is happening and something so new for them that it does not fit with their idea of an ashram, of a monastery. Hence, naturally they turn against me, they become antagonistic.
If they are Hindus they are bound to be absolutely against me -- for the simple reason that this is not a Hindu ashram;

it does not fit with their idea of an ashram. The Hindu ashram has to be very dull and dead. And here there is so much dance and so much song and so much joy and so much love, they are shocked. And things are so intense here.

For centuries they have created a certain ideal of the Hindu ashram. People should not be active there; inaction is worshipped. People should renounce life -- and here we rejoice life. How can they write in favor? To them it appears that I am destroying their whole ideal. To them it seems for centuries they have worshipped a certain ideal and I am sabotaging it. And in a way they are right.

I want to sabotage that stupid idea of an ashram: that it should be dead, people should be inactive, people should be dull, uncreative, against life, against love, against everything that smells of joy -- they should be walking corpses!

And the Hindu idea of sannyas is that one should become a sannyasin only after seventy-five years. That means in India, nobody can become a sannyasin! The average age is thirty-six, so as far as the average man is concerned there seems to be no possibility of anybody ever becoming a sannyasin. Seventy-five years, then sannyas: the fourth stage of life, when death starts knocking on your doors, when one foot is already in the grave -- then you should become a sannyasin.

And here they see young people, so young they cannot believe their eyes. Why have these people become sannyasins? This is not the time for sannyas!

I am trying to create a totally new concept of sannyas. Because they are against life... of course, if you are against

life seventy-five years seems to be the right time. Because life has already left you now you can renounce, at least you can enjoy the idea that you are renouncing life. Life has already left you -- what is the point of renunciation now? What are you renouncing? The whole idea is stupid. Then why not take sannyas when you are dead? Just wait a few days more, maybe one week. Why be in such a hurry? Just a little more!

In India when a man dies, they cover him with orange clothes. I don't know whom they are deceiving; the dead body is covered with the clothes of a sannyasin. And they chant the name of God when they are taking the dead body to cremate it. Now I don't know who is hearing their chanting -- that poor fellow is no more there. They are simply deceiving themselves.

Hindus are bound to be against me. Jainas come here, they are bound to be against me -- this is not a Jaina ashram. In fact, Jainas have always been against ashrams; there is no such thing as a Jaina ashram. They want their sannyasins to be wanderers. They are very much afraid that if a person stays in one place he may become attached to the place; to the house, to the people surrounding him. And they are so much afraid of life that it is better to keep moving. The Jaina monk has to stay not more than three days in one place; the fourth day he has to leave. So no attachments, no friendships, no love affairs are possible; at the most he becomes acquainted. In three days you cannot have intimacies with people. One day you come, in fact only one day you remain in the village, the third day you are preparing to leave. This is fear of life! And to me, a sannyasin should be fearless.

So when a Jaina comes here, seeing so many people living together with so much joy, with such love, in deep involvements with each other, in great intimacies, friendships, love affairs.... Much more love is happening in these six acres than may be happening all over the world. In fact, sometimes I wonder how much love six acres can contain! It seems the capacity to contain love is infinite. And anybody who comes... if a Christian comes he can't find the idea of his monastery. There are Christian monasteries where women are not allowed; for one thousand years no woman has ever entered. Not even a small female baby, a two-month-old baby is allowed. What kind of people are living inside -- monks or monsters? They are afraid of a two-month-old baby. What can a poor, two-month-old baby do to them? They are afraid of themselves -- they may do something. They are boiling! And they are committing all kinds of perversions, they become perverted. If people are not allowed to be natural their energies become perverted.

All sexual perversions came out of the monasteries, remember it. They all have religious origins, they are very very spiritual and holy. All sexual perversions have their sources somewhere in religion. Now only monks are living in a monastery... how long do you think they can avoid homosexuality? Only nuns are living in a nunnery; how long can they avoid lesbianism? -- impossible to avoid. It is natural, something is bound to happen.

So when these people come here they are somebody. It is very difficult to find a journalist who has no prejudices of his own; he comes with his prejudices. And this place is totally new, so naturally they are offended, outraged. And

my statements are outrageous -- they are meant to be. They are electric shocks to these people. They get very much disturbed and they take revenge.
Remember one thing: if you report something good it never becomes news. Nobody is interested in good things; people are interested in something bad, something sensational. So they are in search of sensation. And you can find enough sensational things here, more than you can find anywhere else. You need not invent them -- we provide them!

Father Murphy was a priest in a very poor parish. He asked for suggestions how he could raise money for his church, and was told that horse-owners always had money.
He went to a horse auction, but he made a very poor buy as the horse turned out to be a donkey.
However, he thought he might enter the donkey in a race. The donkey came in third, and the next morning the headlines in the paper read, "Father Murphy's Ass Shows." The archbishop saw the paper and was very angry.
The next day the donkey came in first and the headlines read, "Father Murphy's Ass Out Front."
The archbishop was up in arms and figured something had to be done.
Father Murphy entered the donkey for a third time and it came in second. Now the newspaper read, "Father Murphy's Ass Back In Place." The archbishop thought this was too much so he forbade the priest to enter the donkey the next day, which inspired the editor to write the headline, "Archbishop Scratches Father Murphy's Ass." Finally, the archbishop heard this and ordered Father Murphy to get rid of the donkey. But he was unable to sell

it, so he gave it to Sister Agatha for a pet. When the archbishop heard this he ordered Sister Agatha to dispose of the animal at once. She sold it for ten dollars.
Next day the headlines read, "Sister Agatha Peddles Her Ass For Ten Dollars."

Don't be worried about the journalists. Enjoy whatsoever they write and help them to find things so they can go on writing. I am much more concerned right now that they should go on writing, because whether they write for or against they bring more and more people to me. And once a person comes here it is very difficult to escape! So I am just absolutely grateful to the journalists, whatsoever they are doing. They are doing such humanitarian work, such a great service to me!
So when they come here, don't feel antagonistic. Help them in every possible way.

The sixth question:
Question 6
BELOVED MASTER,
I AM SITTING SILENTLY DOING NOTHING, AND THE WEEDS ARE GROWING ALL AROUND ME.

Roderick, weeds are divine. Don't call them weeds. They are as spiritual as the buddhas. They partake of God as much as roses. Remove men from the earth -- will there be any difference between weeds and roses? All these distinctions are made up by the mind.
You are not really sitting silently; otherwise, who is telling you weeds are growing? Your mind is still functioning,

whispering things to you. It is your mind! If you are really silent there is no mind -- then whether weeds grow or roses grow it is all the same to you. What difference is there? Can't you enjoy weeds? They are beautiful people! See the weeds swaying, dancing in the wind, in the sun.... What do you think is lacking in them which roses have? Nothing is lacking. This is just an idea, and ideas change. It is possible one day that roses may go out of fashion, weeds may become an "in" thing.

A hundred years ago nobody had ever thought that cactuses would be loved by people, but now the cactus is "in" and the rose is "out." To talk about the rose looks old-fashioned, looks orthodox, conventional; to talk about cactuses is avant-garde, it shows that you are modern, contemporary. People are keeping cactuses in their bedrooms -- dangerous cactuses, poisonous cactuses, which can kill you! But they have come into fashion, and once something comes into fashion there are so many fools who start appreciating it.

People simply go on following whatsoever is made fashionable by a few clever and cunning people. Just a hundred years ago nobody would have liked Picasso's paintings, and now Picasso is the greatest artist -- not only of this century but of the whole history. What has happened? Just the fashion has changed. People get tired of one thing; they go on moving to the opposite extreme. Roderick, there is nothing wrong in weeds! There is nothing wrong in anything. The idea of right and wrong means the mind is there. You are not sitting silently and you are not sitting doing nothing. You are discriminating,

and that is action. You are labeling, and that is thinking. And you are judging.
Drop all judgment, all labeling, all discrimination... and just watch weeds growing. So what -- let them grow! When you don't have a mind at all, you are also a weed; so weeds growing around you, it is not something strange -- weeds surrounding a weed! Enjoy!

Once a Zen master was asked by a king -- because the master was a great painter -- to paint a picture of a bamboo.
The master said, "It will take time."
"How long?" asked the king.
The master said, "That is difficult to say, but at least two or three years."
The king said, "Are you mad or something? You are one of the greatest painters. I was thinking you could just draw it right now!"
He said, "That is not the problem, drawing a bamboo is not the problem -- but first I have to be a bamboo; otherwise how do I know what a bamboo is? I want to know the bamboo from the inside! So I will have to go and live in a bamboo grove. Now, one never knows how long it will take. Unless I know the bamboo from within I cannot paint it. That has been my practice my whole life: I paint only that which I have known from its deepest core."
The king said, "Okay, I will wait."
One year passed. He sent a few people to see what was happening, whether the man was alive or dead. They came back and said, "The man is alive, but we don't think that he is a man anymore -- he is a bamboo! He was swaying with the bamboos in the wind. We passed by his side; he didn't

take any notice. We said, 'Hello!' He didn't hear. We wanted to talk to him. We looked at his eyes -- they were so empty that we became frightened; either he has gone mad or something has happened. And he can do anything, so we escaped. He may kill or, who knows? -- he may jump upon us! He is no more the same man."

The king himself went to see, and the master was swaying in the wind, in the sun. And the king asked, "Sir, what about my painting?" He didn't answer.

After three years he appeared at the court and he said, "Now bring the canvas and the paints. I am ready. And why were you people disturbing me again and again? If you had not disturbed me I would have come a little earlier. These fools from your court, they were saying things to me. They were saying, 'Hello!' Do you say hello to a bamboo? They disturbed the whole thing. It took months for me to again settle into being a bamboo and to forget that I am a man. And then you came and you said, 'Sir.' Is that the way to address a bamboo? 'When are you going to paint?' Has anybody ever heard that bamboos paint? You are a fool, you are surrounded by fools! I had told you that I would come whenever I was ready."

The canvas was brought, the brushes and the color, and within seconds he drew the bamboo. And it is said that the king wept for joy. He had never seen such a painting: it was so alive! It was no ordinary painting. It was not from the outside, it was from the bamboo -- as if a bamboo had sprouted on the canvas, not been painted.

Roderick, sit silently doing nothing, and let things happen -- whatsoever is happening. If weeds are growing, let them

grow. They have the right to grow as much as you have the right to grow. And if you allow everything without any judgment, if you are nonjudgmental, you will grow to such pinnacles of joy and benediction that you cannot imagine right now.

The seventh question:
Question 7
BELOVED MASTER,
IT IS TERRIBLE WHAT YOU SAY ABOUT ITALIANS.
TRUE, OF COURSE, BUT TERRIBLE.

Adi, I know it is terrible, but what can I do? I love the Italians and I want to talk about them as much as I can. They are beautiful people. I hit only when I love. You should be worried about those whom I am not hitting. For example, I have not yet hit the Dutch. I am waiting -- when I have gathered enough love for them I am going to hit them too! It is my way of showing love and showering love.

Why don't Italians believe in reincarnation?
Well, look at it this way: who would want to come back to life as an Italian?

A woman with a baby in her arms was sitting in the waiting room at a railway station in Italy, sobbing bitterly. Up came a porter and asked her what the trouble was.
"Oh, dear me," she cried, "some people were in here and they were so rude to me about my son. I'm all upset -- they said he was so ugly!"

"There, there now, luv," said the porter soothingly. "Don't worry about it. I tell you what -- how about a nice cup of tea?"
"You are very kind," she said, wiping her eyes. "That would be very nice."
"And while I'm at it," he said, "how about a banana for your monkey?"

An Italian with a one foot high man sitting on his shoulder walked into a bar and ordered a scotch and soda. The barman was stunned but delivered the drink as ordered. Just as the fellow was about to drink it, the little man knocked it out of his hand. He ordered another one, and again the little man knocked the drink onto the floor. This scene was repeated three times.
Finally, the bartender could stand it no longer. "What's going on here?" he asked.
"It is a long story," the Italian said, "but many years ago I was in Egypt and found a magic lamp. I rubbed it and a genie offered me three wishes. First I wished for ten million dollars. Then I wished for everlasting life."
"Sounds great," said the bartender. "What was your third wish?"
"I wished for a prick twelve inches long."

Get it? Remember if you come across a genie some time, never ask for the third wish. Look in the dictionary to find out the real meaning of "prick."

The last question:
Question 8

BELOVED MASTER,
I FEEL SHOCKED WHEN YOU USE THE WORD 'FUCK'. WHAT TO DO?

Sargamo, it is one of the most beautiful words. The English language should be proud of it. I don't think any other language has such a beautiful word.
One Tom from California has done some great research on it. I think he must be the famous Tom of Tom, Dick and Harry fame.
He says:

One of the most interesting words in the English language today is the word 'fuck'. It is one magical word: just by its sound it can describe pain, pleasure, hate and love. In language it falls into many grammatical categories. It can be used as a verb, both transitive (John fucked Mary) and intransitive (Mary was fucked by John), and as a noun (Mary is a fine fuck). It can be used as an adjective (Mary is fucking beautiful). As you can see there are not many words with the versatility of 'fuck'.
Besides the sexual meaning, there are also the following uses:
Fraud: I got fucked at the used car lot.
Ignorance: Fucked if I know.
Trouble: I guess I am fucked now!
Aggression: Fuck you!
Displeasure: What the fuck is going on here?
Difficulty: I can't understand this fucking job.
Incompetence: He is a fuck-off.
Suspicion: What the fuck are you doing?

Enjoyment: I had a fucking good time.
Request: Get the fuck out of here!
Hostility: I am going to knock your fucking head off!
Greeting: How the fuck are you?
Apathy: Who gives a fuck?
Innovation: Get a bigger fucking hammer.
Surprise: Fuck! You scared the shit out of me!
Anxiety: Today is really fucked.

And it is very healthy too. If every morning you do it as a Transcendental Meditation -- just when you get up, the first thing, repeat the mantra "Fuck you!" five times -- it clears the throat. That's how I keep my throat clear!
Enough for today.

The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 11

Chapter #5

Chapter title: How sweet to be free
15 April 1980 am in Buddha Hall

SEEKER!
DO NOT BE RECKLESS.
MEDITATE CONSTANTLY
OR YOU WILL SWALLOW FIRE
AND CRY OUT: "NO MORE!"

IF YOU ARE NOT WISE,
HOW CAN YOU STEADY THE MIND?
IF YOU CANNOT QUIETEN YOURSELF,

WHAT WILL YOU EVER LEARN?

HOW WILL YOU BECOME FREE?

WITH A QUIET MIND
COME INTO THAT EMPTY HOUSE, YOUR HEART,
AND FEEL THE JOY OF THE WAY
BEYOND THE WORLD.

LOOK WITHIN --
THE RISING AND THE FALLING.
WHAT HAPPINESS!
HOW SWEET TO BE FREE!

IT IS THE BEGINNING OF LIFE,
OF MASTERY AND PATIENCE,
OF GOOD FRIENDS ALONG THE WAY,
OF A PURE AND ACTIVE LIFE.

SO LIVE IN LOVE.
DO YOUR WORK.
MAKE AN END OF YOUR SORROWS.

FOR SEE HOW THE JASMINE
RELEASES AND LETS FALL
ITS WITHERED FLOWERS.

LET FALL WILLFULNESS AND HATRED.

ARE YOU QUIET?
QUIETEN YOUR BODY.

QUIETEN YOUR MIND.

YOU WANT NOTHING.
YOUR WORDS ARE STILL.
YOU ARE STILL.

BY YOUR OWN EFFORTS
WAKEN YOURSELF, WATCH YOURSELF.
AND LIVE JOYFULLY.

YOU ARE THE MASTER,
YOU ARE THE REFUGE.
AS A MERCHANT BREAKS IN A FINE HORSE,
MASTER YOURSELF.
HOW GLADLY YOU FOLLOW
THE WORDS OF THE AWAKENED.

HOW QUIETLY, HOW SURELY
YOU APPROACH THE HAPPY COUNTRY,
THE HEART OF STILLNESS.

HOWEVER YOUNG,
THE SEEKER WHO SETS OUT UPON THE WAY
SHINES BRIGHT OVER THE WORLD.

LIKE THE MOON,
COME OUT FROM BEHIND THE CLOUDS!
SHINE.

The Scots angler died, made his way to heaven, and was stopped at the gate by Saint Peter who said, "You have told too many lies to get in here!"
"Have a heart," replied the angler. "Remember you were a fisherman once yourself!"

Gautama the Buddha is reminding his bodhisattvas that the path that they have followed themselves, the very beginning of the path, they may have completely forgotten about by now. Who remembers the dreams in the morning when he is awake? Within seconds those dreams are forgotten.
The same happens when you become enlightened: all the misery, all the nightmares, all the sorrows that you had suffered so much simply become so insignificant, so irrelevant that they disappear from your consciousness. They are no more part of your life story -- as if they had happened to somebody else and not to you. Hence Buddha is reminding his bodhisattvas how the journey starts from the very beginning; only then can these people be of help to others.
The first thing he says: Remember only to talk to seekers. There are many who are inquirers but who are not seekers, many who are curious but not seekers. The curious person is a little childish. Every child is curious -- curious about each and everything, curious about one thousand and one things, but not really interested in knowing. He asks one question; by the time you answer him he has started asking about something else. He is not listening to your answer at all, he is not interested in it anymore; it was a momentary phenomenon. He had just become attracted to something:

he saw a flower and he asked about it, and then he heard the noise of an airplane and he started asking about airplanes, and then something else caught his eye....

A seeker means one for whom the inquiry is not only curiosity, not a childish phenomenon, but a mature inquiry, for whom it has become a question of life and death. Unless truth becomes a question of life and death you are not a seeker.

Buddha is saying to his bodhisattvas, his apostles: Talk only to seekers, address yourself only to seekers. Don't waste your time with childish people who are curious about each and everything. Their questions may look very great, but their hearts are not in their questions. They have asked just to ask; they are not interested in finding the answer and they are not ready to risk anything. If they can get the answer free, maybe they are ready to listen; but they are not ready to pay. And life's real questions are not to be solved in such a cheap way. You have to pay and you have to pay with your whole being. You have to get involved; it needs commitment.

Anybody can ask about God, but very few people are ready to risk anything, to go into the unknown, to go into the adventure -- and the adventure for God is the greatest adventure there is. And it demands; it is very demanding -- it demands your total commitment. It won't allow you any other involvement. It can't be just one involvement among many other involvements; it has to be the one and only involvement. Only then is there a hope that some day you may find the answer which liberates you. Hence he says:

SEEKER!
DO NOT BE RECKLESS.

And the first thing to be taught to these people who are seekers is not to be reckless. People are living very recklessly, people are living very accidentally. Their lives have no sense of direction. They don't know where they are going, from where they are coming, why they are doing a certain thing. Maybe others are doing it so they are imitating, but imitators are not seekers. Maybe others are going to the church or to the temple so they are also going. They are not really men but sheep.
A seeker has to be a lion. He has to learn to be free from the crowd psychology, from the mob mind. He has to learn ways of individuality, of independence. He has to think of what he is doing and why. He should not be just a victim of natural life forces; he should have a certain sense of direction. Only then is there a possibility of achieving, of coming back home, of reaching somewhere, of attaining contentment, fulfillment, flowering, fruitfulness. Otherwise life remains meaningless; it is just a jumble of unrelated events.
DO NOT BE RECKLESS. First thing: Do not be just curious. Second thing: Do not be reckless.

New York City was jammed for the convention. Every hotel and rooming house was full. Phillips was tired -- he simply had to find a place to sleep that night.
"Anything will do," he said to the hotel clerk.

"I can let you have a cot in the ballroom," replied the clerk, "But there's a woman in the opposite corner. If you don't make any noise she'll be none the wiser."
"Fine," said Phillips. He went to the ballroom but five minutes later came running out to the clerk.
"Say," he cried, "that woman there is dead!"
"I know," was the answer, "but how did YOU find out?"

Everybody is curious for no reason at all -- it was none of his business. Even he cannot answer why -- some unconscious instinct, maybe biology, maybe chemistry, but not his consciousness.
Who or what is deciding your life? -- your biology, your chemistry, your psychology, your hormones? Who is deciding your life? Are you? -- you as a conscious being?

A drunk walked into a bar in Glasgow and asked, "Was I in here last night?"
"Yes, you were," replied the barmaid.
"Did I spend much money?"
"About thirty pounds."
"Thank God -- I thought I'd lost it!"

Angus was staggering home after a night with his fishing pals when he came upon a scarecrow, arms outstretched.
"Hey, Jimmy," he said, "I refuse to believe you. There never was a trout that size."

A number of Scottish soldiers were court-martialed for wrecking a public house, and one of them was asked to explain to the court how the trouble had started.

"Well, sir," he said, "Private McSporran called Private McDougall a liar, and Private Paterson hit him over the head with a chair. Private Fraser pulled out his dirk and cut a slice out of Private McDougall's leg. Two or three of Private McDougall's mates piled onto Private Fraser, and a couple of others started throwing glasses and tables around. One thing led to another and then the fighting started."

Buddha says: SEEKER! DO NOT BE RECKLESS.

MEDITATE CONSTANTLY.
OR YOU WILL SWALLOW FIRE
AND CRY OUT: "NO MORE!"

MEDITATE CONSTANTLY. The person who is a seeker will not really be interested in getting only philosophical answers from others; he will be interested in knowing on his own. He will not be interested in philosophy, he will be interested in religion. That is the difference between philosophy and religion. Philosophy is juggling with words, the art of hairsplitting, arguing endlessly about abstract ideas, arriving nowhere. Religion is more like science: it experiments, it emphasizes experience. Science is the religion of the objective world, and religion is the science of the subjective world.
Philosophy is going to die one day; it is already on its deathbed. You can go to the universities and see: every year less and less people are turning to the departments of philosophy. Many philosophy departments are empty, deserted. People are going to science or to religion. Those who are interested in knowing the truth about the world are

going to scientific inquiries, to physics, to chemistry, to mathematics, to biology. Or, people who are interested in their own interiority, in their own subjectivity, in their own consciousness, are moving towards religion, more and more towards religion.

Religion is the science of the inner. Philosophy is neither: it is neither the science of the outer nor the science of the inner; it is just in between. It only thinks; it thinks about everything -- about science, about religion -- but it only thinks. And just by thinking, nothing ever happens. You can make very clever answers, but they are not going to solve your real problems; the problems are real and the answers are just abstract. Real problems can be solved only by real answers.

Hence Buddha says: The seeker can be persuaded to meditate -- only the seeker can be persuaded to meditate. Meditation means you start changing your inner world. You start removing dust from the inner world, you start removing all that is unnecessary in the inner world. You remove all that clutter, all the rubbish you are full of. Meditation means emptying yourself of all that the society has put inside you so that you can have a clean, clear vision, so that you can have a mirrorlike quality. When a mirror is without any dust it reflects reality; so is the case with meditation.

Meditation means making your consciousness a mirror. Thoughts are like dust, they have to be removed. And thoughts contain everything belonging to the mind: desires, ambitions, memories, fantasies, dreams... all mindstuff is different forms of thoughts, different kinds, different layers of dust. And the dust is so thick that the mirror is not

functioning at all -- hence you have to ask others. Once the dust is removed you need not ask anyone, you yourself can see. Existence has given you the magic mirror -- it is within you.
I have heard a beautiful parable; it must be a parable, it cannot be an historical phenomenon:

When Alexander the Great came to India he collected many valuable treasures. And when he was leaving he came across a fakir, a naked fakir. He asked him, "Do you see my treasures? Have you ever seen anybody with so many treasures?"
The fakir said, "All your treasures are nothing, but I can give you one thing that will really make you rich!"
Alexander could not imagine what this naked fakir could give him. In his begging bowl he had a small mirror. He gave the mirror to Alexander.
Alexander said, "This mirror will make me the richest man in the world? You must be mad!"
The fakir said, "First look in the mirror."
And Alexander looked into the mirror: it did not show his face -- it showed his inner being, it showed his interiority, it showed his subjectivity. His being was reflected in the mirror.
He touched the feet of the fakir and said, "You are right -- all my treasures are nothing before this mirror."
And it is said he kept that mirror continuously with him.

The parable is beautiful. That mirror represents meditation. The fakir must have given him some meditation because only meditation can make you aware of who you are.

But Buddha says meditation has to become something constant. Buddha brings a totally new vision of meditation to the world. Before Buddha, meditation was something that you had to do once or twice a day, one hour in the morning, one hour in the evening, and that was all. Buddha gave a totally new interpretation to the whole process of meditation. He said: This kind of meditation that you do one hour in the morning, one hour in the evening, you may do five times or four times a day, is not of much value. Meditation cannot be something that you can do apart from life just for one hour or fifteen minutes. Meditation has to become something synonymous with your life; it has to be like breathing. You cannot breathe one hour in the morning and one hour in the evening, otherwise the evening will never come. It has to be something like breathing: even while you are asleep the breathing continues. You may fall into a coma, but the breathing continues.

Buddha says meditation should become such a constant phenomenon; only then can it transform you. And he evolved a new technique of meditation.

His greatest contribution to the world is vipassana; no other teacher has given such a great gift to the world. Jesus is beautiful, Mahavira is beautiful, Lao Tzu is beautiful, Zarathustra is beautiful, but their contribution, compared to Buddha, is nothing. Even if they are all put together, then too Buddha's contribution is greater because he gave such a scientific method -- simple, yet so penetrating that once you are in tune with it, it becomes a constant factor in your life. Then you need not do it; you have to do it only in the beginning. Once you have learned the knack of it, it remains with you; you need not do it. Then whatsoever you

are doing, it is there. It becomes a backdrop to your life, a background to your life. You are walking, but you walk meditatively. You are eating, but you eat meditatively. You are sleeping, but you sleep meditatively. Remember, even the quality of sleep of a meditator is totally different from the quality of the sleep of a nonmeditator. Everything becomes different because a new factor has entered which changes the whole gestalt.

Vipassana simply means watching your breath, looking at your breath. It is not like YOGA PRANAYAMA: it is not changing your breath to a certain rhythm -- deep breathing, fast breathing. No, it does not change your breathing at all; it has nothing to do with the breathing. Breathing has only to be used as a device to watch because it is a constant phenomenon in you. You can simply watch it, and it is the most subtle phenomenon. If you can watch your breath then it will be easy for you to watch your thoughts.

One thing immensely great that Buddha contributed was the discovery of the relationship between breath and thought. He was the first man in the whole history of humanity who made it absolutely clear that breathing and thinking are deeply related. Breathing is the bodily part of thinking and thinking is the psychological part of breathing. They are not separate, they are two aspects of the same coin. He is the first man who talks of bodymind as one unity. He talks for the first time about man as a psychosomatic phenomenon. He does not talk about body and mind, he talks about bodymind. They are not two, hence no 'and' is needed to join them. They are already one -- bodymind -- not even a hyphen is needed; bodymind is

one phenomenon. And each body process has its counterpart in your psychology and vice versa.
You can watch it, you can try an experiment. Just stop your breathing for a moment and you will be surprised: the moment you stop your breathing, your thinking stops. Or you can watch another thing: whenever your thinking is going too fast your breathing changes. For example, if you are full of sexual lust and your thinking is getting too hot, your breathing will be different: it will not be rhythmic, it will lose its rhythm. It will be more chaotic, it will be unrhythmic.
When you are angry your breathing changes because your thinking has changed. When you are loving your breathing changes because your thinking has changed. When you are peaceful, at ease, at home, relaxed, your breathing is different. When you are restless, worried, in turmoil, in anguish, your breathing is different. Just by watching your breath you can know what kind of state is happening in your mind.
Meditators come across a point: when the mind really completely ceases, breathing also ceases. And then great fear arises -- don't be afraid. Many meditators have reported to me, "We became very much afraid, very much frightened, because suddenly we became aware that the breathing has stopped." Naturally, one thinks that when breathing stops death is close by. It is only a question of moments -- you are dying. Breathing stops in death; breathing also stops in deep meditation. Hence deep meditation and death have one thing similar: in both the breathing stops. Therefore, if a man knows meditation he has also known death. That's why the meditator becomes

free of the fear of death: he knows breathing can stop and still he is.

Breathing is not life; life is a far bigger phenomenon. Breathing is only a connection with the body. The connection can be cut; that does not mean that life has ended. Life is still there; life does not end just by the disappearance of breathing.

Buddha says: Watch your breathing; let it be normal, as it is. Sitting silently, watch your breath. The sitting posture will also be helpful; the Buddha posture, the lotus posture, is very helpful. When your spine is erect and you are sitting in a lotus posture, your legs crossed, your spine is aligned with the gravitational forces, and the body is at its best relaxed state. Let the spine be erect and the body be loose, hanging on the spine -- not tense. The body should be loose, relaxed, the spine erect, so gravitation has the least pull on you.

Have you watched it? If you want to go to sleep you have to lie down, for the simple reason that when you are lying down flat on the ground you are in touch with the gravitational forces at the maximum, because all over the body the gravitational pull works, it pulls you. You immediately start falling asleep. It is difficult to fall asleep standing. The most difficult posture to fall asleep in is the lotus posture. The body is so relaxed there is no need to fall asleep, and the gravitational forces are at the minimum; hence they cannot pull you downwards; they can't make you heavy and dull and lethargic. You are bright, you are full of life. You are more intelligent in the lotus posture than you can ever be in any other posture. The body affects your mind.

Scientists now agree with this: that it is only because a few of the monkeys somehow... they have not been able to find the reason why and how it happened, and monkeys are monkeys -- it may have just happened out of curiosity, a few monkeys tried to stand on two legs and these are the monkeys who became the original men; they were the originators. That was the greatest innovation; nothing else has been greater than that. A few monkeys standing erect on their two legs created a great revolution; the revolution happened in the growth of the mind. The erect posture helped the mind to come out of sleep. It became more intelligent, it became more alert, it became more conscious. Other animals who move on their four legs have not been able to develop intelligence, although many of them have a mind of almost the same capacity as man. For example, the elephant has a mind of almost the same capacity as man, but has not been able to develop it and I don't think it is ever going to happen. In circuses they try hard to teach the elephant to sit in a chair or to stand even for a few seconds on two feet, but the body is so heavy the elephant cannot manage to be on two feet. Hence the brain remains clouded; the gravitational pull keeps it unconscious.

Hence this lotus posture is something valuable. It is not just a body phenomenon; it affects the mind, it changes the mind. Sit in a lotus posture -- the whole point is that your spine should be erect and should make a ninety-degree angle with the earth. That is the point where you are capable of being the most intelligent, the most alert, the least sleepy.

And then watch your breath, the natural breath. You need not breathe deeply, you don't change your breathing; you

simply watch it as it is. But you will be surprised by one thing: the moment you start watching, it changes -- because even the fact of watching is a change and the breathing is no more the same.

Slight changes in your consciousness immediately affect your breathing. You will be able to see it; whenever you watch you will see your breathing has become a little deeper. If it becomes so of its own accord it is okay, but you are not to do it by your will. Watching your breath, slowly slowly you will be surprised that as your breath becomes calm and quiet your mind also becomes calm and quiet. And watching the breath will make you capable of watching the mind.

That is just the beginning, the first part of meditation, the physical part. And the second part is the psychological part. Then you can watch more subtle things in your mind -- thoughts, desires, memories.

And as you go deeper into watchfulness, a miracle starts happening: as you become watchful less and less traffic happens in the mind, more and more quiet, silence; more and more silent spaces, more and more gaps and intervals. Moments pass and you don't come across a single thought. Slowly slowly, minutes pass, hours pass....

And there is a certain arithmetic in it: if you can remain absolutely empty for forty-eight minutes, that very day you will become enlightened, that very moment you will become enlightened. But it is not a question of your effort; don't go on looking at the watch because each time you look, a thought has come. You have to again count from the very beginning; you are back to zero. There is no need for you to watch the time.

But this has been the experience in the East of all great meditators: that forty-eight minutes seems to be the ultimate point. If this much of a gap is possible, if for this much of a gap thinking stops and you remain alert, with no thought crossing your mind, you are capable of receiving God inside. You have become the host and the guest immediately comes.

IF YOU ARE NOT WISE,
HOW CAN YOU STEADY THE MIND?

You have to be very intelligent; only then can you steady the mind. And what does he mean by intelligence? Ordinarily we behave in a very unintelligent way: we behave according to beliefs; beliefs keep us unintelligent. We behave according to borrowed knowledge; that keeps us unintelligent.

Try to accept the challenges of life directly; don't act out of belief or knowledge. Don't follow the scriptures and the traditions. They are the root cause of making you stupid, because unless you face life directly, unless those challenges are encountered, your intelligence will not arise -- because there will be no opportunity for it to arise. Give it the opportunity. Life gives many opportunities but you go on missing the opportunities because you live on borrowed answers.

Face life and its questions and its realities on your own, even if your own responses are not so great -- they cannot be. Of course you cannot respond like a buddha, but by borrowing some answer from Buddha you will never be intelligent enough to become a buddha yourself. Yes, you

will commit many errors, many mistakes. Yes, you will go astray many times -- go, don't be worried! Life is meant for that, so that you can try. It is through trials, many errors, many mistakes, that one learns. When you learn by your own efforts you become intelligent. And only an intelligent person can see the beauty of meditation, can understand the significance of meditation.

IF YOU CANNOT QUIETEN YOURSELF, WHAT WILL YOU EVER LEARN?

And all learning happens through meditation; it does not happen through study. That is accumulation of information, it is not learning. Always be alert about borrowed knowledge: howsoever precious it appears it is all false, pseudo -- for you. It is not pseudo for the man who has lived it. It is true for Buddha, true for Jesus, true for Krishna, but not for you. You will have to live....
Buddha also had the scriptures available. He could have read Krishna; the Gita was available. And he was well-educated -- he was the son of a king. All the scriptures must have been available to him and great scholars and great teachers were available to him. He could have recited the Gita every day; he could have learned the Gita so absolutely that he would have been able to repeat it just from memory, but then he would have missed buddhahood. And in Krishna's time also the Vedas were available, but Krishna did not borrow knowledge from the Vedas. In Jesus' time the Old Testament was available, but Jesus tried to find out the truth for himself. This is something very essential to understand: truth has to be found by oneself.

Only then is it liberating; otherwise it becomes a bondage -- a beautiful bondage, but a bondage all the same.
And if you cannot learn....

HOW WILL YOU BECOME FREE?

It is only by experiencing truth on your own that freedom happens. Freedom is the fragrance of the experience of truth.

WITH A QUIET MIND
COME INTO THAT EMPTY HOUSE, YOUR HEART,
AND FEEL THE JOY OF THE WAY
BEYOND THE WORLD.

Buddha says: With the silent mind, the quiet mind... COME INTO THAT EMPTY HOUSE, YOUR HEART.
Your heart is your real home; it is utterly empty. Your head is full of rubbish, your heart is totally empty. Move from the head to the heart! The whole process of meditation is a movement from the head to the heart, from the mind to no-mind.
COME INTO THAT EMPTY HOUSE, YOUR HEART, AND FEEL THE JOY OF THE WAY -- and you will be full of joy -- BEYOND THE WORLD. A joy that is not of this world, a fragrance that comes from the beyond.

LOOK WITHIN --
THE RISING AND THE FALLING.

The rising and falling of your breath: that is the way of looking within. Many have said: Look within. Socrates has said: Look within, know thyself, but nobody has given the exact method. Buddha gives you the exact method: the rising and the falling of the breath. It is through the breath that you are bridged. Breath is the bridge between your soul and your body. If you can watch your breath rising and falling, slowly slowly you will be able to see the body as separate from yourself and also the breath as separate from yourself, because the watcher cannot be the watched, the observer cannot be the observed. Suddenly one day you will realize that you are the witness of it all. And the witness is certainly transcendental to all that it witnesses. In that very moment freedom has happened to you. Then:

WHAT HAPPINESS!
HOW SWEET TO BE FREE!

IT IS THE BEGINNING OF LIFE....

Birth is not the beginning of life. This is the beginning of life, when you experience your witnessing soul. IT IS THE BEGINNING....

OF MASTERY AND PATIENCE,
OF GOOD FRIENDS ALONG THE WAY,
OF A PURE AND ACTIVE LIFE.

Meditate over these words. Buddhists have not understood these words at all. How can this man, Gautama the Buddha, be an escapist? He says: IT IS THE BEGINNING OF a

new LIFE, OF MASTERY AND PATIENCE, OF GOOD FRIENDS ALONG THE WAY....

He is giving you a new world, a new way to love, a new way to be friendly; he is giving you new friends. In fact, only meditators can be friendly towards each other because they are not competitors. Nobody else can be friendly, they only pretend. How can competitors be friendly? Deep down they are enemies because everybody is coveting the same things. You are greedy for money, your friend is also greedy for money. How can you be friendly? Impossible. All friendship is bogus, phony.

You want to be the prime minister and your friend also wants to be the prime minister. Who does not want to be the prime minister? How can you be friendly? Hence they say in politics there is no friendship at all. A few are enemies openly, a few are enemies in a hidden way. That's why in politics every day changes happen: somebody who was a friend yesterday, today is an enemy; somebody who was an enemy yesterday, today is a friend. It is a strange world, the world of politics.

Machiavelli, in THE PRINCE, suggests to the politicians, "Never say anything to your friends that you would not like to be known by your enemies, because any friend can become your enemy any day." He also says, "Never say anything against your enemies that you would not like to say against your friends because any enemy can become a friend any day" -- then there will be difficulty. Then you will have to swallow something and it will be humiliating. Politicians go on doing that: they go on spitting and swallowing it back again and again. They say one thing

today, another thing tomorrow; they have to. In politics no friends are possible.

Friends are possible only on the way, on the way towards God, because it is not a competition. You can have God, I can have God; there is no question that by your having God I will not be able to have God anymore. Millions of people can have God and there is no problem because God is infinite, truth is infinite. My having the truth does not mean that now you cannot have it. In fact, on the contrary, my having the truth means that you can also have it! If I can have it, why not you? Hence, on the way, there is a totally new kind of friendship.

... OF A PURE AND ACTIVE LIFE. How can Buddha be called an escapist? He says: ... OF A PURE AND ACTIVE LIFE. He means creativity, a creativity that comes out of meditative innocence, of meditative purity. And a real creator is possible only through meditation. Your so-called painters, ninety-nine percent of them, are not real painters. Your so-called poets are not poets, your so-called musicians are not musicians -- maybe technicians. They know how to play, they know how to compose, they know how to paint, but just knowing how to paint does not make you a creator.

A creator is a totally different phenomenon. The creator brings something of God into the world, something of the creator into the world. But how can you bring something of God into the world if you have not known God yourself? A Buddha is a creator, a Jesus is a creator. Their words, their acts are the only proof that God exists. Their very presence is proof that God exists. Their presence is creative: in their very presence thousands of people are

transformed. Buddha is not an escapist; he cannot be. No awakened person can be an escapist. Cowards escape, courageous people are creative.
SO LIVE IN LOVE -- these are Buddha's words, mind you:

SO LIVE IN LOVE.
DO YOUR WORK.
MAKE AN END OF YOUR SORROWS.

He is not against love, he is not against creativity, he is not against work either. DO YOUR WORK -- because unless you do the work that is close to your heart you will remain unfulfilled. And the meditator finds immediately what his work is. The meditator finds intrinsically that this is his work; he does not have to think about it. It is so clear and so loud that he knows that he has to be a musician or he has to be a poet or he has to be this or that. It comes so clear that there is no question of doubt. And then he starts working; that work is his meditation.
There are many people here who are afraid of work. They don't know that the work that is happening here is totally different from the work that you have come across in your life. That was something totally different. When I give you some work it is to help your growth. Until you become capable of finding your own work I will go on giving it to you -- only up to the moment when you are capable of finding it yourself. And any work that is being given here is nothing but a meditation for you. If it is not a meditation for you then you have not understood my message at all.

FOR SEE HOW THE JASMINE

RELEASES AND LETS FALL
ITS WITHERED FLOWERS.

LET FALL WILLFULNESS AND HATRED.

Buddha says: As the jasmine flowers fall when they have withered away or leaves fall from the trees when they die, dead leaves. Just like that, LET FALL WILLFULNESS AND HATRED. The first thing he says that has to be dropped -- easily, without effort, just like a withered jasmine flower falling of its own accord -- is willfulness, your will, your ego.

So sometimes I have to put you in a certain work where you have to drop your ego and you think it is a kind of punishment. It is not a kind of punishment; it is a challenge, it is a situation where you will have to drop the ego sooner or later because it will be creating misery again and again for you. It will make you clearly aware that your ego is causing your misery.

Just the other day, Anshumali wrote saying, "Beloved Master, working in Vrindavan under Deeksha seems to be a punishment." It is not, Anshumali. It is a reward, not a punishment! It is a punishment if you want to cling to your ego; if you let the ego fall, it is a reward. And then you will be able to see the beauty of the work, and you will be able to see the beauty of Deeksha too. She is a beautiful Italian mama! She loves her workers, she loves her people; she is utterly devoted. Of course, she loves so much that she shouts also, she screams also. Her love is such that she trusts that you will understand her screaming too. But she is

a good device; she has been of immense help to many people.
There are one hundred therapy groups here, but Deeksha's is the best! Although it is not known as a therapy group -- it is a secret therapy group.
If you drop your willfulness, your ego, then hatred also drops because hatred is nothing but the shadow of your ego. If there is no ego there is no hatred; if there is ego, there is always hatred following it. Whosoever comes in the way... and everybody will come in the way because egos cannot adjust to each other. Egos are always in conflict, egos are always quarreling, they are quarrelsome, hence the hatred.
Drop the ego and see the beauty of egolessness. Then there is no hatred, no anger. You become so silent, your energy becomes so calm and quiet, that suddenly you start seeing the world in a different light, in a different perspective. Then this ordinary world is no longer ordinary -- it becomes sacred.

ARE YOU QUIET?
QUIETEN YOUR BODY.
QUIETEN YOUR MIND.

Buddha says: First start with the body and then move to the mind. Quieten your body by watching your breath, quieten your mind by watching your thoughts.

YOU WANT NOTHING.
YOUR WORDS ARE STILL.
YOU ARE STILL.

Then you will come to see that there is no desire. How can desire exist in a silent mind? Desire is a state of turmoil, desire is a state of unconsciousness, desire is mad. When you are silent, madness disappears.

Three times Jessie brought Sandy to the vicarage, hoping to be made man and wife, but each time the minister refused because of the groom-to-be's intoxication.
"Why do you persist in bringing him to me in such a state?" asked the minister.
"Please, Reverend," explained Jessie, "he won't come when he's sober!"

The moment you are sober, silent, you will not do many things that you are doing and you will start doing things that you have never thought of before. Your life will no more be a wastage; it will become creativity, tremendous creativity. Your life will not grow thorns, it will grow flowers. It is the same energy!
But the mind keeps you occupied in such stupid things, in such stupid details about stupid things. Just see what your mind goes on doing... and you will not need anyone to tell you that you are mad.

A little man walks into "The Perfect Stationers" -- an exclusive New York shop specializing in paper products. He is approached by an elegant salesman in a Brooks Brothers suit. "Can I help you, sir?" the salesman intones in a cultured voice.
"Yes, I would like some writing paper, please."

"Would you prefer lined or unlined paper, sir?"
"Oh, anything is fine. It doesn't matter."
"Then will you be writing with a fountain pen or a ballpoint?"
"I really don't know. Whatever comes to hand...."
"Would you like to have a thick paper or onion-skin paper, sir?"
"Look, anything is fine. Just give me any old packet!"
"Perhaps you would prefer one of the perfumed varieties?"
"If you like. But I have a bus to catch -- just give me some paper, PLEASE!"
"It will just take a moment now, sir. Would you like a hand-made paper in a special presentation box or a simple commercial brand?"
The little man's voice rises an octave. "Look, for the tenth time... any paper will do! Make it fast, would you?"
"Then perhaps you have a favorite color -- red, blue, yellow...?"
Just at that moment another man bursts into the shop. His eyes have dark circles underneath and his cheeks are wet with tears.
"Look," he sobs, "this tile is the color of my bathroom and this is the size of my toilet. I showed you my asshole yesterday. Now, could I please have some toilet paper?"

Just look at your mind... stupid things and stupid details ad infinitum! You go on and on -- when are you going to stop?... please! That's what Buddha is saying.

Feinberg, the funeral director, was lunching with his friend, Weinstein.

"I got a good bargain for you in a coffin," he said.
"I don't like to think about things like that. How much?"
"It's made of mahogany with silver handles and a lock. For you, only two thousand dollars."
"I'll think about it."
On his way home from work, Weinstein stopped at the Minkis Mortuary to compare prices.
"I can give you something nice," said the director. "I've got a mahogany coffin with silver handles and I'll even throw in a lock. The price is one thousand dollars."
Weinstein rushed over to Feinberg's and began screaming. "Some friend you are! I just saw the same coffin you wanted to sell me and it was a thousand dollars cheaper."
"Was it mahogany with silver handles and a lock?"
"Yes!" replied Weinstein.
"Did it have a silk lining?"
"I didn't look. I don't think so."
"You see!" said Feinberg. "In six months you'll need a new lining."

Not only about life but even about afterlife, the mind goes on preparing even for that. People decide about their wills, they decide about their epitaphs, they decide how their tombs have to be made, in what kind of marble. Man seems to be so utterly unintelligent and he goes on wasting his life on such things which don't make any sense at all. But you have to look into your own mind.
YOU WANT NOTHING. YOUR WORDS ARE STILL. YOU ARE STILL. Buddha says this is how one should be -- no desire, because all desires are futile. They are about the future; life is in the present. All desires distract you from

the present, all desires distract you from life, all desires are destructive of life, all desires are postponements of life. Life is now and the desire takes you away, farther and farther away from now. And when we see that our life is misery we go on throwing the responsibility on others, and nobody is responsible except us.

"My good man," said the visitor to the prisoner, "how did you happen to come to this sad place?"
"Well, sir," replied the convicted man, "you see in me the unhappy victim of the unlucky number thirteen."
"Indeed!" said the visitor. "How was that?"
"Twelve jurymen and one judge, sir."

Nobody wants to take the blame on himself. Anything will do -- unlucky number, palmistry, fate, astrology... stars, poor stars are creating misery for Anshumali! Even if they search for Anshumali it will be difficult for them to find him; they cannot even find the earth -- the earth is so tiny. Our sun is twelve thousand times bigger than the earth and our sun is a very mediocre star. There are stars millions of times bigger than the sun; compared to those stars this earth is just a particle of dust, unnoticeable, negligible. It can be neglected, ignored. And there are millions of stars that science has counted and millions more must be beyond because our reach is limited, our instruments are limited. And these stars are deciding the fates of a clerk in the collector's office, of a peon in the railway station!
Man is so stupid, unbelievably stupid. He goes on throwing the responsibility on somebody else. Unless you stop this

you will never become religious. A religious person is one who takes the responsibility upon himself.
The first thing that is making you miserable is your desiring, constant desiring for this and that. Stop that. And when there is no desire there are no thoughts either. The function of the thoughts is to help you desire; they are instrumental. If you don't have desires, thoughts are bound to disappear of their own accord. And when there are no desires, no thoughts... YOU ARE STILL. You are calm, collected, centered, rooted.

It was an early morning fire, and the young Italian reporter was lucky enough on arriving at the scene to get an account of it from one of the residents of the apartment house who had escaped.
"It was terrible," narrated the man. "Imagine walls crumbling about you, the flames of the fire practically licking your cheek in whatever direction you turned and the very iron of the bannisters smoking under your hands. But in the midst of it all, I want you to know, I kept quite cool and balanced."
"It's a shame, since you were so calm and cool," replied the reporter, "that you didn't think of putting your pants on."

The people who think they are quiet and calm are not quiet and calm, they are just believing that; they are just hoping that they are quiet and calm. Only very rarely is a person quiet and calm. It happens only at the ultimate peak of meditation, not before it. So don't deceive yourself.

BY YOUR OWN EFFORTS

WAKEN YOURSELF, WATCH YOURSELF.
AND LIVE JOYFULLY.

Accept the responsibility and that gives you great insight. If you are responsible for all your misery, if you are responsible for all your nightmares, then the other thing is also possible: you can wake up. If you are responsible for your sleep, you can wake up; if you are not responsible, some stars are responsible, then what can you do? You are just a victim and you have to suffer. Unless the stars change their mind, if they have any mind....
BY YOUR OWN EFFORTS WAKEN YOURSELF, WATCH YOURSELF. AND LIVE JOYFULLY. And people say Buddha is a pessimist? -- and he says: LIVE JOYFULLY.
Buddha says: Don't believe in a savior because that is the old mind, the same mind that wants to throw the responsibility on somebody else. Now Christians think Jesus saves. Hindus think that whenever the need arises, Krishna will come back; he will take another incarnation to save humanity. When are you going to feel your responsibility? And people don't think that this is just ugly, insulting, humiliating; it is falling below human dignity.

A Christian and a Jew were out walking. They came across a church and in front of it there was a big board with the words, "Jesus saves!"
The Jew said, "That's nothing -- Moses invests!"

Nobody can save you; don't wait for any savior. You can save yourself, that is true.

This is also one of Buddha's great insights into human misery, into human reality, that he says: Don't believe that somebody will save you. You are the cause of your misery, you can be the cause of your bliss.

YOU ARE THE MASTER,
YOU ARE THE REFUGE.
AS A MERCHANT BREAKS IN A FINE HORSE,
MASTER YOURSELF.

HOW GLADLY YOU FOLLOW
THE WORDS OF THE AWAKENED.

And if you meditate, if you become a little silent, a little alert, you will love these words because they have the taste of truth -- but only for those who are meditating.
HOW GLADLY YOU FOLLOW THE WORDS OF THE AWAKENED. Then all the awakened ones suddenly become your contemporaries. Then only can you understand Jesus, Buddha, Krishna, Mahavira, Lao Tzu. Then only, when you meditate, suddenly mysteries open up, closed doors open and things which were never clear to you suddenly become clear. But it happens through meditation and there is no other way. Not by studying, not by gathering more and more knowledge, not by arguing, not by philosophizing, but only by becoming more and more silent. In utter silence, God speaks to you through all the awakened ones.

HOW QUIETLY, HOW SURELY
YOU APPROACH THE HAPPY COUNTRY,

THE HEART OF STILLNESS.

And then your steps have a confidence because all the buddhas are witnesses to you. As you start tasting the joys of meditation, as you start becoming alert to the beauties of meditation, as flowers start blossoming inside you, all the buddhas become witnesses to you. You know you are on the right track; great confidence arises in you.
HOW QUIETLY, HOW SURELY YOU APPROACH
THE HAPPY COUNTRY, THE HEART OF STILLNESS.

HOWEVER YOUNG,
THE SEEKER WHO SETS OUT UPON THE WAY
SHINES BRIGHT OVER THE WORLD.

And it is not a question of age. Buddha was the first to initiate young people into sannyas. Otherwise, in India the tradition was that only very very old people, older than seventy-five, were allowed to take sannyas. Sannyas was for the old people. Buddha created a revolution: he initiated young people.
And my own experience is: the younger you are, the better, because as you become older you gather more and more rust, more and more dust. As you become older you become more and more burdened with experience, knowledge and all kinds of stupid things. As you become older you start losing the vigor, the energy, the courage to experiment with the unknown, to explore the unknown. As you become older you become so afraid of death that out of fear you go to God, and those who go out of fear to God never reach God. Fear is not a bridge, it is a wall. Those

who go towards God inquiring for truth out of love for truth, only they are bridged. It needs a certain youth, a certain courage, a certain capacity to take risks. It needs energy, freshness; because religion basically is rebellion.
Buddha says: HOWEVER YOUNG.... Don't be worried about that. Maturity has nothing to do with age; growing old is not necessarily growing up. One can be young and grown-up and one can be very old and very childish. Age and maturity have no necessary link. Maturity comes through meditation. Aging is an ordinary process; everybody ages. Animals age, trees age, people age; that has nothing to do with transformation.
HOWEVER YOUNG, THE SEEKER WHO SETS OUT UPON THE WAY SHINES BRIGHT OVER THE WORLD.

LIKE THE MOON,
COME OUT FROM BEHIND THE CLOUDS!
SHINE.

Buddha says to his bodhisattvas, go and tell the seekers: LIKE THE MOON, COME OUT FROM BEHIND THE CLOUDS! SHINE.
The same I say to you: LIKE THE MOON, COME OUT FROM BEHIND THE CLOUDS! SHINE.
Enough for today.

The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 11

Chapter #6

Chapter title: Rising in love

16 April 1980 am in Buddha Hall

The first question:
Question 1
BELOVED MASTER,
I HAVE FALLEN IN LOVE WITH A WOMAN I HAD DIVORCED TWO YEARS AGO. IS IT POSSIBLE?

Shraddhan, man is almost a machine. Man is not yet man; he functions unconsciously, he lives in sleep. Hence everything is possible. In fact, you always fall in love with the same woman, even though apparently you fall in love with somebody else. The type is the same because your liking is the same, your mind is the same, your choice is the same.
Just watch people, watch their love affairs, and you will be surprised. It is always the same man or the same woman -- yes, with a different face or with a different mask, different clothes, different shape and size. But these differences are not real differences.
Unless you are new how can you fall in love with somebody new? Who is going to choose? How is one going to choose? The same mind will like the same type of face, the same eyes, the same color, the same shape, the form, the way the woman walks, the way she talks. Again within a few days you will be tired, just as you were tired before. Again you will find you are trapped, imprisoned, and the woman will also find the same thing. But man lives in such an unconscious state that you cannot expect more than that.

If man is conscious, then many things become impossible. In the first place, falling in love itself becomes impossible. You start rising in love, not falling in love; the very quality of your love becomes totally different. It is no more a relationship, it is more a state of your being. You are full of love, you share your love, but there is no demand on your part. It is no longer a business, it is no longer conditional, it asks nothing. It is simply thankful that somebody accepted, that somebody did not reject your love. You feel grateful. It is not a bondage for the other, it does not enslave the other. It is not possessive; it is absolutely nonpossessive, unconditional, undemanding. It gives freedom. And when love gives freedom, lovers start soaring high, they start moving towards God. Love becomes a door to the divine.
Right now love simply drags you downwards. 'Falling in love' is a meaningful phrase -- you certainly fall, you gravitate downwards. In the beginning you feel great, but only in the beginning. That is just infatuation, because you are hoping something new is going to happen. In the beginning you are excited, it seems a great adventure, but soon you find it is the same old, rotten thing -- nothing special, nothing new. Just the partners have changed, but the game is the same -- and played with the same violence, with the same ugliness.
Shraddhan, it is not only you who have fallen in love with the same woman; everybody is doing that. In the ordinary, unconscious state of humanity more than that cannot be hoped for. You were fortunate that you got divorced, but it is difficult to live alone unless you know the beauties of being alone.

The moment you are alone you start suffering from loneliness, you start hankering for the company of the other. And then anybody will do, even the same woman that you had divorced; it is better than being lonely. Even if it is miserable, people prefer misery for company rather than loneliness.

Unless you know the joys of meditation you cannot avoid falling in love. Once you start enjoying your own being, the joy, the space, the absolute freedom, the unhindered consciousness, nobody occupying your attention, nobody trying to catch your attention, nobody impinging on your freedom, interfering with your freedom.... When you start enjoying your aloneness you have become a meditator. Yes, love will also be possible after that, but a totally different kind of love.

You must have been suffering from loneliness and, finding the same woman again, you may have thought it is better to be with her than to be lonely. And you must have forgotten all the miseries -- people's memories are very short.

And this has to be understood: the mind tends to forget the miserable part, it tends to remember the pleasurable part. That is one of the strategies of the mind to remain in control, to remain your master. It always tends to forget the misery; it goes on magnifying, enhancing, decorating the pleasurable part. Reality is totally different, but the mind lives in imagination.

And your memories are not reliable at all because your memories are fictitious. You just think how beautiful it was, you have forgotten all the misery; you have chosen only a few moments that may have been beautiful. There must have been a few moments which were beautiful, but

only a few moments, few and far between. And they cannot be as beautiful as you were thinking; otherwise what was the need to divorce the woman? The misery must have been much more, the pain must have been too much, unbearable. You must have suffered too much, the woman must have suffered too much. It is not a question of the woman being at fault or you being at fault; it is simply that two unconscious people being together are bound to create misery for each other.

If you cannot be happy alone, how can you create happiness for anybody else? You yourself are not happy, how can you give happiness to the other? You can give only that which you have. You are miserable -- you can pretend that you are not miserable, but for how long? The honeymoon cannot last forever. Within a week or at the most two weeks it is finished, and then you know that both are miserable people. And when two miserable people live together, misery is not only doubled, remember, it is multiplied.

But you forget all that. Later on you efface those parts which were miserable, you preserve the beautiful moments. And not only do you preserve them, you go on decorating them, painting them, again and again. Slowly slowly they have no relationship with the reality. Your past is fictitious, your future is fictitious; only your present is real. But you don't live in the present at all; either you live in the past or you live in the future.

And why has this question arisen, Shraddhan? Misery must have started again! That's why you are asking, "Is it possible?" You have done it, and you are asking me, "Is it

possible?" You yourself cannot believe what you have done.
When people are together they want to be alone; when they are alone they want to be together. People are impossible!

Middle-aged Rizzoli sat on the front steps weeping bitterly.
"What's-a matta for you?" asked his neighbor, Pasquale.
"Bonnaocchi's wife-a just-a die," said Rizzoli, wiping his tears.
"So what?" said his neighbor, "She was-a no blood-a relative of yours."
"I know that," said Rizzoli. "It is-a just-a that everybody seems-a to have-a good luck but-a me!"

When you are with someone, immediately a thousand and one problems arise which were not there before. When you are alone those problems disappear, but a new problem arises: the loneliness seems to be so empty. You feel at a loss, you don't know what to do. Soon you start forgetting all the misery that was coming out of your relationship; you start hankering for another relationship. You think, "Maybe this time it is going to be different." Maybe she has changed, maybe you have changed. Maybe both of you have learned from the experience.

Harry and his girl, Francesca, were on the couch watching an old Roy Rogers movie on TV. As Roy rode through a pass, Harry said, "I will bet you a screw his horse steps in a gopher hole and falls."
"Okay," said Francesca, "you're on!"
Sure enough, the horse stumbled.

After the bet was paid in full Harry said, "I oughta tell you I saw the movie before. That's how I knew."
"So did I," said the Italian girl, "but I didn't think-a a horse-a be dumb-a enough to fall-a in the same hole twice-a!"

But man is more dumb.
Now make the best out of it. When you have fallen in the hole, try to make a home there! You are an American, and the only religion the American believes in is: Try and try and try again.

The second question:
Question 2
BELOVED MASTER,
I CANNOT UNDERSTAND YOU; I HAVE TRIED HARD BUT FAILED. WHAT SHOULD I DO NOW?

Govindo, is there a need to understand me? What is understanding? It is an intellectual effort. What I am trying to communicate to you has nothing to do with the intellect. You can feel it, but you cannot understand it. You can live it, and only by living it will you be able to understand it. But people try just the opposite -- first they want to understand. The idea is: Unless we understand a thing, how can we try it, how can we live it? It is logical that first one should understand and only then should one try to live. But life is not logical; life is far deeper than logic, and many times life is absolutely illogical. If you try to cling to logic you will miss many things, and those many things are the most precious. You will miss love, you will miss meditation, you will miss joy, you will miss God, you will

miss freedom. You will miss all that makes life significant, that gives life beauty, splendor. You will miss the presence of godliness that surrounds you. Logic is a barrier, not a bridge.

And Govindo, you say, "I cannot understand you." You must be trying from the head. It is a heart-to-heart communion. If you want to misunderstand me then the head is the right instrument; then you can go on misunderstanding me forever and forever. But if you want to understand me, then you have to forget all about your old patterns of understanding things. It is not mathematics that I am teaching here, it is not philosophy that I am teaching here.

I am teaching something absolutely existential. You have to live it, you have to take the quantum leap. You have been told again and again that before you take the jump, think twice. And what I am saying to you is: Take the jump first and then think as many times as you want, because then thinking cannot do anything, it cannot do any harm. But let the jump happen first.

Meditation has to be experienced. If you try to figure it out, what it is, you will miss the point because it is not a question of mind at all. Meditation means a state of no-mind. I am constantly pulling you towards the state of no-mind, in every possible way.

What I am doing here is absurd, it is not logical. You will have to put logic aside; otherwise I will say one thing and you will understand something else.

The judge asked the philosopher who was produced in court, "Now tell me, sir, why did you park your car where you did?"
The professor said, "There was a sign saying, FINE FOR PARKING."

Put your intellect aside. And remember, I am not telling you to put your intelligence aside. On the contrary, if you can put the intellect aside you will be far more intelligent because intelligence and intellectuality are not synonymous, they are antagonistic. Intelligence is a clarity; intellectuality is nothing but a clouded state. Intellectuality means you are too knowledgeable; your knowledge goes on interfering. Your mind is continuously interpreting, your mind is judging.
Listen to me without any judgment. I am not saying agree with me -- there is no question of agreement or disagreement -- just listen.
When you go to the mountains and you listen to the sound of a waterfall, do you agree with it or disagree with it? You simply listen! When you listen to beautiful music, do you agree or do you disagree? There is no question of agreement or disagreement; listening is nonjudgmental.
Hence the critics go on missing many things. If a critic goes to listen to music, his listening is not total; he is constantly comparing, judging, interpreting. You have to be very noncritical. You have to be just open, vulnerable, receptive, silent; so that whatsoever is happening can penetrate to the deepest core of your being.
If you are full of your own mind, Govindo, you are going to misunderstand me; that is bound to happen.

Miss Zockwoski, an attractive redhead, got on a crowded bus and stood near a young fellow.
The lad, thinking of giving his seat to her, looked up and said, "How far?"
"You got your nerve!" snapped the Polish girl. "Would I ask you how long?"

If you are carrying something in your mind, if you are preoccupied, then whatsoever you hear is not what is being said, it is what you are capable of hearing.

Quizmaster: "Lady, for fifty dollars, tell me who was the first man on earth?"
Lady: "Adam."
Quizmaster: "Right. Now for two hundred dollars tell me Eve's first words when she met Adam."
Lady (stuck for an answer, turns to the quizmaster and says): "Gee, that's a hard one, isn't it?"
Quizmaster: "Give this lady two hundred dollars!"

Govindo, don't remain preoccupied with your own thoughts. You must have come with great knowledge, you must have come with conceptions of your own and you are listening through a jungle of your own ideas.
What I am saying is very simple, utterly simple. My statements are absolutely ordinary. I am not a holy man, I am not a saint. I am far more ordinary than you are! I have nothing special about me. I don't exist at all, how can I be special? So my statements are very simple -- a child can understand them. But you can go on missing.

On a Third Avenue bus in Manhattan, a very prim spinster was shocked overhearing Scarpetti, the immigrant, saying to his friend, "Emma come-a first, I come-a next, two assa come-a together, I come-a again, two assa come-a together again, I come-a once-a more, pee-pee twice, then I come-a for the last-a time."
When Scarpetti was finished, the crimson-faced old maid turned to a policeman sitting nearby. "Aren't you going to arrest that terrible old man?" she whispered.
"Why?" asked the policeman. "For spelling 'Mississippi'?"

Let me repeat: "Emma come-a first, I come-a next, two assa come-a together, I come-a again, two assa come-a together again, I come-a once-a more, pee-pee twice, then I come-a for the last-a time."

You ask me, "What should I do? I have tried hard but failed." Now please don't try hard. In fact, stop trying, drop trying. Just listen for the sheer joy of listening. The wind passing through the pine trees... listen. The sound of running water... listen. The birds singing in the morning... listen. Don't try to understand. And just by listening something will start reaching your heart. A song, a dance will start happening. Your heart will start opening up like a flower and great fragrance will be released -- and that will be real understanding.
Govindo, you have been unnecessarily trying hard. Relax with me, don't try hard. If you try hard you will be tense -- and there is no possibility of understanding me through

tension. Relax, rest. I am here to teach you relaxation and total rest.
Understanding is going to happen but not through the head, it is going to happen through the heart -- not through logic but through love.

The third question:
Question 3
BELOVED MASTER,
WHY IS CREATIVITY SO PAINFUL?

Prem Sarva, creativity is the highest peak of your consciousness; hence it is painful, it is arduous. You are going uphill. To be uncreative is very comfortable; it is a downward journey. You need not do anything, nothing is needed on your part; just the gravitational pull is enough. When you are coming down from the hill towards the plains you can just turn your car engine off, no gas is needed; the car will go on rolling down. But if you are going uphill then effort is needed, great effort is needed. Creativity needs the greatest effort because many things have to be dropped when you are moving upwards; unnecessary weights have to be dropped. And you are carrying so much luggage; it is all unnecessary, it is useless. But people go on collecting, people are great collectors. They will collect any kind of rubbish, hoping that maybe some day it will prove of some use. They are greedy and they feel empty so they go on stuffing themselves with every kind of thing. You are so full of ego and ego is a great weight. You cannot move upwards. You

will have to put the ego aside -- and that is the greatest pain.

To be a creator means you drop the very idea that "I am separate from existence." Creation happens only when you are one with the existence. Creation happens only when you are so in tune with the creator that there is no disturbance from your side. And the greatest disturbance comes from the ego. It nourishes itself on disturbance, it lives on disturbance. Ego means the idea that "I am separate." And if you think you are separate, you are living in a lie -- and creativity flows out of the experience of truth. You have to know the truth, that you are not separate. No man is an island, we are all part of one vast continent. The whole existence is one, it is one organic unity; hence all that is great has come out only in those moments when the creator was dissolved into the whole. Great paintings, great poems, great music, great dance, all happen only when you are dissolved, when you are no more. If you are, suddenly you become the block, you stop the flow. Then God cannot use you as a flute, he cannot sing through you. The flute has to be just a hollow bamboo, just an open space, just a vehicle. The great poets, the great musicians, the great dancers, are all vehicles. They don't dance, they are being danced. They don't sing, some unknown energy sings through them.

That's why creativity is painful, because nobody wants to melt and merge and dissolve. We cling to our identities. In fact, we want to be creative so that we can hang a few more awards around our egos -- so the ego can become more famous, so that you can say, "I am somebody special. I am a great poet or a great composer or a great author" -- or

something. And that's the greatest problem to be faced by any creator: that he has to drop his ego.

And in the beginning it is for the ego that you want to be creative. It is a very paradoxical process: you have to drop the very ego that was the impetus in the beginning, that wanted to be famous, that wanted to leave its name resounding down the corridors of time, that wanted to make history. That very same ego becomes the cause of stopping the flow of unknown energies in you. Otherwise God is always pouring; you have just to be open, available. You are not to be separate.

It hurts in the beginning; it hurts more if you are resisting. If you are not resisting much it hurts less; if you are not resisting at all it doesn't hurt at all. Then dropping the ego can be one of the most joyous acts.

That's what sannyas is all about. The whole message is based on this single phenomenon: dropping the ego joyously. It is not a question of surrendering your ego to me. Ego is not something that you can surrender; it is just a fiction, it is not a reality. So when the master says, "Surrender your ego to me," he is simply giving you a device, because you live with the idea that ego is very substantial. He knows it is nothing, so he says, "Surrender it to me, give it to me, and you be free of it." Not that you are giving anything -- there is nothing to give; not that he is receiving anything -- there is nothing to receive. But to help you to get rid of a false notion, a device is created. Once you have dropped the idea, suddenly you see the whole thing: nothing has been given, nothing has been taken. You are the same, only the old wrong notion has disappeared. People are very reluctant to surrender.

Just the other day one sannyasin wrote to me saying, "I can do everything you are saying, but I cannot surrender." Then how can you do everything that I am saying? That is the first thing that I am saying! And he says, "I can do everything you are saying, but I cannot surrender." And he is thinking he is making a very clear statement. That is the only thing that I am saying: Surrender the ego. And it is not a question of surrendering it to me -- surrender it to a tree, but surrender. Surrender it to the river, go and drown it in the river. Burn it, bury it, cremate it! Do whatsoever you want to do, but be finished with it.

I am not interested in collecting your egos. What will I do with so many egos? If you are suffering so much with one, I will be in the seventh hell with so many egos! I am not an ego collector. It is just a device, a simple device. You say, "Where can I put my ego?" I say, "Okay, give it to me," because I know that there is nothing to give, but you will be happy in giving it. At least you will feel great that you have surrendered; at least you have given your ego into the right hands.

But this sannyasin says, "I cannot surrender." And people coming from the West, particularly, find it very difficult. This is something which has to be understood: the Western education, the Western psychology, all emphasize ego; they all emphasize, "Enhance the ego, strengthen the ego." In different names the ego is strengthened. Willpower -- it is nothing but another name for ego. The whole idea is that man has to have an ego of steel, unbendable, strong, rocklike, hard, because life is a constant struggle for survival. You have to fight, you have to conquer.

Even a man like Bertrand Russell writes a book on science and calls it CONQUEST OF NATURE. The whole idea, the Western idea, is how to conquer; even nature has to be conquered. And who are you? -- a part of nature. A part is trying to conquer the whole. It is like your left hand trying to conquer your whole body. Is it possible? It is ridiculous. Science has not conquered nature, but in the very effort to conquer it, it has destroyed much.

In the East we have a totally different idea: nature has to be understood. The law -- what Buddha calls dhamma, the fundamental law of life -- has to be understood so that you can be in tune with it. It is not a question of conquering but of being in step with it, being in harmony with it. To be harmonious with nature is to be blissful.

If the West has lost all bliss, all peace, nothing is responsible except this stupid idea of conquering nature. Nature has not to be conquered. But the same idea persists in many ways -- in science, and even so-called religious people go on talking about willpower. Hundreds of books have been written on willpower. It is a sheer wastage, and not only a wastage but it is poisoning people's minds. People like Dale Carnegie and Napoleon Hill go on poisoning: HOW TO WIN FRIENDS AND INFLUENCE PEOPLE. Deep down the idea is the same: how to win, how to influence. Napoleon Hill has written a book: THINK AND GROW RICH. And what is the secret of growing rich? When you look, you will find it is willpower; the whole secret, the magic secret is willpower. But willpower is only another name for ego power -- and ego is impotent, there is no power in it. So people go on struggling unnecessarily, fighting with each other,

competing with each other, and the end result is that everybody is miserable. Hence for the Western mind it seems very difficult to surrender.

The situation is not better in the East either. In the East for thousands of years it has been taught that surrender is the key, so people are very easily ready to surrender, so easily ready that it has become a simple formality; it has no significance. The Eastern man can touch the feet of the master with no intention of surrender. He touches the feet of each and everybody; that is just formal. It is like shaking hands, it does not mean anything; it is like saying hello. It has no meaning in it, it is formal. It is a kind of greeting to elderly people, to anybody who is respected by others, to anybody who is known as religious, holy, saintly. People touch the feet of their fathers, their mothers, their elderly relatives; it is just a conditioning.

So the Eastern person is in a different difficulty. His difficulty is that he does not know what surrender is; he has not enough ego to surrender. And the Western man has too much ego; hence he feels resistant. But on the whole the Western man is in a better position, because if he understands the point and he consciously surrenders the ego, his surrender goes far deeper than the Eastern man's surrender.

That is my experience of thousands of sannyasins from the East and from the West. The Western sannyasin's surrender is far more total. Of course it is difficult for him, it takes longer for him, but whenever it happens, it really happens. The Eastern man's surrender takes no time; he is always willing, he is ready, even before you have asked, but it does not change him. He has been touching so many people's

feet; in fact, he has started feeling a new, subtle kind of ego, "I am so humble that I am ready to surrender. I am so surrendered." But that 'I' persists now in a far more subtle way.

You ask me, Sarva, "Why is creativity so painful?"

It is because of the ego. And then there are other problems also. If you are too knowledgeable it will be difficult for you to be creative.

In Zen they have an ancient tradition. They say if you want to become a painter, for twelve years learn as perfectly as possible the technique of how to paint, and then for twelve years forget all about the technique and painting; do something else. Turn your back on painting completely; forget all about it, as if you have nothing to do with it. And then one day start painting again.

This is something significant. For twelve years you have to learn the technique, because without the technique your painting will be childish; but if it is just the technique, then technically it will be perfect but it will not have any life, it will not be creative. So you have to learn the technique, let it soak in and then forget all about it so it becomes part of your blood, of your bones, of your marrow. And then after twelve years, one day suddenly start painting again. Now you don't know the technique. In a way you know, existentially it has become part of you; it is no longer knowledge. So your painting will not be just technical and it will not be childish either.

First learn the technique and then unlearn the technique. Only then one day does creativity explode. First learn the technique of how to dance, then forget all about technique and become spontaneous. Then only....

And there are two types of people -- one who will think that there is no need to learn the technique: "I want to be a creative person, not a technician." Then their painting, their music, their dance, will remain just a childish effort, amateurish; cannot be of much value. And then there are the opposite people who will learn the technique as much as they can and then they are caught in the technique. They paint perfectly but something is missing: the soul is missing, the spirit is missing; it is a dead corpse. So you have to drop all knowledgeability. You have to unlearn so again you can become fresh, innocent.

And third: if you are trying to be creative with a certain hidden motive you will never find the right direction for your energies, because if painters are famous then there will be many painters. For example, in France there are many painters. In India you will not find so many painters, but many saints -- just whatsoever is the fashion. In France painting is fashionable; the people who are thought to be intelligent should be painters. In India they should be saints -- the same fools! If they were born in France they would be painting; in India the same fools have become saints.

In each country the fashion is different, and at different times. For example, in India no saint will ever think of painting, but in Japan all the saints try to paint. They learn calligraphy and painting -- just the fashion.

When you are living according to a certain prevalent fashion, that simply means you want to be famous, you want to be accepted by the tradition and by the people. You are not inquiring about your real potential; you are far more interested in other people's opinions. You have to drop that too. Don't be worried about other people's opinions; simply

find out what feels good for you. Nobody may ever appreciate it -- so what? You may not become famous -- so what? Don't be worried about it. The reward is not in being famous; the reward is in being involved, totally involved in creativity. The reward is in the act itself; it is not beyond the act, it is not after the act. It is not when you have painted the painting and people have appreciated it and it is being exhibited all over the world. No, the reward is when you are painting it, when you are utterly absorbed in it. That silence, that joy, that energy, that moment when you are not and God is: that is the reward.

The fourth question:
Question 4
BELOVED MASTER,
WHAT HAPPENS? I AM AN ITALIAN AND YET NOT ENLIGHTENED.

Anand Shravan, it is enough to be an Italian; enlightenment is no longer needed. Enlightenment is for others who are not Italians. You have the first prize -- enlightenment is the second prize! You should not be greedy for that. To be an Italian is such a great phenomenon; that's why no Italian has ever become enlightened. And I don't think it is ever going to happen, for the simple reason that Italians are born enlightened. Drop this greed. What will you do with enlightenment? Spaghetti is enough! Enjoy it to your heart's content. Leave enlightenment to poor Indians; they don't have anything else. That's why in India so many enlightened people have happened: when you don't have anything else at least you can have enlightenment.

And enlightenment needs a few things which are basically missing in Italians. It needs intelligence. Where are you going to get it? It is not a commodity; you cannot find it in the marketplace, you cannot purchase it. It is not available in the outside world. And Italians are utterly extrovert, and enlightenment happens somewhere inside. It needs great understanding -- and Italians are very skillful in misunderstanding.

One summer in New York a gorilla escaped from a traveling circus. As Bronzini was walking down Broadway the ape suddenly appeared and sidled up beside the Italian. An astonished police officer directing traffic rushed over to the unusual sight of Bronzini and the gorilla.
"Hey," said the cop, "what are you doing with that ape?"
"I don't know," said Bronzini, "He just-a come up and-a take-a walk-a with me!"
"You better take that ape to the zoo!"
"Okay, boss," said the Italian.
The next day the same policeman spotted Bronzini and the gorilla walking hand in hand along Park Avenue. The cop was livid. "Just a minute," he shouted to Bronzini, "I told you yesterday to take that ape to the zoo!"
"I did," said the Italian, "and he like-a it so much, today I'm-a take-a him to the moving picture show!"

Italians are so earthy, they are pure Zorbas! Except for me, nobody is going to accept them as sannyasins. But I love to do absurd things. I want to do this miracle: to make a few Italians enlightened. There is not much hope -- I am hoping

against hope -- but there is nothing to lose. They need a good try.
They are very bodily people, utterly body-oriented. The Romans have always been the most physical people on the earth. That has a beauty of its own, because the people who think they are spiritual become in many ways eccentric, crazy, insane, very egoistic -- of course, in a very pious way. They are always thinking they are "holier-than-thou." And they are wishy-washy. They talk about great things, but their life becomes ugly.
That has happened to the East: they talk about God -- and the bread and butter is missing. And without bread and butter there is no God, no possibility of God.
So nothing is wrong in being body-oriented; one should be rooted in the body. One should be a Zorba, but one should not remain stuck there. One should go a little higher. Zorba should also become a Buddha. Then there is fulfillment; both are fulfilled, the body and the soul.
Italians are too body-oriented and they are stuck there.

Granaldi's wife had just died and he was making an awful scene at the graveside. Over and over he kept tearing at his hair and yelling, "What-a am I gonna do? What I am-a gonna do? What-a am I gonna do?"
The parish priest gently took Granaldi's arm and tried to console him. "My son, I know you have suffered a terrible loss, but you will get over it in time," he said, leading Granaldi away from the cemetery.
"Oh, what-a am I gonna do?" wailed Granaldi. "What I am-a gonna do?"

"Try to control yourself," said the priest. "Months will pass, you will get over your grief, and then in a year or two you will meet some fine young woman and marry her and everything will be fine."
"Yeah, Father, I know all that!" said the Italian. "But what-a am I gonna do tonight?"

The Italians have to be freed from their excessive body-orientation. Enlightenment is the ultimate flowering of consciousness. It can happen only when you are rooted in the body, but it cannot happen only with the body. You have to move inwards, you have to transcend the body too. Your roots should be in the body and your wings should be in the soul.
Shravan, don't be worried. It has not happened yet, but it can happen. There are so many Italians here; their surrender is deeper than anybody else's. Their commitment is also deeper than anybody else's. For the first time so many Italians are trying to move deeper into meditation; something is bound to happen out of it. But they find something in me that they cannot find anywhere else. They can find a connection with me because I am not against the body. I am not against anything. I don't think there is any problem if you love spaghetti -- you can still be spiritual! There is no antagonism.
For me even sex and samadhi are related, together. For me gossiping and gospels are not different -- somewhere deep down they are aspects of the same coin. Hence Italians find a deep affinity with me. They cannot be interested in any other spiritual man, but I am not a spiritual man in the ordinary sense. I am a whole man, I am not holy.

Locatelli, Swenson and O'Hara were sitting in the corner saloon. "There's no doubt about it," said Swenson, "Italian broads are the greatest!"
"Yeah," agreed O'Hara, "I would like to spend a nice long weekend with Gina Lollobrigida."
"Me," said Swenson, "I will take Sophia Loren."
"That's-a very nice," said Locatelli, "but I wanna Virginia Pipe-a Line-a!"
"Never heard of her!" said Swenson.
"Who is she?" asked O'Hara.
"Why, she is-a just-a the greatest Italian girl of them all. She even make-a the headlines in-a newspaper," said Locatelli. "See, here it is on-a page-a one." And there was a headline: "Five Die Laying Virginia Pipeline."

Don't be worried, Shravan, I am here to help you. This time maybe you cannot escape. So many Italians are caught in the net, a few of them are bound to become buddhas. Don't be worried, enlightenment is going to happen to many people -- Italians included!

And the last question:
Question 5
BELOVED MASTER,
AND WHAT ABOUT THE POLACKS?

Purnananda, my God, are you a Polack? I was aware that one of my sannyasins, Anando, was a Polack, but I was not talking about Polacks because one Polack cannot do much.

But two Polacks are too much; then there is danger!
Polacks are great people, even greater than the Italians. Italians are nothing compared to the Polacks! You see, they were searching for a pope, they could not find one in Italy -- they had to choose a Polack. If you are searching for a fool you have to go to Poland.
Swami Anando has contributed this authentic letter from his Polish mother:

Dear Son,
Just a few lines to let you know that I be still alive. I writing this letter slowly because I know you not able to read fast.
You won't know the house when you get home. We moved. There be a washing machine in the house when we move in, but it not working too good. Last week I put fourteen shirts into it, pull the chain, and I not see the shirts since.
Your sister Hanna had baby this morning. I not find out yet whether it be boy or girl, so I not know whether you be an aunt or an uncle.
Your uncle Leopold drown last week in a vat of whisky. Some of the men dived in to save him, but he fight them off hard. We cremated his body, but it took three days to put out the fire.
Your father not have much to drink at Christmas. I put a bottle of Castor oil in his pint of beer. It keep him going until New Year's Day.
It only rain twice last week. First for three day and then for four day.
Try to learn write me soon.
Your loving mother,

XXX
P.S. I be going to send you ten dollars, but I already seal the envelope.

Polacks are great people -- more Polacks are needed here! But it is difficult for poor Polacks to come because their country is dominated by the communists.
Just a few days ago I received a letter saying they would like to start a center somewhere in Poland. They would like the center to remain hidden; I don't think they will be able to manage it! They even want to become sannyasins but they will be caught.
In Russia there are a few sannyasins. They cannot wear orange, they cannot wear the mala, but they have been managing well. They have their malas, they have made arrangements for the malas to reach them. Now, this letter from Poland: they want malas and they want books -- but they have not given their address!

Johnson went to the zoo to see Samson and Lionel, billed as the two most vicious lions in the world. There was no doubt about Samson, the smaller one, for if even a feather came within his reach he would pounce on it and rip it to shreds. But Lionel, the other, larger lion, did nothing but lie against some rocks licking between his hind legs.
Johnson asked the zookeeper how come Lionel was advertised as being so savage.
"Even though he is just lying there licking his sensitive areas," explained the zookeeper, "Lionel is more ferocious than the other one. In fact, not twenty minutes ago he ate a Polack that fell into the cage."

"Then why is he licking himself like that?"
"Oh," said the zookeeper, "he is trying to get the taste out of his mouth!"

Purnananda, meet Anando. Try to find out -- there may be a few other Polacks also trying to hide themselves, because they know once they are known I will be after them. Now you can declare whosoever is a Polack because I will be after them anyhow! So you can declare whoever is a Polack. You can make a small society of the Polacks.
In the new commune it will be good to have small communities, separate communities, of Italians, Polacks, of Germans.... There will be a few difficulties.
Gayan wrote to me this morning saying, "Beloved Master, you may not be aware, but now I have to tell you that I am half Italian -- the fault was my father's, he was Italian -- and half German; that fault is my mother's, she was German."
There will be some difficulty for people like Gayan, but we can make arrangements: they can live on the boundary line, half in the Italian commune and half in the German commune. And I don't think there will be people who are German and Italian and Polack, all three; that will be difficult, very difficult.

Miss Zabriski walked into a physician's office and said, "I would like to get a vassilation."
"Miss," said the M.D., "I think what you are talking about is a vaccination."
"Yeah," said the Polish girl, "and I don't want you to give it to me on my arm because I wear a sleepless nightgown."
"You mean sleeveless nightgown?"

"And I don't want it on my thigh because I have a zucchini bathing suit."
"You mean bikini?"
"And I don't want you to vaccinate me on my Virginia."
"You mean vagina?"
"Alright," shouted the girl. "Virginia, vagina, just as long as I don't get small cox!"

Enough for today.

The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 11

Chapter #7

Chapter title: Beyond the beyond
17 April 1980 am in Buddha Hall

WANTING NOTHING
WITH ALL YOUR HEART
STOP THE STREAM.

WHEN THE WORLD DISSOLVES
EVERYTHING BECOMES CLEAR.

GO BEYOND
THIS WAY OR THAT WAY,
TO THE FARTHER SHORE
WHERE THE WORLD DISSOLVES
AND EVERYTHING BECOMES CLEAR.

BEYOND THIS SHORE

AND THE FARTHER SHORE,
BEYOND THE BEYOND,
WHERE THERE IS NO BEGINNING,
NO END.

WITHOUT FEAR, GO.

MEDITATE.
LIVE PURELY.
BE QUIET.
DO YOUR WORK, WITH MASTERY.

BY DAY THE SUN SHINES,
AND THE WARRIOR IN HIS ARMOR SHINES.
BY NIGHT THE MOON SHINES,
AND THE MASTER SHINES IN MEDITATION.

BUT DAY AND NIGHT
THE MAN WHO IS AWAKE
SHINES IN THE RADIANCE OF THE SPIRIT.

"Look, Captain Columbus, land! We've discovered land!"
"Wonderful! Cable Queen Isabella immediately!"
"But, Captain, the cable hasn't been invented yet!"
"Mamma mia! Do I have-a to do everything myself-a!"

Science is a tradition, it does not depend on one man's discovery. It is a continuity; many people have contributed, still many will go on contributing. Then too it is never going to be complete; something will always remain to be discovered. It is a social phenomenon. Without Newton

there is no possibility of Albert Einstein; without Albert Einstein there will be no possibility of anybody else to find something beyond the concept of relativity. Science is interdependent; it is not one man's work. Much has to be accepted from others, much has to be borrowed; it is inheritance. Hence science depends on the past, it is rooted in the past.

Religion is totally different: every individual has to discover on his own. Religion is not a tradition and can never be a tradition. You cannot borrow insights from somebody else; the insight has to be authentically yours. Only then is it significant. You can see only through your own eyes, you can understand only through your own meditation, you can experience only through the flowering of your own heart.

And there is no question of dependence. If there had been no Buddha you could still be awakened, if there had been no Christ you could still be enlightened. Your enlightenment is absolutely your own, it is individual. That's the beauty of religion; that's why religion cannot be taught. Science can be taught; religion has to be discovered again and again by each and every individual, by each and every seeker. The path of science is like walking on the earth; you leave your footprints. Buddha has said: The path of religion is like birds flying into the sky -- they don't leave any footprints... so nobody can follow a buddha. You can love a Buddha, but you cannot follow him. You can love a Christ, but you cannot follow him. Yes, your love will help you, will help you to understand, will give you courage to inquire, will strengthen your spirit to go into the unknown. It will be a tremendous help because the

journey is without any maps and you are going into the ocean. The other shore, the farther shore is not visible; there is no guarantee that you will ever reach it. By loving a Buddha, a Christ, a Zarathustra, a Krishna, a Lao Tzu, a deep trust arises in you about the farther shore -- that it exists: "If I search with my total being there is a possibility I may discover it." But the risk is great and everything has to be done by you. You have to go alone. You have to be totally alone; nobody can accompany you on the way.

The master can show you the path, but he cannot go with you. He can push you, he can encourage you, he can help in many ways, but still you have to go alone. You have to discover everything, each detail of the truth, again.

In science it is totally different: once a truth is discovered it is discovered for the whole of humanity. Once electricity is discovered there is no need for everybody to discover it again and again. That will be stupid, utterly stupid. Once discovered it becomes part of the whole humanity's heritage.

But it is not true about the inner, subjective truth. Thousands of times it has been discovered, but when it comes as a question, as an inquiry for you to discover it, you have to go again from ABC, as if you are the first, as if nobody has preceded you. You have to break the ice, you have to move in the virgin land.

This is a great challenge. Cowards shrink from it, but courageous people feel tremendously attracted. Courageous people find it almost like a magnetic force pulling them. Hence Buddha always talks about fearlessness. He says: WITHOUT FEAR, GO.

Other religions, particularly the organized religions, are rooted in fear. If Buddha had written the ancient parable of Adam and Eve and their expulsion from heaven he would have written it in a totally different way. He would have appreciated Adam and Eve. He would not have called it the original sin, he would have called it the original virtue -- that they rebelled, that they were not afraid of God and the punishment, that they were fearless people.

He would not have condemned them, that much is certain; he would have praised them immensely. It was a challenge to their spirit, to their very soul, to have been told, "Don't eat from this tree, the tree of knowledge, because if you eat from this tree you will be punished, tremendously punished -- not only you but your progeny also will be punished for ever and ever."

And the punishment was going to be great. God had said to Adam and Eve, "If you eat from the tree of knowledge, if you eat the fruit of the tree of knowledge, you will become mortal. Right now you are immortal." Death was going to be the punishment. What more punishment can there be? Death is the ultimate in punishment.

Buddha would have appreciated them. If Adam and Eve had not rebelled, had not eaten from the tree of knowledge, there would have been no humanity -- and there would have been no Christ, no Buddha, no Zarathustra, no Lao Tzu. Adam and Eve would be still roaming naked like animals in the Garden of Eden. There would have been nothing like humanity. This consciousness, this awareness, this inquiry -- nothing would have been there. The whole credit goes to Adam and Eve.

And the serpent would not have been the Devil. In Buddha's story, the serpent must have been an ancient buddha provoking Adam and Eve, "Go without fear and eat the fruit and don't be afraid, don't be cowards!" In the East the serpent has always represented wisdom. Jesus also says: Be ye as wise as serpents. The serpent in the East represents the inherent power, the seed power of your ultimate flowering; it is your potential. Hence KUNDALINI is called serpent power.

Kundalini means the serpent lying there fast asleep; it has to be awakened. Once it wakes up it starts rising upwards. When it reaches to the ultimate center of your being -- SAHASRAR -- the last center, the last rung of the ladder, you have arrived home. The serpent is not a representative, a disguised form, of the Devil. Buddha would have written the whole story in a totally different way.

But Christianity, Judaism, both are fear-oriented; so is Islam, so is Hinduism. Only two religions in the world, Buddhism and Jainism, are not; otherwise all other religions are fear-oriented. Only these two religions are rooted in fearlessness, and I cannot see how a religion can be fear-oriented. In all the languages of the world we have words like 'God-fearing' for religious people; that is utter nonsense. A religious person is not God-fearing, he is God-loving -- and love and fear don't exist together. If you love somebody you are not afraid; if you are afraid you cannot love.

Love does not exist in the world for the simple reason that we have been trying to create love through fear. The father, the mother, the priest, the politician, they all are trying to create fear in you. The mother says, "Listen to me,

otherwise you will suffer!" The father says, "I am powerful." In a thousand and one ways he proves his power over the helpless child and then says to the child, "Love me -- I am your father!" Of course the child has to pretend, because he is dependent, he is helpless. He loves the mother out of fear; his love is pseudo. He loves the father out of fear; it is only a pretension, it is hypocrisy. He loves God out of fear -- the fear of hell, the fear of being punished, the fear of being tortured.

And do you know? Christianity believes that if you commit sins you will suffer in hell forever. That seems such an absurd concept. How many sins can a man commit in one small life? And Christianity believes in only one life. If Hindus were thinking that you will suffer for a long time in hell one could understand the arithmetic because they believe in millions of lives, so you can commit as many sins as you like. Of course, the suffering will be in the same proportion, the punishment will be in the same proportion. But Christianity proposes an eternal hell. And what sins can you commit? You can smoke cigarettes and then in hell you will be thrown in fire and you will smoke forever and forever! Or you can be an alcoholic, but how much can you drink in one small life? Out of seventy years one third goes into sleep; you can't commit any sin in your sleep unless your dreams are also counted. Another one third goes into the offices, into the factories, into the fields, into the shops.... How much time have you got to commit sins? Just count all the days -- you will not find much time. And your sins will be just trivia. Yes, you can fall in love with your neighbor's wife, but for that you will be suffering for ever and ever? It is utterly unjust, unfair! Maybe three or four

years' imprisonment in hell will do, but eternity? Can you conceive of eternity? It will never end, the suffering will be unending!

This is just to create fear. And people love God out of this fear, they pray out of this fear.

Buddha is against fear; fear is the original sin according to him. He believes in fearlessness -- he believes, and he believes rightly; it is his experience. It is my experience too, that true love happens only when fear disappears completely.

A true religion has not happened in the world because we have been trying to create a cheap religion based on fear. True love has not happened in the world. The wife is afraid of the husband, hence she pretends to love; the husband is afraid of the wife, hence he goes on saying, "Darling, I love you!" as many times as possible.

That's what Dale Carnegie suggests to all the husbands: "Whether you love her or not, that is not the point. Repeat it as many times in the day as possible, as many opportunities as there are. Once or twice from the office phone your wife just to say 'I love you.'" And this is all out of fear.

Because of fear the world is missing the roses of love. Love can happen -- every man is born with infinite capacity for love -- but fear cripples everybody, paralyzes everybody.

Buddha says to his bodhisattvas: Go and teach people these few fundamental things. The first thing he says:

WANTING NOTHING
WITH ALL YOUR HEART
STOP THE STREAM.

These sayings are his code words; you will have to understand his code words. In those old days things had to be remembered, so only very small sutras, very condensed sutras were given. Each sutra is expressed in a code language; you have to decode it. You have to translate it into contemporary language; otherwise you will miss the significance of it.

WANTING NOTHING.... How is it possible -- wanting nothing? That is the most fundamental truth in Buddha's teachings. He is not saying don't want anything, remember; that will be a misunderstanding. He is saying: WANTING NOTHING WITH ALL YOUR HEART STOP THE STREAM.

By "the stream" he means the mind. He always calls the mind the stream because it goes on flowing; whether you are awake or asleep it goes on flowing. It is the stream of thoughts.

In the modern world, William James, one of the great psychologists, used for the first time a Buddhist expression for the mind; he called it "stream of consciousness." Buddha says it is like a river constantly flowing. How can you stop it? The old methods are to repress, to control, but they have failed, utterly failed; they had failed even in Buddha's time.

In a sense Buddha is the first psychologist of the world, not Sigmund Freud. And Buddha's insight into the mind is far deeper than all your psychologists put together. There is no way to get rid of the constant overpowering flood of mind energy, of mindstuff, just by controlling it or by repressing it. Repression is absolutely destructive. If you repress

something it will come up again and again and you will have to repress it again and again. Your whole life will become a kind of civil war; you will be constantly fighting with yourself. And the fight is going to be unending because you cannot destroy the mind in this way; this is not the way to get rid of the mind. In fact, you are giving mind great energy by fighting with it.

Mind can be given energy in two ways: either by fighting with it or by indulging in it. One leads to repression, the other leads to identification, and both go on nourishing the mind. The stream becomes bigger and bigger.

You can repress -- repression is easy -- and the whole of humanity has learned to repress because you always fall for the easy. Repression is not a difficult thing. Anger arises: you can sit upon it, you can go on smiling a false smile, and sooner or later you will forget about it. But it is there boiling within you and you are accumulating every day more and more anger. Anger has a beauty of its own if it is spontaneous, but you are accumulating anger which will become irrelevant, it will not be spontaneous.

Something may have happened ten years ago; now it has no reference to reality, no context -- and suddenly you explode. You look insane. That's how people go insane. If they had been angry ten years before when the right context was there, nobody would have called them insane, but for ten years they were sitting on it; then it became too much. And then for ten years continuously they were accumulating more and more anger. Every day they were repressing, they were sitting on a volcano; sooner or later it was going to erupt. Either that, or you have to become so dead and dull, so unalive that nothing can erupt. You have

to withdraw yourself so totally from life, into a monastery, you have to become so insensitive to life that people can go on insulting you and you gather such a thick skin that nothing penetrates you....

Giovanni was sentenced to jail for having made love with his wife's body a few hours after her death. "Do you have anything to say in your own defense?" asked the judge. "Honest, Mista Your Honor," replied the Italian, "I didn't know she was-a dead. She has-a been like-a that for the last-a twenty years!"

There are millions of people who are not really alive -- afraid of being alive because if they are alive then their anger, their lust, their greed, all become alive. To keep them repressed they have to remain at the minimum; they never live at the maximum. And not to live at the maximum is to miss God, is to miss all -- all the beauties and the benedictions of life.

You should live at the maximum; only then do you come to know the tremendous beauty of existence. Only from that height do you become aware of the immense splendor, of the constant celebration that goes on and on. But you cannot live to the maximum; you are afraid because if you live so totally then all that you have repressed will come up.

Millions of people have decided for a dead life; before they really die they are dead. They live only for the minimum, to earn a livelihood; not to live but just to vegetate. They are so afraid -- the priests have made them so afraid.

Buddha is against repression. And if you repress something it will start finding some other way to come up, some perverted way. That's why I say that all sexual perversions have religious origins, for the simple reason that all religions have been against sexuality.
Sex has to be transformed, not repressed. It is pure energy, it is fire! But you need not burn your house with the fire. You can heat your house when it is too cold, you can make your house full of light when it is dark. It is the same fire which becomes light, which becomes heat, but it can also burn your house. You have to be very alert, careful, cautious.
Your life energies are neutral: they can harm you, they can help you; it all depends on you. Don't condemn them. You are responsible -- and only you!
But people go on condemning sex as if sex has something to do with you. Sex has nothing to do with you; sex is pure energy. But if you repress it it will become a perversion; then it will find ways. If you close the natural way, then it comes through some unnatural way. And you are the same stupid person, you have not changed at all; your understanding has not grown up.

Mulla Nasruddin came from his village to the big city, and a rich friend invited him to his box at the opera.
Said the friend, "We will be sitting close to other people, so be sure to change your socks before you come!"
A short time after they entered their opera seats, the neighbors started turning their noses up at the bad smell.
"I told you to change your socks," said the friend to Mulla.

"I most certainly did," said Nasruddin. "And furthermore I knew you wouldn't believe me, so I brought the old socks right here in my pocket to prove it!"

If you are the same old stupid guy it does not matter what you do with your sex, with your greed, with your jealousy. They will be coming back in some other form, by some other route; they will become even more subtle.
Buddha says what is needed is more awareness, more understanding -- neither repression nor control. If you can become aware of your desires, if you can watch your desires, then a miracle happens, the greatest miracle of all. The moment you become aware of your desires you can easily see that no desire can ever be fulfilled; its very nature is unfulfillable. Every desire is just a hankering for something which cannot be, every desire means more and more and more. Now, how can you fulfill this constant hankering for more? You can have all the wealth of the world, still the desire will be there.

I have heard that when Diogenes said to Alexander the Great, "Have you ever thought about one thing? -- although it is a very remote possibility, have you thought about it? You may really conquer the whole world -- then what? There is no other world to conquer, there is only one world. If you really succeed -- have you ever pondered over the matter? -- then what will you do?"
And it is said that Alexander became very sad. Diogenes laughed and he said, "Look! You have not yet conquered it, but the very idea that if you conquer the whole world... what are you going to do next? -- because there is no other

world. You will be quite at a loss, because the mind will ask for more. It is not going to be satisfied with this world only -- it is not going to be satisfied."

Mind means discontent; it is its very nature. Desires are only manifestations of this discontent. When you watch your desires you slowly slowly become aware of the futility of desiring, you become aware of the absurd nature of desiring. You become aware that by their very nature desires are unfulfillable. Seeing this, a transformation happens, a miracle happens, a radical change sets in; but by seeing this -- not by repression, not by control but by understanding.

A violinist was convinced he could use his art in music to tame wild animals. So, violin in hand, he traveled to the heart of the African jungle to prove it.
He had no sooner begun to play than the jungle clearing was filled with animals of all kinds gathering to hear him play. Birds, lions, hippos, elephants -- all stood round entranced by his beautiful music.
Just then a crocodile crept out of the nearby river and into the clearing and -- snap! -- gobbled up the violinist.
The other animals were extremely irate. "What on earth did you do that for?" they demanded. "We were enjoying that."
"Eh?" said the crocodile, cupping its hand to its ear.

The mind is absolutely deaf; it goes on and on doing the same stupid things, never seeing, never listening to the message. Every desire brings you to a point where a radical change can happen, but the mind can neither see nor can it

hear. It is blind, it is deaf. As one desire fails it simply jumps on another desire. If one desire fails, the mind thinks, "If this desire has failed that does not mean that all other desires are going to fail." It goes on hoping that there must be some desires which can be fulfilled, maybe not this time but next time; if not today then tomorrow; if not in this life then in the life after death, in heaven. But the mind goes on and on thinking in the same old rut.

At the scene of a bank raid the police sergeant came running up to his inspector and said, "He got away, sir!" The inspector was furious. "But I told you to put a man on all the exits!" he roared. "How could he have got away?" "He left by one of the entrances, sir!"

The mind always finds a way to convince you again of the same stupid game. Buddha says watch it. It is only through watchfulness that wanting nothing happens.
And your watchfulness has to be with all your heart; it should not be partial, otherwise it is not going to work -- because if you only watch partially then the part that has not been involved will go on doing the old tricks, the old strategies. Your whole heart has to be watchful so no dark spot is left in you, so your whole being becomes aware of the absurdity of desiring.

Jimmy Carter was visiting one of the largest institutions for the mentally unbalanced. He finished inspecting the main building and wanted to see the Farm Section. His chauffeur was not around so the president boarded the regular bus.

In a few minutes the keeper brought on some inmates. When they were seated he began counting, "1, 2, 3, 4, 5...."
He got to the president and said, "Who are you?"
Mr. Carter said, "Why, I'm the president of the United States!"
The keeper said, "6, 7, 8...."

It does not matter who you are, where you are. If you are still desiring you are mad: "6, 7, 8...." You are insane. In fact, unless you are insane enough, how can you try so hard to be the president of a country? For years people try to become the president of a country; almost their whole life is devoted to a single goal, to be the president of a country. And what is attained? With the same energy they could have become buddhas, with the same effort they could have become awakened. But we put our energies to such wrong goals -- money, power, prestige -- and they all lead to insanity.
Desiring is insane. Enjoy life! -- but don't be too much bothered about tomorrows. Don't sacrifice your today for tomorrows; otherwise you will always go on missing all the opportunities which open up for your inner growth.
WANTING NOTHING WITH ALL YOUR HEART STOP THE STREAM.
Watch. Try to understand the very nature of desiring, and in that very understanding there comes a stop of its own accord. The stream simply disappears, evaporates, as if it has never been there. And the moment you are free of the mind you are free of all misery, of all discontent.

WHEN THE WORLD DISSOLVES

EVERYTHING BECOMES CLEAR.

With the dissolution of the mind, the whole world that the mind has created around itself also dissolves, obviously -- it depended on the mind, it was mind's projection. Not that the trees will disappear and the roses will disappear... roses will be far rosier and trees will be far greener. People will be far more beautiful; even pebbles on the seashore will be like diamonds. Everything will become precious.

This world, the real world, is not going to disappear with your mind, but you are living in a totally different private world: the world of your desires. You don't see the real world, you only see your own private world projected on the real world. The real world is simply being used as a screen on which you go on projecting your desires. You never see that which is; you only go on seeing that which you desire.

It is said that the shoemaker never looks at people's faces, he always looks at their shoes. Of course he is not concerned with their faces, he has nothing to do with their faces; he is concerned with their shoes. And by seeing the shoes he knows about the person; the shoe contains all the messages for him: whether the person is rich or poor, successful or unsuccessful. The shoe will say everything: the shape of the shoe, the newness, the oldness, the tiredness of the shoe; everything will say what kind of man this is. The shoe, analyzed by a shoemaker, will give you a perfect analysis of the man. There is no need to go to a psychoanalyst, you can go to the shoemaker, leave the shoe with him. And he can make a chart about you: what kind of man you are, what is happening in your life.

The tailors never see you, they only see your clothes. They decide from your clothes. People see only that which they desire and they project their desire. If somebody is full of lust even an ugly woman may look beautiful.

Mulla Nasruddin goes to a hill station once in a while; he has a bungalow there. Sometimes he says, "I am going for three weeks," and comes back after only ten days. It happened many times so I asked him, "You never follow your decision. You say, 'I am going for three weeks,' then you are back within a week. Sometimes you say, 'I am going for five weeks,' and you are back in ten days. What is the matter?"
He laughed; he said, "I have a criterion and I cannot decide from here. You know that I have got a bungalow in the hill station -- well, I have kept one woman there to look after the bungalow. She is the ugliest woman you can conceive of and how long I am going to stay is determined by that woman."
I said, "I don't understand."
He said, "Let me explain. She is so repulsive, so disgusting, but when I go there, after two or three days she is not so repulsive, so disgusting. After four or five days I even start seeing something beautiful in her. By the seventh or eighth day she starts looking really beautiful. The moment I see that a desire for her is arising in me, I escape -- that's how I decide. That means now it is time for me to leave. I know that she is ugly, but my eyes are deceiving me now, now they are projecting. Now my unfulfilled sexual lust is being projected on her; she is not what she is appearing to me. Then I start escaping -- I am going insane. Then I

immediately rush back home; it is time to go home, otherwise there is danger. And I don't want to make love to that disgusting woman. I know perfectly well she is disgusting, but there comes a time, somewhere between seven and ten days, when she starts looking so beautiful, as if she is a Sophia Loren."

You experience this again and again, but you don't understand. When for the first time you fall in love with a woman or a man, the other looks almost like a god or a goddess; that is your projection. Soon you will be disillusioned. The fault lies with you, not with the other. It is not that the other has cheated you; the other has not done anything. You were starving, you were hankering, you were living with a repressed desire and that desire created an illusion for you. You fell in love, you saw something which was not there. Lovers go on seeing things which are not there, nobody else sees them; that's why lovers are thought mad by everybody else. They themselves will think they were mad after two or three weeks, but when they are in love for the first time they think they have discovered the woman they are made for -- that they are made for each other.

Here, I go on receiving letters. One woman sannyasin finds somebody almost every month and she writes to me and she forgets all about the fact that she has been writing it for at least three years: "Beloved Master, it seems we are made for each other." She has no idea that she has written this at least fifty times! But when she is infatuated with somebody she forgets everything else.

I reminded her. She said, "The other times I may have been wrong, but this time, believe me, we are made for each other!" And within two or three weeks these people who are made for each other are finished.

In fact, nobody is made for anybody else; everybody is made for himself or herself. Nobody is made for anybody -- God never makes you in pairs! Drop that whole nonsense. He simply makes individuals.

In the East we have stories -- they must be stories, they cannot be history. In Jaina scriptures it is said that in the beginning when the world started, God used to make men and women together. Each mother used to give birth to twins, one girl, one boy; they were going to be husband and wife. They were not sister and brother -- they were made for each other! That must be a wish fulfillment. Man has always been thinking, "There must be someone with whom I am going to fit absolutely. Somewhere someone must exist who is just for me and I am for her." There is nobody just for you or you for anybody. God creates only individuals, God believes in individuality -- he is an individualist.

In fact, marriage is a human invention, God does not believe in marriage. He himself is alone without a wife; you can see -- the point is so clear. Otherwise he would at least have married the Holy Ghost! The Holy Ghost can be turned into a woman or a man -- a ghost is a ghost! He does not have any body; he could have given it a body. If he can create the whole world, can't he create a woman for himself? He was so generous with man -- he gave man first a woman, Lilith. And Lilith was really a beautiful woman, but the first night there was a pillow fight -- the first

liberated woman! The Women's Liberation movement started with Lilith. And the fight was because God had given them only a single bed and both wanted to sleep on it and it was not big enough for two persons. Lilith simply rejected the idea that she should sleep on the floor. She said, "If you want to sleep on the floor you can!"
Adam felt very insulted -- a man, and sleeping on the floor, and the woman sleeping in the bed? In the middle of the night they knocked on God's door and said, "You have to settle it."
God also seems to be very strange -- it was such a simple thing. He could have called Asheesh: "Make a double bed!" That's what I would have done. Why make so much fuss about it? Or if Asheesh was going to take a long time -- as he usually does -- he could have removed the bed: "Both of you can sleep on the floor, be equal!" He could have sent Deeksha to remove it; she would have removed everything, even the floor! But God's ways are strange.
He dissolved Lilith. He said, "You disappear. You will not be able to work it out." Then he made Eve, taking a rib out of Adam so that she would be a part of Adam. That is an ugly act, that is very antifeminist. And since then God has been a male chauvinist pig!

Nobody is made for anybody else, hence no two persons can fit absolutely. All your ideas about fitting with the other are illusions, and they are shattered sooner or later. Either you have to compromise or you have to separate. But nobody is made for the other.
Those who understand, they start accepting the uniqueness of the other, they start respecting the uniqueness of the

other. They know they are different, yet they have decided to be together. And it is beautiful that they are different because that variety gives richness to life.
But you go on creating a world around yourself, an illusory world. Buddha is talking about that world when he says: WHEN THE WORLD DISSOLVES -- he means when the mind dissolves with all its projections -- EVERYTHING BECOMES CLEAR.
When all your projections are gone you have a clarity, an immense clarity, no clouds in your consciousness. You can see through and through. That seeing is freedom, that seeing is salvation, that seeing is nirvana, that seeing is coming home.

GO BEYOND....

Go to that seeing. Go beyond the mind, go beyond the known, because the mind consists of the known. And go beyond the knowable because whatsoever is knowable will sooner or later become known and will again create the mind. So go beyond the known -- known means that which has already become your mind -- and the knowable -- that which is potentially going to become your mind sooner or later. Go beyond the known and the knowable so that you can enter into the unknowable, into the mysterious. The beyond represents the mysterious.

THIS WAY OR THAT WAY....

Buddha is not a fanatic; he says it doesn't matter which way you follow. Remember: you have to go beyond the mind.

Follow any way! This is his beauty -- it is very rare. You will not find this quality in religious fanatics; he is not a fanatic at all. He says it is immaterial what way you follow, whether you swim to the other shore or you go by a boat or a steamship or how you manage... that is up to you. Go to the other shore; that is the point. Every path is valid if it leads to the other shore, every path is valid if it leads you beyond the mind.

And there are only two paths. One is awareness, meditation -- Buddha's path. And the other is love, devotion, the path of the Sufis. There are basically only two paths, but Buddha is very clear. He says: THIS WAY OR THAT WAY....

By "this way" he means his path; by "that way" he means the path of love, of devotion. That is not his path, but he does not prohibit you. He does not say that you cannot reach by the other path. He does not say, "My path is the only path." He does not say, he does not claim, "Only those who come with me will reach and everyone else will fall into hell." No! He says, "You can follow other paths too. Just keep one thing in your consciousness -- that you have to go beyond."

TO THE FARTHER SHORE
WHERE THE WORLD DISSOLVES
AND EVERYTHING BECOMES CLEAR.

BEYOND THIS SHORE
AND THE FARTHER SHORE,
BEYOND THE BEYOND,
WHERE THERE IS NO BEGINNING,
NO END.

"Beyond the beyond" is Buddha's expression for God; he never uses the word 'God'. But "beyond the beyond" is exactly what the word 'God' represents. Why does he say "beyond the beyond"? Is it not enough to call it "the beyond"? It is not, because when you say "the beyond" it seems you have comprehended it; it means your mind has comprehended. When you say "the other shore" it means that it is the other shore, but it is something like this shore; at least it is also a shore so it must be something like this -- maybe a little bit different, more beautiful, with more trees, with more greenery, with more beautiful flowers and fragrance -- but a shore is a shore.

"This shore" and "that shore" your mind can comprehend. Hence he says: Anything that is comprehensible to the mind has to be left behind. The beyond is comprehensible. BEYOND THIS SHORE AND THE FARTHER SHORE -- you have to go beyond both the shores -- BEYOND THE BEYOND, WHERE THERE IS NO BEGINNING, NO END.

When a man came to Buddha -- he had been practicing meditation for years -- he said, "You have told me, 'Attain to nothing,' and I have attained it. Now what else do I have to do?"

Buddha said, "Now throw it away! Go out and throw it away!"

He was puzzled. He said, "I have spent years in attaining it!"

Buddha said, "The only purpose in attaining it is to throw it -- then only will you be really in a state of nothing;

otherwise, this nothing has become something -- you have attained it. It is not real nothing. How can you attain real nothing? Real nothing is not attainable, it is not graspable. It is beyond grasp, it is beyond comprehension. So go out and throw it!"

A king came to Buddha with many diamonds in one hand, very precious, very rare, and with a lotus flower in the other hand, out of season. He wanted to offer the diamonds. Buddha said, "Drop it!" So he dropped the diamonds -- reluctantly, because it was such a great treasure -- thinking, "This man does not understand what he is saying." But ten thousand monks are there and now not to drop them will look miserly and people will laugh and they will say, "If you have come to offer him something and he orders, 'Drop it!' then drop it! You have offered them to him, now it is his business what to do with them." So he dropped them, but very reluctantly.

Then he offered the lotus flower. Buddha said, "Drop it!" He dropped that flower too. Now he was standing with empty hands and Buddha said, "Drop it!" Now the king was at a loss. He said, "Sir, I don't have anything to drop; my hands are utterly empty." Buddha said, "Then DROP it!" Now the king thought, "This man is crazy! I am saying my hands are empty, still he says 'Drop it!'"

One of Buddha's bodhisattvas, Manjushree, laughed and he said, "Sir, you don't understand my master. He is saying, 'Don't carry this idea of emptiness, drop that too -- because the idea of emptiness is enough to fill yourself; the idea of emptiness is enough to create a mind.' Buddha is saying, 'Drop ALL unconditionally. And when you have dropped

all, don't carry this idea that now nothing is left. Drop that too so you have nothing to claim.'"

That is the meaning of going beyond the beyond. That is the ultimate state of nirvana -- when the ego, the mind, the personality, all cease to exist and you disappear into the mysterious, into the miraculous, into the universal.

WITHOUT FEAR, GO.

MEDITATE.

This is what meditation is all about: watching your desires, understanding their nature... and letting them fall like dry leaves from the trees in the autumn.

LIVE PURELY.

And when meditation has happened and desire has disappeared, then live out of that innocence. Right now you are living out of desires. You desire this, you desire that, and sometimes you desire even God, sometimes you desire nirvana, sometimes you desire even meditation, but you live out of desires.
There is another kind of life -- the real life -- which is lived through innocence, without desiring. So whatsoever comes on the way you enjoy, you rejoice, but you don't desire. LIVE PURELY -- that's what Buddha calls a pure life: a life which is not lived out of desires.

BE QUIET.

Naturally you will be quiet -- when there is no desire left there is no turmoil left.

DO YOUR WORK, WITH MASTERY.

Then whatsoever you are doing, whatsoever you enjoy doing, do it with mastery and skill. He loved skill very much, he loved excellence, he loved perfection. He was not a perfectionist, remember, because he was not a neurotic person, but he loved perfection. Do everything with your totality. Whatsoever you are doing, do it with such love, with such commitment and involvement that for the moment that is your whole life.

Once Vincent van Gogh was asked by somebody, "Which is your best painting?"
He was doing a painting. He said, "This one -- this is the best."
After a few months the man asked again -- he was painting something else -- he asked, "Which is your best painting?"
He said, "This one."
The man said, "But this is not right. Just a few months ago you said about some other painting that that was your best."
Vincent van Gogh said, "Whatsoever I am doing at the moment is the best. It is always this, it is never that. It is always now, it is never then."

This is the way of perfection, the way of excellence, the way of skill, mastery. Whatsoever you are doing, do it as if it is a question of life and death. Put your total energy into

it, and it will give you tremendous bliss. Don't be halfhearted. Only then does creativity bloom, only then do you become a participant in God the creator.

BY DAY THE SUN SHINES,
AND THE WARRIOR IN HIS ARMOR SHINES.
BY NIGHT THE MOON SHINES,
AND THE MASTER SHINES IN MEDITATION.

These are code words. The sun represents the warrior. The sun is hot energy; the sun is violent energy. The moon represents the meditator, the mystic; it is cool energy. It is the same energy, remember -- it is the same energy, it is not a different energy. But passing through the moon the sunrays become cool; that is the miracle of the moon, the alchemical change that happens through the moon. The moon simply reflects sunrays; it is a mirror. But just by passing through the moon a radical change happens: the rays which are hot, violent, become silent, cool, peaceful. The sun represents the warrior, the fighter, the soldier. The moon represents the sannyasin, the meditator, the mystic. Buddha says: BY DAY THE SUN SHINES, AND THE WARRIOR IN HIS ARMOR SHINES.
The day belongs to the warrior, the sun belongs to the warrior. The warrior means one who is trying to conquer others, who is trying to become a master of others. That is a stupid effort, but it is cheaper. It is easy to enslave somebody else, it is always easy to find somebody who is weaker than you, it is easy to impose yourself upon somebody.

But the mystic, the meditator is moving in a totally different direction -- he is moving in his interiority. He is trying to be a master of himself, not of others but of himself -- and that is true mastery. The first effort is stupid.

And the world has been dominated by the soldiers for centuries, that's why the world is in such a mess. The world needs more and more sannyasins because each sannyasin becomes a moon: he transforms the violent energy of the world into a cool pool of energy. The world needs to be full of sannyasins, only then can we have a world which forgets the ways of war and learns the language of peace and love. The world needs many sannyasins as transformers of energy.

That's exactly what is meant by a buddhafield: where many sannyasins are together and create such a great transforming force that all kinds of energies passing through the buddhafield become cool, become feminine, become more like flowers and less like rocks. They lose their hardness, they become delicate -- delicate like rose petals.

BY NIGHT THE MOON SHINES.... The night is the time of the mystic, the day is the time of the warrior. The night represents a change in the whole atmosphere. It is easier to meditate in the night than in the day. Meditation is far closer to sleep than to any other activity, with only one difference: in sleep you fall unconscious, in meditation you remain conscious, but with the same relaxation. In the day it is difficult to sleep; if you want to sleep in the day you have to close the doors and the windows and pull all the curtains so it becomes dark. If sunrays are coming they won't allow you to sleep; sunrays activate your energies.

Night helps you to rest and relax. It is the time of the mystic.
Sannyasins should use the time of night more and more for meditation. You can go deeper, and easily, because the winds are blowing that way; you can move with the winds with less effort. In the day you are moving against the winds. In the day active meditations are good; dynamic meditation is good in the day, dancing meditation is good in the day. But in the night vipassana, silent meditations, just sitting and doing nothing, just relaxing because the whole atmosphere is relaxing.... The sun has gone down, the trees have fallen asleep; it is a totally different quality of energy that surrounds you in the night. It is easy to meditate.
Buddha says: THE MASTER SHINES IN MEDITATION in the night.
By "the master" he means one who is trying to be a master of himself; by "warrior" he means one who is trying to be a master of others. But once you have attained, once you have become enlightened, then there is no question of day and night, no question of sun and moon.

BUT DAY AND NIGHT
THE MAN WHO IS AWAKE
SHINES IN THE RADIANCE OF THE SPIRIT.

The buddha, the awakened, the enlightened one shines both in the night and in the day; there is no difference for him. Once you have become awakened, then nothing makes any difference. But till that happens use the night atmosphere more and more for meditation.

And when the moon is there in the night it is far easier to meditate. The full-moon night is the best for meditation. Many people who have become buddhas have attained their enlightenment on the full-moon night, even Buddha himself. It may have been a coincidence, but it is significant to remember: he was born on the full-moon night, he became enlightened on the full-moon night and he died on the full-moon night. Something in the full moon seemed to be synchronizing with his energy.
Use it. Be alert and use every possibility to help you go in. Once you are awakened, then there is no problem. Then you can be at ease, at rest, at peace, anywhere.

Somebody asked Buddha, "When you die will you go to heaven?"
Buddha said, "Don't ask nonsense questions. Wherever a buddha is there is heaven. Buddhas don't go to heaven; wherever a buddha goes, heaven goes there."

This is much closer to the truth, far more beautiful; the very statement is significant. There is no question of enlightened ones going to paradise -- enlightened ones live in paradise wherever they are. You can send them to hell -- if there is a hell -- and the hell will be transformed. By their very presence the hell will become a buddhafield. By their very presence the energies of hell will go through a transformation.

Once it happened:
A Christian priest was delivering a sermon one Sunday and he said, "Those who don't believe in God and live immoral

lives will go to hell; those who believe in God and live moral lives will go to heaven."

A man stood up and asked, "A question has arisen in me. The question is: Those who don't believe in God and live a moral life, where will they go? Those who believe in God and live immoral lives, where will they go?"

The priest was at a loss; he had not thought about it. The question was tricky. He said, "Please give me time to ponder over it. After seven days I will answer, next Sunday."

Those seven days were real hell for him. He tried to figure it out, but it was impossible to figure it out. If he says, "Those who don't believe in God and are moral still go to heaven," then the man will say, "Why believe in God? Why bother about God at all? Just being moral is enough." He thought, "And if I say the people who don't believe in God and are moral have to go to hell, then morality loses all relevance. Then why be moral? Just believing in God is enough. Believe in God and live as immorally as possible. Why miss that opportunity?" He was driving himself crazy, he could not sleep. Continuously he was thinking and consulting books, but there was no answer coming.

Sunday came; he came a little early to the church to pray to Jesus. "Help me!" he prayed to Jesus. The whole night he had not slept so while he was praying he fell asleep, and he dreamed a beautiful dream, a very significant dream. He saw that he was in a train. He asked where the train was going and the other passengers said, "The train is going to heaven."

He said, "This is very good! That's what I wanted to see -- see with my own eyes. Socrates never believed in God, but

he lived a moral life. Buddha never believed in God, but he lived one of the purest lives. Mahavira never believed in God, but who can surpass Mahavira in his moral life? If I can find these three people there, then the question is solved; if I don't find them there, then too the question is solved."

The train reached heaven; he was very much surprised. Seeing heaven, he could not believe it -- it looked more like hell! Of course the board said it was heaven, but it had not been painted, it seems, for centuries. So much dust had collected, everything was dirty. It looked like a desert: no greenery, no trees, no roses, no lotuses. He came across a few saints who looked almost dead, somehow dragging themselves. Dust had also gathered on them as if they had forgotten how to take a bath, as if nobody took baths in heaven.

He asked, "Is Socrates here? Is Buddha here? Is Mahavira here?"

Those saints said, "Never heard of these people."

He rushed to the inquiry office. He inquired, "Is there a train that goes to hell?"

They said, "Yes, it is leaving immediately. You can catch it right now."

And he rushed in the train towards hell, and as hell came closer he was again in for a great surprise: so much fragrance, so much greenery, so many flowers, so many beautiful birds, and singing and dancing. He said, "What is the matter?" And everybody looked so joyous, so radiant. He asked people on the station, "Is this really hell? Is THIS hell?"

They said, "Yes, this is hell, and nobody can believe this is hell. Since these three people -- Socrates, Buddha and Mahavira -- arrived, everything changed. They have transformed the whole scene. Just the name is hell now -- it is really heaven. And the other place is only heaven in name; it has become hell."

I agree absolutely with the dream. I can visualize that your so-called saints, wherever they are, will create hell. But if a man like Buddha or Socrates or Mahavira or Jesus or Lao Tzu or Zarathustra is in hell, then hell has to change. It is not a question of the place; the question is of who is there.
BUT DAY AND NIGHT THE MAN WHO IS AWAKE SHINES IN THE RADIANCE OF THE SPIRIT.
You can say hell or heaven... THE MAN WHO IS AWAKE SHINES IN THE RADIANCE OF THE SPIRIT.
Wherever he is he creates a new world, he creates a totally new energy. He is an alchemical transformer.
First, don't be soldiers, be sannyasins, because that is how one day you can become buddhas. Move towards self-mastery. Use all devices, methods, to become a master of your own self. And then one day, when the mind has disappeared with all its illusions and you have attained to clarity, when you can see that which is as it is, you are a buddha. Then wherever you are there is paradise.
Enough for today.

The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 11

Chapter #8

Chapter title: Laughter: love, joy, gratitude

18 April 1980 am in Buddha Hall

The first question:
Question 1
BELOVED MASTER,
IS IT ALL A JOKE? BUT I DON'T GET IT.

Vimalkirti, it certainly is a joke, but you cannot get it. You are German, and not only an ordinary German -- you are the great-grandchild of the German emperor! Just think of the old man in his grave: he must be tossing and turning, seeing you in orange, cleaning floors in Poona! What do you think? -- is it not a joke? Could your great-grandfather ever have imagined or dreamed that this was going to happen to his own children one day? Impossible that he would have ever dreamed about it -- but it has happened. You have been told for centuries that life is a serious affair; it has become a deep conditioning. Otherwise life is really a joke. It is playfulness, it is LEELA. It all depends on how you take it. If you take it seriously it becomes serious, but then you suffer -- you suffer from your own idea. Life becomes heavy, it becomes a weight, a mountain on your chest; you are crushed underneath it. Life loses all joy, all laughter. You simply drag, you don't live. How can one live without laughter?
It is man who is the only animal on earth who knows how to laugh. Laughter is the only thing that is special to human beings, not reason but laughter. Animals can also reason -- they reason in their own way -- but they cannot joke, they cannot laugh, they cannot see the humorous side; that is

impossible for them. All animals are serious people and all serious people are animals! The moment you get rid of your seriousness you get rid of your animality.
Hence I have no respect for your saints. They are very serious, far more serious than the donkeys, far more serious than the buffaloes. They have fallen, they have not risen. Your saints are serious, your politicians are serious, your revolutionaries are serious, your scientists are serious. They are all taking life as if somehow one has to pass through it -- not dance. The very concept of dance is far away from them. They cannot even walk, they drag. They don't live, they only slowly die. They are all waiting for death to relieve them of the pain and the suffering of life.
It is very rare to find a human being who has not contemplated committing suicide once or twice. On average, four times in his life every human being thinks of committing suicide. He does not do it, that is another matter. Maybe he has no guts to do it, maybe he is afraid of what is going to happen after death. Who knows? It may be far worse than life itself. At least life is known, familiar; it is risky to move into the unknown.
Indians don't commit suicide much because they believe that they will be sent back again, so what is the point? -- millions of times you have to be born. All Indian religions seek and search not for God, remember, but for freedom from life, freedom from the circle of birth and death. How can these people rejoice and how can these people be thankful to God? They are complaining and their complaining is very loud. They are saying, "We don't want to be born. We never wanted to be born. Why didn't you ask us first? It is unfair! It is not a gift, it is unfair to send

us into a life which we had never asked for. And it is unfair to go on sending us into a life which is nothing but misery."
But life is not misery. It is our approach, it is our way of looking at it that has made it ugly. Our vision is distorted, not life itself. Our mirror is distorted, not life itself. Because our mirror is distorted, life appears distorted.
Vimalkirti, to me it is all a joke. And I am not joking -- I am really serious about it!
You say, "But I don't get it."
I have heard that in Germany people are not allowed to tell jokes on Saturday evenings. Why? -- because they might burst out laughing in church on Sunday morning. It takes time for them to understand! And you are the great-grandchild of the German emperor, it may take a little longer for you! But if you are here you are bound to get it. Don't be worried. Life is so full of hilarious moments that it is almost impossible to miss them. It is a miracle how people go on missing them; otherwise you will come across jokes everywhere.

When Winston Churchill was appointed prime minister for the first time -- he was tired from the election campaign and all the politics that had gone before and all the struggle to reach the top -- his wife thought it would be good to call a friend who knew many beautiful jokes so he could tell a few jokes to Winston Churchill. "That will relax him, help him to laugh a little. He has been so serious for so many days and he looks so tired."
The friend was called; he came with all the latest jokes. He asked Winston Churchill, "Would you like to know the latest jokes?"

Churchill looked at him and said, "Please, no more -- I have appointed them all in my cabinet!"

If you look around, if you are watchful enough, then you are bound to stumble again into something so beautiful and so ridiculous. The very idea of creating the world and creating you all is such a cosmic joke! God must have a sense of humor.

An old rabbi was dying and somebody asked him... because they were afraid for the old rabbi. He was not very religious, not very virtuous; in fact, he was just the opposite. They were worried. They asked him, "Are you ready to meet God?"
He opened his eyes and said, "Yes, that's what I am doing -- I am just trying to remember a few beautiful jokes to tell him. He must be getting tired of all those long faces, sad saints. He will really enjoy a few jokes, a few gossips about the earth."

And I absolutely agree with this old rabbi. If you meet God, don't fall on your knees and start praying -- he is tired of all that! Tell him a beautiful joke. That will be a deeper communion with him. Let him have a good laugh. In that laughter there will be a revelation.
Vimalkirti, a few jokes for you:

Karpuik was rushed to the emergency room of the city hospital. The doctor on duty was amazed to discover that Karpuik had scalded his scrotum. "How did it happen?" he asked.

"I was making tea," replied the Polack, "and the directions said, 'Soak bag in hot water.'"

Pilzudski took his wife to the doctor and complained that he could not have intercourse with her because she was too tight.
"Alright," said the doctor, "let's test it!"
The sawbones put the wife on the table, applied some vaseline to his instrument and entered Pilzudski's wife easily.
"Hey," said the Polack, as he watched the doctor pumping away, "if it not be for the medicine I think you be screwing my wife!"

There once was a pious young priest,
who lived almost fully on yeast;
"For," he said, "it is plain
that we'll all rise again,
and I want to get started at least!"

My approach towards life is that of laughter. And laughter contains love, laughter contains joy and laughter contains gratitude. Laughter contains a tremendous thankfulness towards God.
When you are really in deep belly laughter, your ego disappears. It happens very rarely in any other activity, but in laughter it is bound to happen. If the laughter is total the ego cannot exist; nothing kills the ego like laughter. That's why all egoists are serious. Ego can exist only in seriousness; ego lives, feeds on seriousness. And serious people are dangerous people.

We have to destroy all kinds of seriousness in the world. Temples should be full of laughter and song and dance and celebration. That's how trees are, stars are, rivers are, oceans are. The whole existence, except man, is in a nonserious state; only man seems to be very serious. No child is born serious, remember, but we destroy the innocence of the child. We destroy his qualities of wonder and awe, we destroy his laughter, we destroy everything that is beautiful and valuable, and instead we give him a load to carry on his head -- of knowledge, of theology, of philosophy. The more and more he becomes educated by us, the more and more he loses all sense of humor. He can't see any humor in existence because he starts living through his knowledge; he knows everything. Because of his knowledgeability all wonder is destroyed. Because of his knowledgeability, the greatest religious quality -- awe -- is killed.

A young man at college, named Breeze,
weighed down by B.A.s and M.D.s,
collapsed from the strain;
said his doctor, "It's plain
you are killing yourself by degrees!"

By the time you come back from the university you are almost dead. Your state is pathological. You are ill -- ill with knowledge, suffocated by knowledge. And you cannot laugh; that is only for children and madmen.
And my whole effort here, Vimalkirti, is to make you both simultaneously: to make you childlike and to make you utterly mad. If these two things happen, then only are you a

sannyasin. My only commandment is laughter!... and everything else will follow. If you can love and if you can laugh, totally, wholeheartedly, your life will become such a bliss and a benediction, not only to yourself but to everyone else. You will be a blessing to the world.

You have to drop all seriousness. You have to drop this seriousness because it has been forced upon you; this is not your nature. You did not come serious into the world, you came laughing. Each child is bubbling with joy and by the time he is four he starts dying. The age of four for the boys and the age of three for the girls is the time when death starts occurring. Girls are always ahead of boys in every way; even in this matter they are one year ahead.

And once death settles in you, it kills you slowly slowly. It is not that you die suddenly when you are seventy or eighty; that is only the completion of a process that started at the age of three or four. Have you ever noticed the fact that if you try to remember backwards you cannot pass the barrier of the age of three? At the most you can remember when you were three years old; beyond that all is blank. Why? You were here, certainly, and those three years were not blank at all; in fact they were more full of experience than any other year of your life is ever going to be. Each moment was full of experiences. You were constantly exploring life, people, everything; you were constantly in inquiry.

In one university they were doing an experiment. The experiment was... that children seem to be so active -- from where do they get so much energy? Their bodies are so small and their bodies are so delicate -- they are just like flowers, fragile -- but they seem to be so energetic, so vital,

so overflowing with energy. From where do they get so much energy?

So they tried an experiment. They arranged that a very strong man would follow a child, and he would do exactly whatsoever the child was doing. And they were going to pay him; whatsoever he wanted they were going to pay him. He was a really big man, a wrestler, a famous wrestler, so he was not worried about following a child. What can a child do? But within four hours he was flat on the ground, because once the child knew that he was imitating him, the child jumped and the child ran and the child rolled on the floor and the child laughed uproariously.... And the child did so many things that the wrestler, within four hours, was finished!

He said, "Never in my life have I been so tired. I have been fighting my whole life, I have fought great fights, I have been always a winner. This is my first defeat!"

And that small child was not tired at all; he was still ready, he was still challenging the man. He said, "Come on! Let us have a little more fun! Are you finished? Why are you lying down on the ground?"

Every child is born with such great energy, but we destroy it. We paralyze every child, we cripple every child. And our churches and our temples and our priests have done the greatest wrong to humanity. They are the greatest criminals in the world, they are the real sinners. They have sinned against humanity -- they have paralyzed every human being. You don't know who you would have been if you had been allowed total freedom from the very beginning -- if your laughter had been free, your love had been free, your joy had been free, and you had not been hindered,

interfered with, distorted, manipulated, forced, channeled in certain directions....
No child is interested in money, because no child is foolish. No child is interested in being the president of a country or the prime minister, because no child is so stupid. His interests are far more natural. He is interested in the flowers, he is interested in the butterflies, he is interested in the pebbles on the seashore. He is interested in dancing under the stars, in dancing in the sun, in dancing in the wind. He is interested in climbing the tree or in climbing the mountain. He is interested in swimming the river or in going into the ocean.
His interests are totally different, but we divert all his energies. We say, "No need to climb the tree, no need to climb the mountain. Climb the ladder of success!" -- which is an absolutely mediocre process, which is an absolutely unintelligent process. "Climb the ladder of success. Be more rich than others. Be competitive. Be jealous. Be possessive. Fight!" -- a fight for things which are meaningless. Then you lose your joy, then you lose your laughter. Then life seems more like a nightmare than like a beautiful joke.
Vimalkirti, it is a cosmic joke.
And my vision is that the future religiousness is bound to be rooted more in life than in death, more in laughter than in sadness, more in dance than in dragging your life.

The second question:
Question 2
BELOVED MASTER,

WHY, DESPITE APPEARANCES, IS THE VOID MORE TANGIBLE THAN THE FORM, CONSCIOUSNESS MORE THAN THOUGHT, SILENCE MORE THAN THE WORD?

Deva Bruce, the void is the source of all forms. The void is eternal, forms are temporary. Forms are like ripples in the lake, the void is the lake itself. Forms come and go, the void remains. Forms are only appearances, the void is the reality.

Hence Buddha calls reality SHUNYA. Shunya means the ultimate void. Yes, it is far more tangible than your so-called real things, because these real things come from the void and will go back down to the void. The void is the source and the goal. Everything comes out of nothingness and disappears back into nothingness.

Hence, remember, nothingness does not mean that it is nothing; nothingness simply means that it is all. Nothingness means "no-thingness." Things are forms; nothingness is a formless energy. It can manifest in millions of forms, and it can only manifest in millions of forms because it has no form of its own. It is fluid, it is available for any form, it has no resistance to any form. It can express itself in millions of ways because it has no obsession, it has no fixation. It can bloom as a rose, it can bloom as a lotus. It can be a song, it can be a dance, it can be silence. All is possible because nothingness simply means that no form has yet been taken. Once a form is taken, things become limited, alternatives become limited. Once a form is taken you are not totally free; your form

becomes your bondage. Hence, meditation is an entry into nothingness.

The Western religions have missed the point completely. Even their God has a form; God cannot have a form. To give God a form is anthropocentric, it is projecting our own form onto God.

If horses were philosophers -- and who knows, a few horses may be -- then God would be a horse, a beautiful horse, with all the great qualities of a horse. Horses cannot think of God as a man, impossible. Man has not been good to the horses at all. They can think of the Devil as man, but not of God as man. Man thinks of God as man.

The Bible says God created man in his own image. The truth is just the contrary: man creates God in his own image. Hence the Negro God will have a Negro form, the Hindu God will have a Hindu form, the Chinese God will have a Chinese form. The Chinese God cannot have a Hindu form; it is impossible. The Chinese cannot think that God can have another form than the Chinese -- of course, the most beautiful Chinese form, but it is going to be Chinese. These are our ideas projected onto God.

God is not a form, God is formlessness. God is absolute nothingness, God is total void. Out of that voidness everything arises -- trees, people, mountains, earths, stars, creations. They come, for the time being they are there, and then they again disappear into the ultimate void. That is the beginning and the end; it is before the beginning and after the end. Buddha calls it the beyond, the ultimate beyond, beyond the beyond.

You ask me, Bruce, "Why, despite appearances, is the void more tangible than the form, consciousness more than thought, silence more than the word?"

Consciousness is God because consciousness is nothingness. Thought is a world; hence Buddha calls mind "the world." The moment a thought arises, a wave has arisen in the lake of consciousness, a form has arisen, and the form is only temporal, momentary. Soon it will disappear; it is not going to abide, it is not eternal. Don't cling to it. Watch it come in and watch it go out. Watch it arising and watch it disappearing, but don't cling to it. Remember consciousness, in which it arises and in which it dissolves again. That is your reality, that is your truth. The thought can be good, the thought can be bad, but good or bad it makes no difference. A thought is a thought; it is not eternal -- and that is the only criterion of reality.

That's how the mystics have always been judging reality: whatsoever is eternal is real and whatsoever is momentary is only a dream phenomenon. There is no difference between the dream that you see in the night and the dream that you see in the day, the dream that you see with closed eyes and the dream that you see with open eyes. Yes, there is a little difference: one dream is absolutely private. In the night with closed eyes you see a private dream; in the day with open eyes you see a collective dream, an objective dream. There are many participants in it, hence it gives you the feeling as if it is real. It is not so. What happens when you fall asleep? You forget all about the day.

It is said about Chuang Tzu that one morning he woke up and started laughing. His disciples gathered together and they asked, "What is the matter?"
Chuang Tzu said, "I have come across a problem that I cannot solve. Help me to solve it."
That was the first time that he was asking the help of the disciples to solve a problem. Otherwise he was always solving their problems.
The disciples said, "It must be a really great, complicated problem -- you tell us."
He said, "The problem is simple, but in a way very complicated -- and I don't think it can be solved, it seems insoluble. That's why I am laughing. I have looked at it from every side; it seems absolutely insoluble. The problem is, in the night I dreamed that I had become a butterfly."
The disciples said, "That's nothing. We all dream all kinds of things -- dreams are dreams. Now you are awake the dream is finished. Why make so much fuss about a dream?"
He said, "I am not making much fuss about a dream. The problem is: if Chuang Tzu can dream that he is a butterfly -- now the problem arises -- the butterfly may have fallen asleep and is dreaming that she is Chuang Tzu! Now what is what? Am I Chuang Tzu who dreamed about the butterfly or am I the butterfly who is dreaming of being Chuang Tzu?"

In fact there is no difference. The butterfly is also a form and Chuang Tzu is also a form. One form arose when you were asleep, another form arose when you were awake, but both are forms. Chuang Tzu is neither -- he is neither the butterfly nor Chuang Tzu. He is the consciousness, he is the

awareness; the awareness of the dream, the awareness of the butterfly and Chuang Tzu. That awareness he is. And that awareness is far more real, the only reality in fact. No thought is real.

And the same is true about silence. Words arise in the lake of silence, beautiful words, but they are just forms. Hence the insistence of all the mystics: move from words to wordlessness, move from sound to silence, move from form to formlessness, move from thought to consciousness. Don't get entangled with the forms, thoughts, words. That's what meditation is all about.

Don't get identified with all that arises in you and disappears. Remain centered in that which never appears and never disappears, which is always there. Remain centered in the abiding reality of your being, and you will know the greatest bliss possible and you will know the truth that liberates. You will know freedom from all forms -- because all forms create bondage. You will know you are neither a man nor a woman, neither white nor black, neither this nor that -- NETI, NETI. You will know that you are only the pure awareness which has no name, no form.

That's what Buddha says: You don't have any form and you don't have any name. Don't hanker for that which you are not, because hankering for that which you are not is creating misery for yourself, is creating unnecessary pain for yourself. Just be that which you are and have always been and will always be. Don't try to become -- be! And that you already are. It is not a question of becoming, it is not a question of desiring, it is not a question of reaching somewhere. You are already there, you have always been there. Just wake up! Wake up from the dreams, all the

dreams -- night dreams, daydreams. Wake up from all the forms and abide in the formless.
And all the awakened ones say the same thing: Knowing that formlessness, knowing that eternity, your life is fulfilled. You will attain to tremendous contentment and bliss and benediction.

The third question:
Question 3
BELOVED MASTER,
I AM GREEK AND I LOVE GARLIC. MY GIRLFRIEND CAN'T STAND IT, SHE IS BRITISH. SHE CALLS ME PRIMITIVE. WHAT IS WRONG WITH ME?

Devo, nothing is wrong with you, nothing is wrong with garlic either, but garlic is going to create a few problems for you. And the problem that you have come across is not really a great problem; soon you will have to face greater problems. The British lady at the most may leave you; that is not a problem -- that will be getting out of the problem! Find some woman -- be free of ladies! A woman is beautiful, a lady is a problem. And it is very difficult to find a British woman -- I have not come across one yet. They are all ladies. The men may not all be lords, but the women are all ladies.

An Englishman and his wife were strolling around their West Indian estate when they came across a black girl and boy making love in the bushes.
"My gracious!" exclaimed the British lady to her husband. "They do it just like human beings!"

If she thinks you are primitive that is nothing -- at least she thinks you are a human being! Or maybe she does not think that you are a human being, but she cannot say it. It is so unmannerly to say to you that you are not a human being so she says you are primitive. That is not a great danger -- at the most the lady will leave you. You continue eating garlic. If there is going to be a choice between a British lady and garlic, prefer garlic; it is far healthier. But the real problem will come later on -- once the British lady has left you, then you will be in trouble.

Did you hear about the Gypsy girl who had to give up wearing garlic around her neck?
It kept the vampires away alright, but it attracted too many Italians.

So if you want to drop garlic, drop it when the British lady has left you; meanwhile she will protect you from the Italians. Every man needs a woman as a protection; otherwise he is so helpless. Once the other women see that one woman is protecting you they don't bother you. The moment they see you are unprotected they all jump upon you!
So first use garlic to get rid of the British lady, then immediately stop garlic; otherwise Italians will start coming. And it is easy to get rid of a British lady; it is next to impossible to get rid of Italian women because they are not ladies. They are true women and they will create so much trouble for you. They help only in one thing: they make you so much aware of the trouble that love brings, or

that comes in the wake of love, that you start thinking of religion, God, meditation. All these great things would not have been possible without women. The people who started thinking about all these great things were people who were tortured by women. These were their escapes, escape routes, so they could tolerate whatsoever was happening around. They could hope for a paradise somewhere after death. They lost all hope in life because they knew wherever they went some woman was going to create trouble for them.

It seems God sent man alone first. He made Adam, but if man had been alone here he would never have thought of God. He made woman -- the woman is a constant reminder. She never leaves you at ease, she forces you to believe in hell. And once you believe in hell you have to believe in heaven too.

Devo, nothing is wrong with you, but if you want to live with garlic you have to renounce life. The British lady may be right in a sense: you have to be primitive, you have to go to the caves, as far away from humanity as possible. Garlic is simply dangerous for any communion, for any communication. It is very medicinal; it will keep you healthy and it will keep you alive longer than you would have lived without it. Or maybe because you will have to live alone your life will look longer!

If you want more advice about garlic you can ask Maitreya -- he is the expert about garlic and all its great qualities. I have never tasted it, so whatsoever I am saying is not very reliable. And I have never allowed any primitive to be close to me. You know my sniffers! No people who eat garlic will ever be able to come close to me! Garlic is good but a

little inhuman: it is good for you, but bad for everybody else.

The fourth question:
Question 4
BELOVED MASTER,
CAN INNOCENCE IN AN ADULT HAPPEN WITHOUT AWARENESS?

Anand Manuel, it is impossible for innocence to happen to an adult without awareness. Awareness is the only method that can help you to destroy all the conditionings that the society has imposed on you. Society has hypnotized you, but the hypnosis is done in such a subtle way, for such a long time, and it starts when you are so small, that you never become aware of it. You are hypnotized with the milk of your mother, you are given all kinds of conditionings, and those conditionings destroy your innocence.
Unless you become aware, you will not be able to see that you are a conditioned human being, that you are living with borrowed ideas -- ideas which have been imposed by others on you against your will -- that you are almost a prisoner. Not that you live in a prison, but you live in an ideology which is a subtle prison. You are a Hindu -- how can you be innocent? You are a Christian -- how can you be innocent? The ideology keeps you away from innocence; it makes you knowledgeable, and knowledgeability is the only thing that destroys innocence. It takes all wonder away from you.

There are millions of people who don't feel any wonder in life. They will see a roseflower and yet they will not see anything -- no beauty, no awe. They will not even stop for a single moment. The rose seems to have no message for them, as if they have not seen it at all.

Every day you pass by beautiful trees, birds singing in the early morning sun, flowers releasing their fragrance, but you are a robot. You go on chattering inside your mind, yakkety-yakkety-yak... you go on and on. And what you are chattering inside has been put inside you. Your mind has been used like a computer: just as they feed a computer they have fed you.

In communist Russia they will feed you with communism. They will also teach you the holy trinity, their own holy trinity. They will teach you their own Bible, they will teach you their own religion. Communism is a religion, a substitute for other religions. Marx, Engels, Lenin, that is their trinity; DAS KAPITAL is their Bible. And they believe in all these things as fanatically as any Catholic, any Hindu, any Mohammedan. The Mohammedan believes in Kaaba and the communist believes in the Kremlin. The objects differ, but the belief is there. Both are knowledgeable, both have lost their purity, their innocence, their childlike quality.

Once you are full of knowledge you think you know all the answers. You don't know anything because unless you know yourself, nothing is known. And the beauty of self-knowledge is that it deepens the mystery of life, it does not demystify it; it makes it more mysterious, more miraculous. The person of wisdom, one who has dug deep into his own consciousness, becomes more and more full of wonder and

awe. But the ordinarily knowledgeable person goes on living in absolute unawareness; nothing makes him wonder. He knows all the answers.

A dog walked into a restaurant and ordered a steak.
"How would you like it cooked?" asked the waiter.
"I like it well done, with crushed cherries on top. Then put some marinated tomatoes on it and soak it in pepper."
The waiter brought the food.
"Did you enjoy your dinner?" the waiter asked when he was finished.
"Very much," answered the dog. "By the way, don't you think this is all very odd?"
"No," answered the waiter, "I like my steak the same way."

The waiter knows too much about the steak -- he is not looking at the dog at all.

It was two o'clock in the morning and Gedalia the goniff was trying to break into a house. He tried all the doors and windows but he could not pry any of them open. Cautiously he climbed up to the second-floor balcony. Peering through a locked window, he saw a baby in its crib. By this time he was quite desperate so he decided to enlist the aid of the infant.
"Hoo-hoo, bay-bee," he called softly. "Itsy-bitsy boo-boo, is oo gonna open window for nice mansi-wansie, hmm?"
"Open the window?" yelled the baby. "Why, ya dumb schnook, I can't even walk yet!"

The baby cannot walk, but he has become knowledgeable, he can talk.
You have all become knowledgeable. You know nothing and yet you are full of knowledge. Your knowledge simply covers your ignorance, it does not make you wise. It simply makes your foolishness a little decorated, a little polished.

A troubled young man went to see a doctor. The doctor told him to take off his clothes for an examination, then said, "Ah, you have orange candle wax in your navel? -- I know about this problem. Just the other day a girl came to see me; she also had wax in her navel -- because her boyfriend likes to eat by candle-light. Does your girlfriend like to eat by candlelight too?"
"No," said the man, "she needs the candle to find it."

Just look at things, don't bring your knowledge in, and you may be always in for a surprise.
You ask me, "Can innocence in an adult happen without awareness?"
It is impossible. The beginning of innocence in an adult is to be aware that you are conditioned. Millions of people are not aware that they are conditioned. If you don't know that you are in a prison, why should you try to get out of it in the first place?
Just the other day I came across a newspaper. The editor must have been here, he must have listened to one of my discourses. He comments that whatsoever I said was against Indian culture -- as if that is enough to criticize me, that it was against Indian culture! He takes it for granted that anything that is against Indian culture is bound to be

wrong. But who has said that I am not against Indian culture? I am against all rotten things -- Indian, non-Indian, it makes no difference! I am against the very idea of Indian culture and Chinese culture and Japanese culture. I am against the very idea of dividing humanity and I am against the past. I am not here supporting Indian culture. So that is not a criticism of me -- in fact, that is a compliment!

I am against all that is dead. One should not carry dead bodies for ever and ever, they should be buried or burned. I don't believe in any culture and I don't believe in any country and I don't believe in any race and I don't believe in any religion.

I believe in religiousness, I believe in culturedness, I believe in humanity. But humanity is not Indian, religiousness is not Christian or Hindu or Mohammedan, culturedness has nothing to do with any country. It is a grace that comes through meditation, through awareness. It is a beauty that happens to you when you become rooted in your consciousness, when you are settled in your consciousness, when nothing can distract you from your consciousness.

Yes, every person has to become a child again, but how is he going to become a child again? Except through becoming aware there is no other way. First, become aware of your conditionings -- and there are a thousand and one layers of conditionings -- and when you are aware, then slowly slowly disentangle yourself from all the conditioning. Drop those conditionings, become dehypnotized, so no layer of dust remains on the mirror of your being. When there is no layer of dust on the mirror of

your being, you will be able to reflect that which is -- and that is God and that is truth and that is nirvana.
But you are asking the question so that you can avoid awareness. You would like to find some shortcut to innocence. There is no shortcut; awareness cannot be avoided. Awareness is the only method -- let me repeat, the ONLY method -- which can cut from the very roots all the conditionings and can make you free from the prison in which you are living. And it is only a question of becoming more and more aware; nothing else can help you. I cannot do it for you, nobody else can do it for you. If somebody else does it for you, you will be reconditioned again. Remember it, you have to be unconditioned, not reconditioned. That's what happens: a Christian becomes a Hindu; of course he becomes unconditioned as a Christian, but he becomes reconditioned as a Hindu.
My effort here is to uncondition you, to help you to be unconditioned, and not to recondition you again. My effort is to leave you in total freedom; then you have to decide what to do with your life. You are the master of your life; I can simply give you a few indications of how to get rid of all the nonsense that has been forced upon you. Once you are free from all that nonsense, I am not going to give you any positive instructions about what to do or what not to do, because that will be a reconditioning again.
So awareness will help you in two ways: first it will help you to become unconditioned and then it will help you to find ways and means to live your life. It will be the only way to uncondition and the only way to find a new style of life, a new vision of life.

The fifth question:
Question 5
BELOVED MASTER,
I AM LEAVING SOON ON A TRIP WITH RADHA. BEFORE HEARING ABOUT YOUR EXPERIENCE OF TRAVELING WITH HER I FELT CONFIDENT AND SAFE ABOUT OUR LUGGAGE, BUT NOW DO YOU THINK I NEED SARJANO ALSO TO COME ALONG WITH US?

Anand Amito, no, categorically no! Sarjano may help to save your boxes and bags, but what about Radha? Radha will be in danger. It is better to risk the suitcases -- you will not be able to save Radha from Sarjano. Avoid Sarjano, even if he wants to come. Certainly he will help you to save the suitcases, but Radha will be gone.
So it is up to you. If you are too much attached to your suitcases, then you can take Sarjano with you; otherwise, that incident is not going to happen every time. And it was a fictitious journey that I talked about -- you are going on a real journey. On a real journey things like that don't happen....

The sixth question:
Question 6
BELOVED MASTER,
DO YOU REALLY KNOW ITALIAN? THEN PLEASE TELL ME WHAT THE ITALIAN WORD IS FOR REFRIGERATOR AND ALSO THE ITALIAN WORD FOR A PRETTY GIRL.

Satyam, I don't know that much Italian, but I will try my best. The Italian word for refrigerator is 'ice-a box', and the Italian word for a pretty girl is 'nice-a box'!

The last question:
Question 7
BELOVED MASTER,
IS THERE ANY HOPE FOR SOMEONE FROM AMERICA? WHAT ABOUT ONE WHO COMES FROM CALIFORNIA, BUT IS ENGLISH AND GERMAN; HAS A SCOTTISH STEPFATHER AND A JEWISH MOTHER; LOOKS SWEDISH AND FEELS ITALIAN?
P.S.: AND LIVES WITH A NEW YORK JEWISH-RUSSIAN POLACK!

Anupama, you are in quite a mess! Enlightenment is absolutely sure!
Enough for today.

The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 11

Chapter #9
Chapter title: What mischief!
19 April 1980 am in Buddha Hall

A MASTER GIVES UP MISCHIEF.
HE IS SERENE.
HE LEAVES EVERYTHING BEHIND HIM.

HE DOES NOT TAKE OFFENSE

AND HE DOES NOT GIVE IT.
HE NEVER RETURNS EVIL FOR EVIL.

ALAS FOR THE MAN
WHO RAISES HIS HAND AGAINST ANOTHER,
AND EVEN MORE FOR HIM
WHO RETURNS THE BLOW.

RESIST THE PLEASURES OF LIFE
AND THE DESIRE TO HURT --
TILL SORROWS VANISH.

NEVER OFFEND
BY WHAT YOU THINK OR SAY OR DO.

HONOR THE MAN WHO IS AWAKE
AND SHOWS YOU THE WAY.
HONOR THE FIRE OF HIS SACRIFICE.

MATTED HAIR OR FAMILY OR CASTE
DO NOT MAKE A MASTER
BUT THE TRUTH AND GOODNESS
WITH WHICH HE IS BLESSED.

YOUR HAIR IS TANGLED
AND YOU SIT ON A DEERSKIN.
WHAT FOLLY!
WHEN INSIDE YOU ARE RAGGED WITH LUST.

THE MASTER'S CLOTHES ARE IN TATTERS.
HIS VEINS STAND OUT,

HE IS WASTING AWAY.
ALONE IN THE FOREST
HE SITS AND MEDITATES.

Hank was riding the range, a-singing and a-humming. Suddenly his horse reared and stopped. In front of them was a huge snake. Hank drew his gun and was about to fire when the snake cried, "Don't shoot! If you spare my life I have the power to grant you any three wishes you make!"
"Okay," said Hank, figuring he had nothing to lose. "My first wish is a handsome face like Paul Newman. Second I want a muscular body like Muhammad Ali. And my last wish is to be equipped like my horse here!"
"Granted!" said the snake. "When you wake up tomorrow you will have all these things."
Next morning Hank awoke and rushed to the mirror. Sure enough, he had a face like Paul Newman and to his delight he saw a pair of massive shoulders and arms like Muhammad Ali. Then glancing down in great excitement he let out a blood-curdling howl, "My God, I clean forgot!" he babbled. "Yesterday I was riding Nellie!"

Man lives almost in a kind of deep sleep. He is not aware who he is, what he is doing, what he is thinking, where he is going, why he is going. His whole life is the life of a somnambulist, a sleepwalker. He is utterly unconscious. Out of this unconsciousness arise a thousand and one mischiefs; not that he knowingly wants to do them, he cannot avoid them. It is not a question of his decision to stop being mischievous; it is a question of his awareness. If he is aware, mischiefs disappear as darkness disappears

when you bring light in. If he is not aware he may think he is doing something good, he may believe with his whole heart that he is doing something good, but he will be doing something mischievous. The total outcome of his life is going to be more chaos in the world.

You can watch the do-gooders: they all try to help, they all try to serve; they make it a point that their whole life should be one of service. So many public servants in the world, so many missionaries, so many social reformers, so many great revolutionaries -- and look at the shape the world is in. Can it be more in a mess? This is the outcome of all your great efforts, of all your great saints. The tree is known by the fruit, and all your religions and all your saints and holy men can only be known by the world that they have helped to create. It is the most ugly world possible. Not that God is responsible -- God has made a beautiful world. His world is immensely beautiful: the trees, the flowers, the rivers, the mountains, the stars. But the world that man has made, the social structures that man has created are all ugly, violent, utterly mischievous. But everything bad can be done in the name of good.

Adolf Hitler was not consciously trying to do evil, remember it. He was not knowingly destructive; he was thinking he was trying to help humanity. He was thinking he was trying to bring a better human being into the world -- the superman. He believed deeply in Friedrich Nietzsche's philosophy of the superman and he also believed that the Germans were the really superhuman beings, that they were entitled to rule the world.

And it was not that he was deceiving anybody; he was utterly convinced of the fact. It was not a fiction for him, it

was a fact that the German race is the real Aryan race, that the Nordics are the purest people in the world. He could influence millions of very intelligent people for the simple reason that he was convinced of what he was saying and doing. His conviction was hypnotizing. He was not a man of great intelligence, he was utterly mediocre, but one thing was there: he was convinced that only through him could the world be made a better place to live in. By murdering millions of Jews, he was not thinking that he was doing any violence -- he was serving humanity, he was getting rid of the enemies of humanity. And it was not a question of his befooling anybody -- he was so unconscious that he himself was befooled by his own convictions.

Adolf Hitler did great mischief -- all the politicians do. And they always do it behind beautiful slogans: socialism, democracy, freedom, equality and whatnot. They are all trying to improve upon the world, but the total result is more and more confusion and chaos. The world would be a far better place if we could be alert enough not to listen to these lunatics. But we are also asleep. What they say appeals to us; it has a great magnetic quality in it.

In fact, a Buddha is bound to be misunderstood, not Adolf Hitler; a Jesus is bound to be misunderstood, but not Joseph Stalin. Joseph Stalin, Adolf Hitler, Benito Mussolini, they speak the language that you understand. They are just people like you; they live in the same kind of sleep. Hence there is a communication between you and them which is missing between you and a Buddha, between you and a Lao Tzu.

Buddha stands on the Everest and you live in the dark valleys far below. You don't look up, you have forgotten

how to look up. You crawl in the mud. Those who are crawling by your side can be understood more easily by you. They speak your language, they speak your idiom; they are perfectly in tune with you. They are not different people. But a Buddha, a Krishna, a Mohammed, these are different people. They speak a different language, from a different height, from a different vision -- although they use the same words. But they give different meanings to your words, and you are going to miss those meanings.
Meditate over this:

"Why won't you, honey?"
"I'm too tired."
"Ah, come on...."
"Leave me alone!"
"I won't be able to sleep!"
"Well, I can't sleep now."
"Please."
"Why -- in the middle of the night?"
"Because I'm hot."
"You get hot at the damnedest times!"
"You don't love me!"
"Yes, I do...."
"If you loved me you would do it."
"Well, damn it -- alright."
"What's the matter?"
"I can't find it."
"That feels better."
"It should be -- it's all the way up."
"That's enough; thanks, dear."
"Next time, open the damned window yourself!"

And all the time, what were you thinking?

Buddha says:

A MASTER GIVES UP MISCHIEF.

... Because a master gives up mind. Mind is mischief; there is no other mischief. Mind is the source of all mischief. A master is a master only because he has ceased to be dominated by the mind. A master is a master of himself; he is no longer unconscious. Whatsoever he does, he does it knowingly. Whatsoever he is, he is perfectly aware about it. His life is not accidental. His every act is rooted in consciousness, it is intentional.

We live in the mind. The mind can even become a saint, can pretend to be holy, but it will not be. It is impossible; it is not in the very nature of the mind to be holy. Just look at the history of religions -- they are full of bloodshed. In fact more crimes have been committed in the name of religions than in the name of anything else. More people have been killed, butchered in the name of religion, God, truth, Christianity, Islam, than in the name of political ideologies even. Religion tops the list. Religion has been far more mischievous; it has even defeated the politicians. It could defeat them for the simple reason that the politician cannot hide himself for very long; sooner or later he is exposed. But the religious person can hide himself for centuries and you will never know.

The people who crucified Jesus have not even yet understood that they committed a sin. I have not come

across a single Jew who accepts it consciously, that it was a crime to crucify Jesus. And it is not that there are not good Jews, not that there are not saintly Jews, not that there are not learned rabbis... there are very pious people. Even a man like Martin Buber could not gather the courage to say, "We have committed a crime in the past." No, that seems impossible. The crime was on Jesus' part because he tried to declare himself the Son of God. That is the crime: that he tried to project his image as the messiah, as the messenger of God. That was the crime and he was rightly punished -- Jews are absolutely convinced of that.

Two thousand years have passed; I have not come across a single book written by a Jew who can accept that "We committed a mistake." It seems impossible. They can't see it because the crime was committed in the name of religion. Thousands of Christians have been killed by Mohammedans, and vice versa. And these wars have been called JIHADS -- holy wars. Now, no war is ever holy, no war is a jihad; all wars are unholy. What excuse you find, that is another matter; that is just an excuse to fight. You want to fight, you want to kill and destroy. You find good excuses, beautiful excuses -- holy wars... and millions of people destroyed.

In these holy wars millions of women were raped; now, that rape is holy. If murder is holy, why not rape? That too is holy -- it is done in the name of religion. Everything that is done in the name of religion is good.

Your saints, who look so holy and pious, are the causes of all this nonsense, of all this nuisance in the world. When are we going to get rid of all this stupidity? Is man not yet mature enough? Has not the time come yet that we should

get rid of all this foolishness that has remained overwhelmingly powerful down the ages? Is not the time ripe to disconnect ourselves from the past?
But the only way to disconnect yourself from the past is to disconnect yourself from your mind because your mind is the past. Mind means the known, the past. Mind is history, mind is time. Mind is Christian, Hindu, Mohammedan, mind is Indian, German, Chinese. And unless you get out of the hold of the mind, whatsoever you do is going to be mischievous. It may or may not appear mischievous to you -- that is another matter -- but it is going to be mischievous. Out of mind nothing good can ever happen.
Good is a by-product of meditation, and bad, a by-product of mind.

A man said to Mulla Nasruddin, "How is your great friend, the lawyer?"
Mulla said, "I'm afraid he is lying at death's door."
"These lawyers! At death's door and still lying?"

That's the state of the mind: it goes on lying even at death's door. In fact, as death comes closer to you you start lying more and more, you start deceiving yourself with many more fictions, you start creating myths around you of God, of heaven, of hell. You start creating dreams and you start living in dreams because your whole life is shattered. You have wasted the opportunity. You have not been creative, you have been destructive.
And remember, nobody can be neutral. Either you create something in life or you destroy; either you live in the mind or you live beyond the mind. If you live beyond the mind

you become creative. To be in meditation is to be creative. Then whatsoever you do is beautiful; it brings more glory, more blessings to the world. Otherwise whatsoever you do is going to make the world more ugly.

The table and the chair were profoundly in love. They decided to get married and in due course they had a new arrival.
"What shall we christen him?" asked the chair.
"Chable," was the other's logical reply.

Of course the child of a table and a chair should be called a chable. And that's what people are doing: they go on producing chables. That seems to be their only productivity: all that they can do is produce more children.

A woman was telling me, "I hate my husband! From my very guts," she was saying, "I hate my husband! I am afraid some day I may kill him, may poison him!"
I said, "If you hate him so much, then how come you have eighteen children?"
She said, "I was trying to create such a crowd that he would get lost in it."

People hate and still they go on reproducing because their productivity knows no other way.

Rena went into the city clerk's office to report the birth of her sixth child.
"But, miss, this is your sixth child by the same father," said the clerk. "Why don't you marry him?"

"Are you jivin'?" replied Rena. "I don't even like the sonofabitch!"

But people have to do something; they can't just sit. They have to find something to remain occupied with. That's how all the mischiefs arise in the world.
Buddha says: A MASTER GIVES UP MISCHIEF.

HE IS SERENE.

Serenity is the flavor of meditation, serenity is the fragrance of meditation. He is so serene, so silent that he can be absolutely empty, with no desire to do anything. When all desire to remain occupied disappears, then only can something good happen through you, then God can happen through you -- and good only happens through you when God happens through you. Good is nothing but God flowing through you.
HE IS SERENE.

HE LEAVES EVERYTHING BEHIND HIM.

He leaves the past, he leaves his mind, he leaves his memories, he leaves his tradition. He is not a conformist, he cannot be a conformist. No master has ever been a conformist; that would be a contradiction in terms. He is always a rebel. He is pure rebellion. He dies every moment to the past; he never collects the past. Hence he remains always fresh, as fresh as the dewdrops in the early morning sun, as fresh as the lotus leaf, as fresh as the petals of a rose. He is always fresh, he is always young; he never

grows old. He grows up, but he never grows old. The body of course grows old, but his consciousness remains absolutely fresh; it never gathers any dust or rust. And he is so serene that he can sit alone for eternity with nothing to do -- still he will be absolutely blissful. He will enjoy his serenity.

This serenity cannot be cultivated from the outside; this serenity comes only when you have become a watcher of the mind, when you have become a witness of the mind and through witnessing you have transcended the mind. Then suddenly, out of nowhere, a serenity explodes from all directions. It showers on you like flowers and it goes on showering. Your life then is a life of virtue. It is not a question of cultivating it, it is not a question of creating it -- it is a consequence of meditation.

This point should be remembered again and again; never forget it, because it has been forgotten millions of times. Again and again a buddha comes to remind you but you go on forgetting it, for the simple reason that a cultivated serenity is cheap. You can look serene, you can make a serene face; you can act it, you can be a good actor, you can be very efficient, but that will be nothing but hypocrisy. Deep down you will be boiling; deep down inside you there will be hell. And from the outside you have perfumed yourself and inside you are stinking. Inside you are clinging to all your misery, to your past, to all that is dead, to all that is rotten, to all that should be burned; you are clinging to it. And those who cling to dead corpses slowly slowly become dead themselves; those who live with corpses become corpses themselves. On the surface you may smile, you may laugh; deep down there are only tears -- tears of pain.

But this strange fact about man has to be understood: that he clings to the past. Even if the past is ugly he clings to the past, even though he has only suffered. Why does he cling to the past? -- because the past gives him a definition, the past gives him an identity, the past gives him an idea of who he is.

After six weeks away on business the married executive entered a West Side brothel in Chicago. He walked up to the madam, handed her a hundred-dollar bill and said, "I want the worst screw in the house!"
"But sir," answered the madam, "one hundred dollars will buy you our best."
"No," demanded the businessman, "I want the worst available."
"I can't let you do this," the woman pleaded. "You're entitled to the top of the line."
"Listen, lady," said the man, "I'm not horny, just homesick!"

Watch your mind, how you cling to the past. There is nothing to cling to -- just dry bones, skeletons, but you are holding onto them as if they are your very life. And because you are holding them, your hands are not empty to hold anything else; because you are looking towards the past you cannot see the present and you cannot enjoy the beauty of it, the joy of it. You cannot enter into the present -- and the present is the door to God. The past is no more. And God is never past, God is always present. God is never future either, God is always present. You cannot say "God was," you cannot say "God will be," you can only say "God

is." In fact to say "God is" is a repetition because God means isness; isness and God are synonymous.
Buddha says: HE LEAVES EVERYTHING BEHIND HIM.
The master cannot be a Hindu, cannot be a Buddhist, cannot be a Christian. The master is simply a master; these names are of the slaves. Somebody is a slave in the name of Christianity and somebody is a slave in the name of Hinduism. These are all slaves; they don't know what freedom is. They are clinging to such utter nonsense, but they are clinging so hard that they can't see anything else. Their eyes are full of the dust of the past. They are blind because of the past; they are blind for no other reason. You are not missing God because you are sinners; you are missing God because you are past-oriented. And God is available only now... here. God knows only one time, now, and only one place, here. And you are never now and you are never here; you are always somewhere else. 'Then' and 'there' are significant words for you; 'now' and 'here' are almost meaningless to you.
The master lives now and lives here. HE LEAVES EVERYTHING BEHIND HIM. He goes on destroying the bridges he has crossed.

HE DOES NOT TAKE OFFENSE
AND HE DOES NOT GIVE IT.
HE NEVER RETURNS EVIL FOR EVIL.

Obviously, if somebody insults him he does not take it. You cannot insult a master, that is impossible. How can you insult a man who does not take it? To insult a man two

things are needed: somebody to insult him and his readiness to take it.

Once Buddha was insulted very much by a few people. They abused him badly. He listened silently and then he said, "Have you anything more to say? -- because I have to reach the other village in time. People must be waiting there. If you still have something else to say, when I come back I will be coming by the same route and I will inform you and I will keep a special time for you, so you can come and say whatsoever you like."
Those people were very much puzzled. They said, "We are not saying something, we are insulting you!"
Buddha laughed. He said, "For that you have come a little late. You should have come at least ten years ago. Now I am not so foolish. You can insult, that is your freedom, but whether to take it or not that is my freedom. I am not taking it."
And he said to them, "In the other village which I just passed before yours, people came with sweets to offer me. I thanked them. I said, 'I don't need sweets and I don't eat sweets.' What do you think they must have done with the sweets?"
Somebody from the crowd said, "They must have taken them back home."
Buddha said, "Now what will you do? You will have to take your insults back home. I don't take your insults -- there is no other way, you have to take them back."

When you feel insulted you have participated with the person. But you are not conscious, so anybody can push

your buttons. You function like a machine: push the button and you are on; push the button and you are off. Anybody can enrage you, anybody can make you smile and laugh, anybody can make you cry and weep. Anybody, any stupid fellow can do that! One just needs to know where the buttons are -- and almost always they are in the same places. It is very rare to find a person whose buttons are in different places.

A Polack was driving his Volkswagen, when suddenly it stopped for some reason. He went to look -- maybe there was some trouble in the engine -- but he could not find the engine. So he thought, "My God, my engine has been stolen!"
Just then another Polack stopped by his side. He said, "Is there some trouble?"
The first man said, "Yes, it seems my engine has been stolen."
The man said, "Don't be worried. This morning I was looking at the back of my car -- there is a spare engine. You can take it!"

Now in a Volkswagen the engine is not in the usual place; it is at the back, not in the front. But God has not yet learned anything from the Volkswagen -- he still makes the same engine with the same buttons, maybe a little bit different here and there, just a little change. Anybody can find... just a little groping and you can find anybody else's button. If you know your buttons you know everybody else's buttons.

You will be in a difficulty only with a buddha, because you can go on pushing his buttons and nothing will happen because he is no more identified with his mechanism. He will watch you pushing his buttons and he will enjoy the exercise that you are giving him, but that's all.
HE DOES NOT TAKE OFFENSE AND HE DOES NOT GIVE IT. HE NEVER RETURNS EVIL FOR EVIL. He understands humanity so deeply. By understanding himself he has understood the miserable state of all human beings. He feels sorry for people; he is compassionate. He does not return evil for evil for the simple reason that he does not feel offended in the first place. Secondly, he feels sorry for you; he does not feel antagonistic towards you.

Once it happened in Baroda:
I was talking to a big crowd. Somebody sitting just in the front row became so disturbed by what I was saying, he became so disturbed by it he went out of control, he lost his senses. He threw one of his shoes at me. At that moment I remembered that I used to play volleyball when I was a student, so I caught hold of his shoe in the middle and asked him for the other one. He was at a loss.
I said, "You throw the other one too! What am I going to do with one? If you want to present something...." He waited. I said, "Why are you waiting? Throw the other one too, because this way neither will I be able to use the shoe nor will you be able to use it. And I am not going to return it, because evil should not be returned for evil! So you please give the other one too."
He was so shocked because he could not believe it... first, what he had done he could not believe -- he was a very

good man, a scholar, a well-known Sanskrit scholar, a pundit. He was not expected to behave like that, but it had happened -- people are so unconscious. If I had acted the way he was unconsciously expecting, then everything would have been okay. But I asked for the other shoe, and that shocked him very much. He was dazed.

I told somebody who was sitting by his side, "You pull off his other shoe. I am not letting him off, I want both the shoes. In fact, I was thinking of purchasing some shoes, and this man seems to be so generous!" And the shoe was really new.

The man came in the night, fell at my feet, and asked to be forgiven. I said, "You forget all about it, there is no question... I was not angry, so why should I forgive you? To forgive, one first has to be angry. I was not angry, I enjoyed the scene. In fact, it was something so beautiful that many people who had fallen asleep were suddenly awakened! I was thinking on the way that it is a good idea, that I should plant a few of my followers, so once in a while they can throw a shoe so all the sleepers wake up. At least for a few moments they will remain alert because something is happening! I am thankful to you."

For years he went on writing to me, "Please forgive me! Unless you forgive me I will go on writing."

But I told him, "First I have to be angry. Forgiving you simply means that I accept that I was angry. How can I forgive you? You forgive me, because I am unable to be angry with you, unable to forgive you -- you forgive me!"

I don't know whether he has forgiven me or not, but he has forgotten me. Now he writes no more.

ALAS FOR THE MAN, Buddha says,
WHO RAISES HIS HAND AGAINST ANOTHER,
AND EVEN MORE FOR HIM
WHO RETURNS THE BLOW.

Why ALAS FOR THE MAN WHO RAISES HIS HAND AGAINST ANOTHER...? Because he is raising his hand against himself, because there is no one who is other. All existence is one. When you hit somebody you are hitting yourself. You are simply being childish. It is the same reality: I am one of its waves, you are another of its waves. One wave hitting another wave in the ocean -- they are both hitting themselves.
ALAS FOR THE MAN WHO RAISES HIS HAND AGAINST ANOTHER, AND EVEN MORE FOR HIM WHO RETURNS THE BLOW. Why more for him? -- because then he creates a vicious circle. And that's how we are living, in many many vicious circles. People go on fighting; once something starts then it seems there is no end to it. You do something in revenge and the other has to wait for his opportunity to do something against you, then you do something against him, and so on and so forth. It goes on from one life to another life, it continues.
The wise person is one, the master is one, who stops all these vicious circles.

Once a man came and spat on Buddha's face, he was so angry. Buddha asked him, "Is that all or do you want to do something more? Please do it and finish it."
The man asked, "What do you mean -- 'Please do it and finish it'?"

Buddha said, "In a past life I had insulted you and now the time has come when the vicious circle can be closed. Now you insult me and I will not return anything; I will simply accept it and close the circle -- it is just to close the accounts with you. I was waiting for you; in fact, the day I came into this town I was hoping that you would come and you would do something and the accounts could be closed. This is my last vicious circle; I have closed all others. Now I am out of all vicious circles. I am thankful to you; otherwise something was hanging in the air -- only one thread, but something was hanging in the air, something incomplete.

"Now the circle is complete and I don't want to continue it anymore. Now it is up to me to continue or not to continue. Now I am the master; up to now you were the master. By spitting on my face your mastery is gone; now I am the master and I don't want to continue this vicious circle anymore. This is my last life and I want to close all accounts with everyone -- good accounts, bad accounts, all kinds of accounts have to be closed -- so that I can disappear into the ultimate with no strings attached to the world. I am immensely happy," Buddha said to him.

RESIST THE PLEASURES OF LIFE
AND THE DESIRE TO HURT --
TILL SORROWS VANISH.

Pleasure is dependent on others, and whatsoever is dependent on others will make you a slave, will create a bondage. And Buddha's ultimate goal is freedom, nirvana -- freedom from all bondage.

Hence all the awakened ones have been saying: Search for bliss. Don't waste your time in ordinary pleasures. In the first place they are momentary; in the second place every pleasure brings pain. Pain is the other side of the same coin. It brings pain in the same proportion; the greater the pleasure, the greater the pain. So when you are enjoying something, be aware: soon the pain will follow; it is inevitable. Just as the day follows the night and the night follows the day, pain and pleasure follow each other. They are not separate, they are inseparable.

First, pleasures are momentary, they are just soap-bubbles. To waste your precious life for them is simply stupid, unintelligent. Second, every pleasure brings pain. But people are so foolish that they never look at the association. They think pain has come from some other source, they think pleasures can be forever. Again and again they are ditched by their pleasures into pain; again and again they go on thinking that there were some reasons why this pleasure was destroyed.

Whether reasons were there or not is irrelevant; every pleasure is momentary, it is going to disappear, and in its wake the pain.... You can rationalize it; that rationalization will only help you to continue in the same old rut. But see the fact. Seeing the truth is a great liberation; seeing that every pleasure is inevitably a bringer of pain, you will be freed from both.

And third: it is the same energy that is involved in pleasure which has to move towards bliss. Pleasure is dependent on others; bliss is totally independent, it is your own. It arises within your being, it is your self-nature; hence you are not dependent on anybody. And because it is your self-nature it

is forever. There is no contrary, there is no opposite to bliss.

Happiness is just in between pleasure and bliss. In happiness something is independent and something is dependent; it is a mixture of both. Hence the man who lives in sheer pleasure is in a better condition in a way; he is healthy, as healthy as animals are. Animals live in sheer pleasure: when the pain comes they suffer, when the pleasure comes they enjoy. They go on rotating between pleasure and pain. The man who lives only in pleasures -- a Don Juan -- he is in a way healthy, normal, because he is part of the animal world; he is not yet human. In a way his life is clear, it has no complexity.

But the man who lives in happiness or tries to find happiness, lives for happiness, is far more confused because he is nowhere. He is neither the animal nor yet the divine; he is in a limbo. He is riding on two horses; he will be in very great difficulty. And that's where almost all human beings are. It is very rare to find a human being who lives purely in pleasure -- it is rare to find a Zorba the Greek who lives purely in pleasure. He is clear, there is no confusion in him. He simply walks on the earth; he has no idea of flying in the sky. He has accepted the law of gravitation and he knows no other law.

The man who lives for happiness, who knows the beauty of music, who knows the beauty of paintings, art, who knows something higher than the animals can know, is far more confused; he is in far more of a mess... because while you are listening to great music something is contributed by the music which is outside and something is contributed by the music which is inside; it is a meeting of two polarities. You

are hanging in the middle and both are pulling you in separate directions. You will find more anxiety in your life. That's why poor people are less in anguish than rich people. Rich countries live in anguish because they have enough pleasure; they are fed up with it. Now they want something higher, and with the higher the problems arise.

The animal part is well settled because it is your heritage of millions of years. It is in your chemistry, in your biology, in your physiology. Everything is settled, instinctive. You need not be aware, you need not do anything. But if you seek and search for happiness then you are going into a more shadowy world which is less substantial -- higher but more shadowy.

And the third goal is bliss, which again is very clear, as clear as the first, in fact far more clear than the first because the first has a clarity, but the clarity is of a much lower kind. The third has a clarity of the highest quality. Only the awakened one knows the clarity of the third.

Buddha says: RESIST THE PLEASURES OF LIFE.... Become a little more mature. Don't be childish, don't remain animals. Put your energies towards the highest goal in life -- let bliss be your goal.

And people who live in pleasures also have one thing more in their life, and that is the desire to hurt others, because pleasures create competition. If you want more money, of course you have to snatch it from somebody else. If you want power, then somebody else will lose power. If you want to be the president, then somebody else will not be the president. Hence it is a constant struggle. You have to hurt many to succeed. You have to be very destructive, inhumanly destructive.

It is only the goal of bliss which can be nonviolent; otherwise pleasures are going to be violent.
Buddha says: RESIST THE PLEASURES OF LIFE AND THE DESIRE TO HURT -- TILL SORROWS VANISH.
Be alert. He is not saying repress, he cannot say that. Be aware -- so that pleasures don't pull you downwards, so that slowly slowly you are freed from your animal heritage, so that slowly slowly you can transcend your biology.
And avoid the desire to hurt others. There is a certain joy in hurting others. We go on hurting people; it gives you the feeling of power. It helps you to feel that you are powerful when you can hurt somebody. It is a very ugly desire, egoistic, but everybody does that. Watch yourself, in how many ways you hurt people. You may not be doing anything in particular to hurt them, but your gesture may be enough. People walk in such a way, talk in such a way, that others are hurt. And nobody can blame them because what they are doing is so subtle. They use words which can hurt, and they use them with such skill that you cannot blame them. They can always find a way to rationalize.

A black gentleman was arrested for shooting a man. The next morning he was brought into court.
"Why did you shoot that man?" asked the judge.
"Because he called me a black sonofabitch!"
"You didn't have any business shooting a man for that!"
"Well, Your Honor, what would you have done if he called you that?"
"Oh, he wouldn't have called me that!"
"I know, Judge, but suppose he had called you the kind of a sonofabitch you are, then? Of course he cannot call you 'a

black sonofabitch' -- you are not black -- but the kind of a sonofabitch you are, if he had called you that, what then?"

People can go on finding ways skillfully.... One has to remain aware until all sorrows vanish.

NEVER OFFEND
BY WHAT YOU THINK OR SAY OR DO.

That does not mean, remember, that people will not be offended. They may still be offended, but it should not be an intention on your part. Buddha is not saying that nobody will be offended by the master, because thousands were offended by Buddha himself. Certainly many were offended by Jesus; otherwise why should he have been crucified?
Buddha is saying: NEVER OFFEND BY WHAT YOU THINK OR SAY OR DO. It should not be your intention. Still, it is going to happen: whenever the master speaks it is almost inevitable that many will be offended because they will understand in their own way what he is saying. They will not hear what he is saying; they will hear only what they can hear. They are going to misunderstand him. That is absolutely inevitable, it cannot be avoided.

It was late afternoon in a small town. Joe, the owner of the local beer parlor, was lazily polishing glassware when his friend, Mickey, came running in.
"Joe," he shouted, "get over to your house real quick. I just stopped off to see if you were home and I heard a stranger's voice in your bedroom. So I looked in the window and,

gosh, I hate to tell you this, but your wife is in bed with another man!"
"Is that so?" said Joe, matter-of-factly. "What does this guy look like?"
"Oh, he is tall and completely bald."
"And did he have a thick red mustache?" asked Joe.
"Right! Right!" yelled Mickey.
"Did you notice if he had a gold front tooth?"
"Damn it, man, you're right!"
"Must be that jackass, Dick Roberts," said Joe. "He'll screw anything!"

Now, when you are talking to a husband about his wife it is a totally different matter. He does not care, he is no longer interested, he is fed up, he is finished. You may be excited that something has to be done, but the husband will hear through his experience of being a husband to the woman; he cannot put that experience aside.
I am saying something to you; you will hear it through your experiences, through your memories, through your ways of interpreting things. Nobody knows what you are going to gather out of it; that will be more your own than mine. I may have triggered the process, that's all, but you will be the creator of the whole phenomenon.
Hence, remember, the master never offends, still people are offended.
Buddha says:

HONOR THE MAN WHO IS AWAKE.

That has been one of the most beautiful things in the East -- that flower has bloomed in the East -- the East can be proud of it: we have always honored the man who is awake. In other parts of the world, particularly in the West, the expert is honored, the technician is honored, the scientist is honored, the man who can do many things is honored. But the man who is conscious is not considered at all just for his consciousness.

Gurdjieff was not honored at all. In the East he would have been a buddha; in the West he was not honored at all -- insulted in every possible way, for the simple reason that the West has no idea how to honor the awakened man, because the awakened man fulfills no utilitarian purpose. If your machine is broken he cannot be of any help; he cannot mend your car... he cannot help you in any way in the world. In fact, all that he can do is help you to get rid of the world. And nobody wants to get rid of the world; everybody wants to be in possession of the world. Hence the expert is honored in the West; in the East the expert has not been honored, never. The expert is okay -- he is a servant, he serves, he is paid for it. But we have honored the buddha.

To honor a buddha is to honor a roseflower, which has no utilitarian purpose. You cannot eat it. If it is a question of starvation, roses won't help; wheat will be far better. If it is a question of choice between wheat and roses you are going to choose wheat. What are you going to do with roses? A buddha is like a rose: you can appreciate the beauty, you can dance around the rose, you can sing songs to it, you can look at the rose and praise the Lord, but what else? It cannot fill your hungry stomach, it cannot help you to

succeed in the world, it cannot make you a great warrior. If you carry a roseflower you will not become Alexander the Great; a sword is needed, not a rose.
But the expert is as much asleep as you are; there is no difference, no qualitative difference. Hence in the East the expert is paid but he commands no honor.

A motion picture actor told his psychiatrist, "I'm attracted to men instead of women."
The shrink replied, "You've come to the right place, handsome!"

Now the shrink cannot be honored in the East; in the West he has become one of the most honored people. He has even defeated the priests. Now priests are learning how to be shrinks; priests are going to the universities to learn psychotherapy, psychoanalysis, psychosynthesis and all kinds of nonsense, because now they know the profession of the priest is finished; they have to add something more to its glamor. And they see the shrink is getting higher and higher; he is the most highly paid person in the West. In the East nobody will think anything special about a shrink. Yes, he cannot be more than a motor mechanic, maybe he is a mind mechanic -- he is also a plumber. You pay him, but honor is totally different.
Honor is due only where payment won't do. Where you cannot pay, where there is no possibility of paying back, then honor. Honor is the acceptance of the fact that it is impossible to pay back; the debt cannot be paid.

HONOR THE MAN WHO IS AWAKE

AND SHOWS YOU THE WAY.
HONOR THE FIRE OF HIS SACRIFICE.

The buddhas show you the way. You have to walk, you have to go; buddhas only point. They don't give you detailed directions because each individual is so unique and different that no detailed directions can be given. Only vague instructions, only indicators, pointers, hints at the most -- not orders, not commandments....

I have heard the story about the Ten Commandments. Of course God had asked the Indians first, "Would you like to have a few commandments?" They said, "No, not at all."
Then he asked the French and they said, "We want to live in freedom, we don't want any hindrances."
And he went on asking and nobody was ready. Finally he asked Moses, "Would you like a few commandments?"
He said, "How much?"
And God said, "Free, absolutely free!"
He said, "Then I will have ten!"

HONOR THE MAN WHO IS AWAKE AND SHOWS YOU THE WAY. He does not command you; he does not tell you, "Do this and don't do that." He simply gives you a few hints here and there -- and keeps you free, allows you total freedom. He is not to be imitated or followed; he is only to be understood. You have to learn from the awakened person the beauty, the bliss of being awakened, that's all, and then you have to search on your own. It is always an individual search, a private exploration. Truth

cannot be transferred from one hand to another; it is untransferable.

HONOR THE FIRE OF HIS SACRIFICE.... And why should a buddha be honored? -- because of the fire of his sacrifice. It is impossible for you to understand the sacrifice of a buddha because it is absolutely invisible to you. You will know it only when you become a buddha. What he has known cannot be put into words, still he tries; it is a constant sacrifice.

What he has known is beyond the mind, yet he tries in every possible way to make you understand it, to help you understand it. He puts all his energy into making the incomprehensible comprehensible. His sacrifice is great. He takes so much trouble -- for no reason at all, because he is not going to gain anything out of it. His work is finished! His ship has arrived. He can leave the body any moment, any moment he decides, still he goes on living in the body -- which is a confinement, which is a bondage. Still he goes on suffering in the body for the simple reason that he would like to convey the unconveyable. His compassion is infinite.

Ramakrishna suffered from cancer. Many times his disciples said to him, "Paramahansadeva, if it is too much of a pain, we will be very sad, miserable, but you please leave your body."

He said, "It is all the same whether the body has cancer or does not have cancer. To be in the body now is a suffering; even if it is healthy it is a suffering because now I can be as vast as the sky. But for you I will cling to the body a little

longer."

And the master has to find ways and means to cling to the body because all the old associations are broken, all the old connections are broken. He has to forge new connections, which is really one of the most difficult things in existence.

Ramakrishna was very much interested in food, so much so that his wife was always feeling embarrassed. He would be talking to his disciples and suddenly in the middle of it he would rush to the kitchen and ask Sharda, "What are you cooking?"
It is just like if suddenly, in the middle of the lecture, I rush to the kitchen and ask Vivek, "What are you cooking?" and then come back again, and you have to wait!
Sharda said many times, "This is not right. What will the people think?"
Ramakrishna always laughed and never answered. One day Sharda persisted: "You answer me! There is something strange about it." Whenever she brought his food he would stand up; he was so eager to know. He would remove the cloth and look into the THALI. People were always sitting there and they would start laughing and giggling: "What kind of God-realized man is this?"
One day Sharda persisted, then Ramakrishna said, "If you want to know the truth I will tell you: this is the only way I am clinging to the body. I have created a false desire for food. And remember, the day I show no interest in food then that is the end. Only three days more will I live after that."

Sharda did not pay much attention to it -- who pays much attention to such people? They go on talking about things, so many things; you listen and you don't pay much attention.
But one day Sharda came in with the thali... Ramakrishna did not stand up. Not only that: he was looking at the door, he turned his back towards Sharda and started looking out of the window in the other direction. Sharda suddenly remembered -- the thali fell from her hands.
Ramakrishna said, "So now you understand; that day you missed. Now only three days more...." And exactly on the third day he died.

Only when you become enlightened, awakened, will you know how a man who has come home still goes on living in the caravanserai -- dirty, ugly -- and still goes on helping people who are insane. HONOR THE FIRE OF HIS SACRIFICE.... Hence, Buddha says, honor him.

MATTED HAIR OR FAMILY OR CASTE
DO NOT MAKE A MASTER
BUT THE TRUTH AND GOODNESS
WITH WHICH HE IS BLESSED.

YOUR HAIR IS TANGLED
AND YOU SIT ON A DEERSKIN.
WHAT FOLLY!
WHEN INSIDE YOU ARE RAGGED WITH LUST.

Character is not a decisive factor. You can cultivate a beautiful facade around yourself, but the really decisive factor is your inside.

THE MASTER'S CLOTHES ARE IN TATTERS.
HIS VEINS STAND OUT,
HE IS WASTING AWAY.
ALONE IN THE FOREST
HE SITS AND MEDITATES.

For years Buddha was meditating in the forest, alone, not caring about his clothes, not caring about his body, not caring about anything else except his meditation; except for one thing all was dropped from his consciousness: how to reach the center. Once you have reached it then there is no problem, but before you can reach it, it has to be a one-pointed search. You have to be concentratedly concerned about only one thing, excluding everything else. Unless your search is so total, so whole, so wholehearted, you will not succeed in it.
ALONE IN THE FOREST HE SITS AND MEDITATES.
Wherever you are, learn to be alone, sit alone. It is difficult, the most difficult thing in the world, because when you are alone the mind starts dying. It cannot exist in aloneness, it needs company. Hence whenever you are alone the mind says, "Do something, go somewhere. Turn on the TV or the radio." The mind wants company, engagement, occupation. If you can be just alone... sitting silently doing nothing, the spring comes and the grass grows by itself. One day your inner being blooms into a one-thousand-petaled lotus. That day you have also become a buddha, and only then will you

be able to understand the meaning of Jesus' life, the meaning of Buddha's sayings, the meaning of Lao Tzu, Zarathustra. Before that whatsoever you try to understand is just your mind interpreting, and that interpretation has been one of the greatest causes of mischief.
Drop the mind -- the only thing to be renounced in the world is the mind -- and move towards the no-mind, the inner silence and serenity. Know yourself in your absolute aloneness and your life will be fulfilled, your life will be blessed: blessed with eternal bliss, blessed with truth, blessed with freedom.
Enough for today.

The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 11

Chapter #10

Chapter title: Laugh your way to God
20 April 1980 am in Buddha Hall

The first question:
Question 1
BELOVED MASTER,
TO BECOME ENLIGHTENED, DO YOU NEED TO BE JEWISH OR DOES IT JUST HELP?

Amitabh, religion has been missing one very fundamental quality: the sense of humor. It has been very unfortunate because it has made religion sick.
The sense of humor is part, an essential part, of the wholeness of man. It keeps him healthy, it keeps him

young, it keeps him fresh. And for centuries the sad people have dominated religion. They have expelled laughter -- from the churches, from the mosques, from the temples. The day laughter enters back into the holy places they will be really holy, because they will be whole. Laughter is the only quality that distinguishes man from other animals. Only man can see the ridiculous, the absurd. Only he has the capacity and the consciousness to be aware of the cosmic joke that existence is. It IS a cosmic joke; it is not a serious affair.

Seriousness is a disease, but seriousness has been praised, respected, honored. It was absolutely essential to be serious to be a saint; hence only pathological people became interested in religion, people who were incapable of laughter. And people who are incapable of laughter are subhuman, they are not human yet -- what to say about their being divine? That is impossible -- they have not yet become human. And to be human is the bridge between the animal and the divine. Hence I have tremendous respect for the sense of humor, for laughter.

Laughter is far more sacred than prayer, because prayer can be done by any stupid person; it does not require much intelligence. Laughter requires intelligence, it requires presence of mind, a quickness of seeing into things. A joke cannot be explained: either you understand it or you miss it. If it is explained it loses the whole point; hence no joke can be explained. Either immediately you get it.... If you don't get it immediately then you can try to find out the meaning of it; you will find out the meaning, but the joke will not be there. It was in the immediacy.

Humor needs presence, utter presence. It is not a question of analysis, it is a question of insight.
Amitabh, as far as humor is concerned, to be a little bit Jewish is very good -- everybody should be a little bit Jewish! For enlightenment it will prepare the ground, it will make you more alive. Enlightenment is becoming totally alive. Laughter brings life to you.
And if you can laugh totally there are a few more things to be understood. In deep laughter the ego disappears, it is not found at all. You can't have both laughter and the ego. If the ego is there it will keep you serious. All egoists are serious people, and all serious people are egoists.
To be able to laugh, you need to be like a child -- egoless. And when you laugh, suddenly laughter is there, you are not. You come back when the laughter is gone. When the laughter is disappearing far away, when it is subsiding, you come back, the ego comes back. But in the very moment of laughter you have a glimpse of egolessness.
There are only two activities in which you can feel egolessness easily. One is laughter, another is dancing. Dancing is a physiological method, a bodily method to feel egolessness. When the dancer is lost in his dance he is no more -- there is only dance. Laughter is a little more subtle than dance, it is a little more inner, but it has also the same fragrance. When you laugh.... It has to be a belly laughter. It should not be just superficial, it should not be just polite, it should not be just a mannerism.

I have heard:
One typist was leaving her job. This was her last day in the office, and the boss was telling the old jokes that he had

always been telling. Everybody was laughing, except the typist. The boss asked, "What is the matter with you? Can't you get the jokes?"

She said, "I got them long ago. You've been repeating them a thousand and one times, but I need not laugh anymore. Anyway tomorrow I am leaving. These fools are laughing because they have to laugh -- you are the boss. So whether the joke is worth laughing at or not doesn't matter. They have to laugh, it is part of their duty. But I'm leaving, what can you do to me? I'm not laughing, you cannot make me laugh at all those rotten jokes."

If you laugh out of duty or out of a sense of mannerism, out of politeness, then it is not a belly laughter, then it is just superficial; on the circumference, you are managing it. You will not understand what I am saying about laughter then. Laugh so that your whole body, your whole being becomes involved, and suddenly there will be a glimpse. For the moment the past disappears, the future disappears, the ego disappears, everything disappears -- there is only laughter. And in that moment of laughter you will be able to see the whole existence laughing.
Indians don't have the sense of laughter. In India we don't have any Indian jokes. All the jokes that are told in India are borrowed, there is no such thing as an Indian joke. Indians are serious people, very religious people, holy people. How can they descend to such low things as joking? They talk about God, they talk about moksha, they talk about nirvana... they can't laugh. These are not

laughing matters! You cannot laugh about God. But if you can't laugh about God you will never understand God.
The Indian statues of Buddha are totally different from the Chinese or the Japanese statues of Buddha. You must have noted the difference; the difference is great. The Indian Buddha has a very athletic body. His belly is very small, almost nonexistent. He never had a belly laugh. If there is no belly how can you have a belly laugh? But the Chinese Buddha has a big belly, and not only a belly -- even on the statue you can see ripples of laughter on the belly. Even in marble you can see he is laughing, the belly is laughing. No Indian will agree with the Chinese statue. He will say, "This is not right, Buddha was not like this, with such a big belly...." The Chinese Buddha looks like a clown -- but I have great respect for the Chinese Buddha. The Chinese Buddha has absorbed Lao Tzu, Chuang Tzu, Lieh Tzu. He is pregnant with Lao Tzu, that's why that big belly. Inside his belly there is Lao Tzu. And you cannot keep Lao Tzu quiet. He must be laughing and kicking and doing things; hence the ripples on the belly.
Lao Tzu has the sense of humor. Maybe because of that Lao Tzu could not become the founder of a great religion. There exists no religion in his name. Yes, a few rare people have followed his path, but there is no organized church, for the simple reason that Lao Tzu seems so nonserious. He used to ride on a buffalo. Now, can't you find a horse? Anybody could have afforded at least a donkey -- but a buffalo...? And that too, not in the right position, but sitting backwards! The buffalo is going one way and Lao Tzu is looking the other way. He must have created laughter

wherever he passed. People must have gathered to see the scene, what is happening.

And Chuang Tzu far surpassed his master. There has never been such a beautiful man as Chuang Tzu. All that he has said is utterly absurd, ridiculous! -- but with profound meaning. First you will laugh and then slowly you will see the point that he is indicating, in a very joyful way, towards certain truths which can only be indicated in a joyful way. If you are serious you cannot make people understand the beauty of existence, the celebration of existence.

Life is not a tragedy, it is a comedy. It is not tragic. But religious people have depended on the very idea of life being tragic: it is misery, utter misery -- what is there to laugh at? Hence they attracted the people who are incapable of laughter, of living, of loving.

My effort here, Amitabh, is just the opposite. I want you to learn as much from Buddha, as much from Lao Tzu, as much from Krishna, as much from Chuang Tzu as possible. I would like you to absorb all the great experiences that have happened in the past, so that a higher synthesis becomes possible. In that higher synthesis laughter is going to be one of the most essential qualities. With truth, courage and virtue, laughter also has its own place.

In that sense Jews are beautiful people. They have the greatest sense of laughter in the whole world. They are on the one extreme; on the other extreme are the British people. So many letters I have received, angry: "Beloved Master, you don't understand the British." Who cares to understand? And why should I understand the British, for what? Is nothing else left to understand?

I have been telling so many jokes about the Italians, but not a single angry letter. They understand that jokes are jokes! If you understand too much you cannot joke. A little bit of misunderstanding is needed.

Now, one of the most British of all the British sannyasins, Prembodhi, has written, "You don't understand the British at all." You simply prove my point!

Somebody else has written, "This is not right. You say that no British woman is a woman; they are all ladies." I was simply paying respect!

And I think it is a well-known fact that nothing should be said against the dead. For the dead you should always show respect. That's what I was doing! Why are you angry about it?

I repeat again: it is very difficult, almost impossible, to find a British woman -- only ladies are there. All men may not be gentlemen; men after all are men, boys are boys! And old boys more so! But as far as women are concerned, they carry the culture, the religion, they are the foundation stones. The British woman has a certain face. No other woman has that kind of nose... they all need plastic surgery!

Amitabh, the only problem with the Jews is when it comes to the question of price. Then they will go on haggling for centuries. Enlightenment will be just in front of them, but they will haggle for the price.

So that is the problem, Amitabh; there you have to be aware.

A Scot went into a tailor's and asked to see a suit.

The Jewish proprietor came back with a nice Harris tweed. "Look at this," he said, "and it's not fifty pounds, not even forty. Thirty pounds and it's yours."
The Scot examined it carefully. "I wouldn't give you twenty-five pounds for it, not even twenty. My price is eighteen pounds."
"Right," said the Jew. "That's the way I like to do business -- no haggling."

Then there were the two Jews who bumped into each other after forty years, and rushed to the nearest pub to celebrate. "It will be magic to have a drink together after all these years," said one.
"Yeah," said the other, "but don't forget, it's your round."

The rich widow needed a blood transfusion, so a Jew donor saved her life. She was so grateful, she gave him a hundred pounds, but after a relapse she needed another one and this time gave the donor fifty pounds.
The third time he saved her life she had so much Jewish blood in her that she just thanked him very much.

The second question:
Question 2
BELOVED MASTER,
I AM UTTERLY MISERABLE. HOW CAN I GET OUT OF MY MISERY?

Vandan, I have never come across a person who is utterly miserable. You are tolerating it, you are existing with it,

you are living with it. If it is so bad one should stop breathing! Why should one go on living?
It can't be so bad. Maybe you love to exaggerate. There are people who always like superlatives, who magnify everything. Small miseries of course there are, but what big misery can you have? Where will you have it? I cannot conceive of any misery that can be so bad that you can call it absolute; otherwise one will simply die, immediately.
So one thing, remember, stop exaggerating. That is also a way of the ego. The ego is so strange that it wants to exaggerate everything. Even if it is misery it will magnify it, it will make a big fuss about it. There may be nothing much in it: if you go to the roots you may find a mouse, but you are talking about elephants.
And I know you, Vandan. I have never seen you utterly miserable. You look perfectly normal. Unless all normal people are utterly miserable... just the ego has the habit of magnifying.

A boy came running home from school. He was breathing hard, puffing, perspiring. He told his mother, "Somehow God saved me. A tiger is following me, a very dangerous tiger, a very ferocious tiger."
The mother said, "You stop exaggerating! I have told you a million times not to exaggerate, and again you are doing it. Where is that tiger?"
The boy showed her from the window. A very small dog, thin, lean, hungry, was standing outside. And the mother said, "This is the tiger? You go upstairs, pray to God and ask his forgiveness. And never exaggerate again. Enough is enough!"

So the boy went upstairs. After five minutes he went back to the mother, and the mother said, "Did you pray?"
He said, "Yes, I prayed, and do you know what God said? He said, 'You don't be worried. When for the first time I saw that dog I myself thought that it was a ferocious tiger. So nothing to be worried about. I myself was deceived, so what about you? And I am so big, still I thought it is a very dangerous tiger. I was just getting ready to run away, then I had another look and found: oh no, it is just a dog. And you are a small child, so if you got frightened it is natural.'"

Misery is not so big as you make out. So the first thing is to reduce it to the right proportions. Before you can get out of it let the tiger disappear. Be very factual. If you really want to transform your life, be factual. You cannot get out of fictions. You can get out of facts; facts can be tackled, but fictions cannot be tackled.
But this is the way of the mind, the way of the ego, to magnify everything. It makes everything look big. And then of course you start suffering in a big way. The cause is not so big, but the effect can be very big -- it depends on you.
Look again, consider again, reconsider the whole situation. What is it that you are calling "utterly miserable"? And then you will find ordinary facts of life. But we don't want to be ordinary. The ego hankers to be extraordinary. Even if it is misery we would like to be extraordinary.
Somebody asked George Bernard Shaw, "Where would you like to go when you die, to heaven or to hell?"
He said, "Wherever it is, that does not matter. What matters is: I want to be the first. Even if it is hell, I want to be the

first. I don't want to be second to anybody. Hence I think hell will be better, because in heaven Buddha and Jesus and Zarathustra... and there are so many competitors. And I will have to stand in a queue, and that I hate! I am ready to go to hell, I am ready to suffer in hell, but I want to be the first."
The ego is always hankering to be the first. It says, "My misery is bigger than anybody else's. Whatsoever I am, I am bigger, I am special, I am extraordinary."

Once a high court judge came to me. His wife used to come to me. I was surprised, because the wife always used to say that he is very much against me and he does not want her to listen to me or read my books or to go and see me. But whenever I visited that city she was always coming.
So I was surprised. I asked him, "Your wife always says you are very much against me."
He said, "Not that I am very much against you -- I am simply afraid that.... My wife is already crazy, and what you are saying, if it gets into her mind, she exaggerates everything. You will create more trouble for me."
I asked him, "Why have YOU come?"
He said, "I have just come to say to you that if she says that she has cancer, reduce it to a headache. Don't be bothered about her cancer. I have suffered my whole life. Then I have learned this lesson: she exaggerates."
And in fact that was the case. Every time she used to come she was talking about cancer. She was telling that she has cancer of the heart and this and that -- and the husband said she had nothing! Just a hypochondriac... she goes on exaggerating.

A hypochondriac died. Before he was dying his wife asked, "Have you some last words?"
He said, "Yes. On my gravestone write in big letters: Now do you believe me or not?"

The first thing for you is to bring things down to the level of reality. It is difficult, Vandan, particularly so for a woman. They live in fancy. When you fall in love you think you have fallen in love with a Greek god, and by the time the honeymoon is finished you know he is nothing but a goddamned Greek! Within seven days the Greek god is nothing but a goddamned Greek.
And again it will happen. Again you will fall in love, and again you will create a great fancy, you will create projections. And all your projections are going to be shattered sooner or later, because reality has no obligation to fulfill your projections.

So first bring down your idea of misery to the fact, to the real. And then it is not difficult to get out of it. Then the second thing is to be aware of it. Just be aware of it, and you are out of it -- because you can be aware only if you are not it.
That is the miracle of awareness. When you observe something one thing is certain, absolutely certain: that you are not it. The observer is never the observed. The observed is there as an object confronting you. You are the observer, you are the subject.
So misery is there, pain is there or pleasure, or whatsoever experience is there -- you are not it. You are out of it!

Two ham actors were moaning about how tough things were in the motion picture business.
"I haven't had a part for over ten years," one of the thespians sighed.
"That's nothing," the other ham said. "I've not worked since sound pictures came in."
"That's really tough."
"You bet it is. I wish to hell I could figure some way to get out of this business."

For forty years you are not in the business, and you are still figuring out how to get out of it!
Just watch. These two steps, Vandan: first, bring your misery to the level of reality, and then watch it -- because only reality can be observed; fictions cannot be observed, you become identified with them. Once the reality is there, it is objective; watch it, and suddenly a great realization happens. You are the watcher, you are out of it.
You ask me, "How can I get out of it?" Vandan, you ARE out of it. Right now you are out of it! It is only an illusion that you are in it. If you want to believe you can go on believing that you are in it. Otherwise you can snap out of it any moment. Try. Try to snap out of it. Snap your fingers and slap your face and wake up!

The third question:
Question 3
BELOVED MASTER,
ARE YOU AGAINST GARLIC? I HAVE BEEN EATING IT SINCE MY CHILDHOOD AND I DON'T THINK THAT IT STINKS.

Virago, meditate over this story....
Forster sat in the posh offices of Park Avenue's most famous physician.
"I've got this terrible problem," he explained. "Everything I eat turns to gas. I just had steak and potatoes and it turned to gas."
"That could be serious," countered the doctor.
"But fortunately," said Forster, "my gas is noiseless and odorless. Can you cure it?"
"I'm sure that I'll be able to help, but first I'm going to fit you with a hearing aid and then I'm going to fix your nose."

The fourth question:
Question 4
BELOVED MASTER,
RECENTLY YOU MENTIONED THAT THE SPIRITUAL EGO IS MORE DANGEROUS THAN THE NORMAL EGO. CAN YOU EXPLAIN?

Prem Unmado, all egos are dangerous, because the ego is a false entity. It does not exist, in fact. It is there because you are not aware of who you are.
The ego is just like darkness. Darkness has no positive existence of its own; it is only the absence of light. Hence you cannot do anything directly with darkness. If you want to remove darkness you cannot remove it directly; you will have to bring light in. If you want to bring darkness in you cannot bring it directly either; you will have to put the light off. Whatsoever you want to do, you will have to do with

the light, because the light has existence. Darkness has no existence, and with the nonexistential nothing can be done. The ego is nonexistential, it is a nonentity. It is the absence of awareness, of alertness. You are not conscious; hence the ego prevails, hence the darkness remains.

All egos are dangerous, because you are living in something which is not. You are living for something which is not, you are sacrificing that which is for something that is not. This is the danger. A real life is being sacrificed at the altar of the nonexistential ego.

You are running after money, after power, after prestige, but in fact nobody is really interested in power, money, prestige. They are just ways of the ego to exist. If you have more money you can have more ego; if you have more power you can have more ego. The basic desire is to expand the ego, but the more your ego becomes strengthened, the more the darkness becomes dense, the less is the possibility of your becoming aware. And without becoming aware you are missing the whole opportunity of life, a golden opportunity, in which God can be realized, in which truth can be lived. A life which can be a constant celebration, an eternal joy, is sacrificed for something absolutely meaningless.

Hence, remember, all egos are dangerous. But the spiritual ego is the most dangerous simply because all other egos are gross. You can see that the politician is after his ego, you can see even the politician in some moments can see it. It is very gross, how can you avoid seeing it? You are bound to stumble on it, it is like a rock.

But the spiritual ego is very subtle, it is like fragrance. You don't stumble, it does not hit you like a rock. You cannot

remove it so easily as you can remove a rock. It is a subtle fragrance. The more spiritual you become, the more your ego becomes subtler and subtler. Your ego becomes pious, and when the poison is pious, of course it is more dangerous, because you think it is nectar. Now, the label is nectar; inside the bottle is the same poison.
Hence your saints are more egoistic than your sinners. There is every hope for the sinners, they can reach to God far more easily than your so-called saints. Your saints are living with such egoistic attitudes, they are full of holy cow dung, rubbish.
The man of the world claims that he has so much money and the religious man claims he has so much virtue. The worldly man claims he has so much power, so much prestige, and your so-called holy man claims he also has power, spiritual power. He tries to show his spiritual power.

Once such a so-called spiritual man came to see Ramakrishna. Ramakrishna was sitting on the bank of the Ganges in Dakshineshwar, where he used to live. The spiritual man said to Ramakrishna, "I have heard that you are a great saint. If you really are, then come with me and walk on the water. If you can walk on the water then I can believe that you are spiritual."
Ramakrishna laughed. He said, "Can you walk...?"
The man said, "Yes, I can walk."
Ramakrishna asked him, "How long did it take you to learn to walk on the water?"
The man said, "It took me eighteen years of tremendous effort, austerities, TAPASCHARYA, fasting, prayer. I

lived in a cave in the Himalayas. I sacrificed everything. Then this spiritual power has been given to me."
Ramakrishna said, "I am not spiritual, I am a simple man, very ordinary. But one thing I would like to tell you. When I want to go to the other shore, the ferryman takes me for just one paisa. Your whole eighteen years' effort is not worth much more than that. You wasted your eighteen years. You may be spiritual, but you are a fool, you are utterly stupid! I have never come across such an unintelligent person -- wasting eighteen years just to walk on water! Then what is the point? Okay, you can walk on water, so what?"

This is the spiritual ego, which will go sooner or later to exhibit its powers, to prove that "I am holier than you." That man had come with that idea -- to prove to Ramakrishna that "I am holier than you, I am higher than you."
It is meaningless. Buddha is not reported to have done any miracle. Mahavira is not reported to have done any miracle. And my own understanding is that all the miracles that are talked of in the name of Jesus are inventions.
(the sound fails....)
You see? Some Christian got mad! They are all inventions of the Christians.
I have a totally different approach. When Christians say Jesus turned water into wine it is not a literally factual thing. It simply means that people like Jesus get drunk on simple water. I know it from my own experience. I never mix my soda with whisky; I mix my soda with soda, and I get drunk, so what is the point of mixing it with whisky?

Just pure air is enough to get drunk; water is enough. It all carries the essence of God, what more do you need to get drunk? This existence is more than is needed.
But the spiritual man will try to prove in some way that he is spiritual. He will prove it through miracles, he will become an exhibitionist. That's why the spiritual ego is more dangerous. He will not be able to see it, and others will not be able to see it either. Because you cannot see it easily, Unmado, I called it more dangerous.
Drop the very idea that you are separate from existence. And I am not telling you to fight with the ego, that is nonsense. I am telling you to create more awareness in you, become more full of light and consciousness and the ego will disappear on its own. And when it disappears on its own it has a beauty, it has a benediction. When there is no ego in you, no ego worldly or otherworldly -- when there is no ego at all of any kind, you are one with God. The barrier is removed, the last barrier has fallen.
And to experience God is to experience life in its utter simplicity, in its utter beauty. To experience God is to experience truth in its eternity. Then you are beyond death and beyond time.
Ego is the only barrier. But don't fight with it -- spiritual or worldly, it is the same. Create more consciousness, be more meditative. Meditation is the only medicine. Both the words come from the same root: 'meditation' and 'medicine' -- because meditation also is a medicine. It heals you, it cures you from the greatest disease, the disease of the ego.

The fifth question:
Question 5

BELOVED MASTER,
WILL YOU ONE DAY GO IN THE MIDDLE OF THE DISCOURSE TO THE KITCHEN TO INQUIRE WHAT IS BEING PREPARED FOR YOU?

Pantha, sorry, I cannot do that -- for many reasons. One is, I am not Ramakrishna; I am just myself, I am nobody else.
Secondly, all my kitchen people are here: Vivek is here, Astha is here, Nirgun is here, Pragya is here -- there is nobody to ask.
Thirdly, I eat the same food, morning, evening, year in, year out. In fact, all my kitchen people are bored with preparing it. Except me everybody is bored! This is a device to bore them.
Just think: the same thing they have to prepare, morning, evening, every day. Unless they become enlightened they are going to go crazy.
So there is nothing to ask, I already know. There is no change ever in my food.
Thirdly, I don't know where my kitchen is! So, Pantha, even if I want I cannot find it. I know only my room, and the way from the room to Buddha Hall and back. I will get lost into Lao Tzu House. And after many many lives somehow I have found the way. Please don't make me get lost again.

The sixth question:
Question 6
BELOVED MASTER,
WHAT IS THE DIRTIEST FOUR-LETTER WORD IN THE INDIAN LANGUAGE?

Darshan, 'work'!

The seventh question:
Question 7
BELOVED MASTER,
YOU DID NOT FINISH THE STORY OF THE PRIEST AND HIS SUNDAY SERMON. IS IT NOT SO?

Chetan Hari, that is true. Knowingly I did not finish it, but now that you have asked I have to finish it.

When the priest saw the hell, so beautiful, with such ecstatic people, he certainly became infatuated. He knew all the ways to reach to heaven, he had no idea how to go to hell. And now, seeing hell, he wanted to go to hell, not to heaven.
So he inquired of a few people. They said, "Better you ask the Buddha, he is there sitting under the tree."
He went to the Buddha and he asked, "Sir, can you show me the way to hell, because now I don't want to see heaven again. Once is enough. I don't want to go there at all. I have lived my whole life preparing for heaven. I know all the ways and all the methods and means how to reach there. I don't know how to get to hell."
Buddha said, "You go back to the station and buy a ticket to Poona and take sannyas. That is the best and shortest way to go to hell."

The priest is here. Please don't ask me his name, because priests are a little shy, and he will feel embarrassed -- and

particularly a Catholic priest. But he is here. If you try a little harder you will find him.

The last question:
Question 8
BELOVED MASTER,
OKAY, GIVE IT TO ME STRAIGHT. CAN GOD REALLY EXIST IN AMERICA? LEAVING TOMORROW, I GET A LITTLE NERVOUS REALIZING HOW SERIOUS THE WORLD TENDS TO BE, AND WELL, YOU KNOW, GOD TOO. SO WOULD YOU GIVE ME ONE OF YOUR FUDDY-DUDDY JOKES TO SHARE WITH HIM JUST IN CASE WE MEET?

Toshen, you forget this word 'him'. God is not a he, God is a she. If you go with this idea that he is a he, you will never find him. That's how people go on missing him. They go on looking for him as if he is a man, and he has changed himself long ago.

Colonel Stanford, a staunch segregationist, died and somehow made his way to heaven. A week later his friend, Colonel Beauregard, departed and was also allowed to get past the Pearly Gates. The two of them met.
"Never had any doubt we would make it," said Colonel Beauregard, "but now that we did, tell me, how are things up here?"
"Not bad," answered Colonel Stanford, "but I would advise you to watch your step. I saw God the other day and she is a Negress."

And not only that he is a she, she is a Negress -- a black woman. So if you are really in search of God in America, remember this.

And then you will have to learn a few things. If you meet a black woman you will have to learn some art, you will have to learn to be a little like a black man, otherwise there will be no communication, no communion.

God has changed. He was tired of being male and white. Everybody gets tired of being the same. And people are still thinking that he is the old. You are worshipping old photographs, you are carrying old albums. No wonder very few people find him.

Now think of God as a woman. And God can only be a woman; the very idea of God being a man is the male chauvinist idea, it is the idea of man. The Christian trinity has not a single woman in it. Look at the nonsense: they have made even a place for the Holy Ghost. Now, who is this Holy Ghost? The trinity would not have missed much if there was no Holy Ghost, but the trinity looks a little ugly without a woman. The father is there, the son is there, and where is the mother? Do you think God is gay?

This is man's egoistic projection. Remember: the she contains he, but the he does not contain she. Man is born out of a woman, but no man can give birth to a woman. It is natural to think of God as woman -- as mother, not as father. That is a fascist idea.

It is not accidental that Germans call their country "fatherland." Nobody calls their country "fatherland." Everybody calls his country "motherland" -- that seems to be right -- except the Germans... they call it "fatherland."

God is a mother, a motherly phenomenon. This whole existence is motherly. And God is far softer than man can ever be, far more vulnerable, far more open. God is the womb of existence. The whole existence comes out of the womb.
So, Toshen, drop this idea of "he" and "him"; think of "she" and "her." And remember: he is tired of being white, he is no longer white. He is black now, and he is enjoying being black, because very few people are able to find him now. Even if you come across him, you think, "It is just a nigger." Even if he knocks on your door you will not open the door.
And if you meet him, you are asking me that you would like to tell him some joke. Tell him this joke:

"What makes you black men such good lovers?" asked the white employer of Kinney, the chauffeur.
"The trouble with you white folks is that you just go in there and rush, rush, rush, and before you know it, it is all over," said Kinney. "Now the way us black folks do it is get in there, take it easy, make long strokes, talk sweet a while, stop a while, take our time, then some more slow long strokes, nice and cool-like."
That night whitey climbed into bed with his wife and began making love to her exactly as Kinney had suggested. After twenty minutes of sheer delight she gasped, "My God, where did you learn to screw like a black man?"

Enough for today.

The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 12

Talks given from 21/04/80 am to 30/04/80 am
English Discourse series
10 Chapters
Year published:
The original tape and book title was "The Book of the Books, Vols 1 - 6". Later reissued as twelve volumes under the present title.

The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 12

Chapter #1

Chapter title: No-self actualization
21 April 1980 am in Buddha Hall

A MAN IS NOT BORN TO MASTERY.
A MASTER IS NEVER PROUD.
HE DOES NOT TALK DOWN TO OTHERS.
OWNING NOTHING, HE MISSES NOTHING.

HE IS NOT AFRAID.
HE DOES NOT TREMBLE.
NOTHING BINDS HIM.
HE IS INFINITELY FREE.

SO CUT THROUGH
THE STRAP AND THE THONG AND THE ROPE.
LOOSEN THE FASTENINGS.
UNBOLT THE DOORS OF SLEEP
AND AWAKE.

THE MASTER ENDURES
INSULTS AND ILL TREATMENT
WITHOUT REACTING.
FOR HIS SPIRIT IS AN ARMY.

HE IS NEVER ANGRY.
HE KEEPS HIS PROMISES.
HE NEVER STRAYS, HE IS DETERMINED.
THIS BODY IS MY LAST, HE SAYS!

LIKE WATER ON THE LEAF OF A LOTUS FLOWER
OR A MUSTARD SEED ON THE POINT OF A NEEDLE,
HE DOES NOT CLING.

FOR HE HAS REACHED THE END OF SORROW
AND HAS LAID DOWN HIS BURDEN.

Man is born only as a seed, not as a flower. Flowering has to be achieved; one should not take it for granted. Birth itself is only the opportunity for life, it is not life itself. You can still miss life -- and millions miss it for the simple reason that they think that just being born is enough to be alive. It is not enough. It is necessary -- without it there will

be no life -- but it is not synonymous with life. You have to be twice-born.

Jesus says: Unless you are born again you shall not enter into my kingdom of God.

A kind of rebirth is needed. The ordinary birth is the birth of the bodymind mechanism, but your spirit is only a potential -- it has to be actualized. Abraham Maslow has called this process self-actualization. Gautam Buddha would call the same process "no-self actualization."

Abraham Maslow has no idea of the ultimate; he is thinking about it, speculating about it. He has stumbled upon a certain truth, but he does not know how to express it. He has not experienced it himself; it is only an intellectual understanding, hence he calls it "self-actualization."

But in that ultimate flowering the first thing that disappears is the self. In fact, the self is the only barrier for that flowering. The self is the hindrance, not the help. The self surrounds you like a wall; it is not the bridge.

When you are really born, born to life or to God -- to me both are synonymous -- you are no more, no more as you understand yourself to be. A pure emptiness prevails, an utter void prevails, a silence which is soundless. A music is there certainly, but without any sound. The Zen people call it the sound of one hand clapping. That no-self is your original face. When you are not, you are, and you are for the first time.

If Abraham Maslow had experienced the ultimate state of flowering he would never have called it self-actualization; he would have called it "no-self actualization." You are born as a self, as an ego. This is the seed and the seed has to disappear before the sprout can start growing. The seed

has to die in the soil; then and only then the life that is hidden inside the seed will start manifesting itself.
It is a miracle! You are blind, that's why you can't see. So many miracles are happening all around you. When a seed becomes a sprout, a great miracle is happening. If you cut the seed you will not find any leaves, you will not find any flowers, you will not find any tree, you will not find anything at all -- just emptiness. Through analyzing the seed you will not reach any conclusion. But if you let the seed fall down into the right soil, if you allow the seed to die and disappear, out of that nothingness something immensely beautiful arises, something impossible happens. Leaves come, branches come, a big tree grows. Such a small seed contains such a big tree! Now hundreds of people can sit under its shade, hundreds of birds can make their nests, can come to rest every night in its shelter, and thousands of flowers will bloom.
A single seed is capable of making the whole earth green. It has so much potential -- infinite potential, because out of a single seed millions of seeds will arise, and so on and so forth. If you have one single seed the whole earth can be a garden. Why just the whole earth? -- the whole universe can be a garden! The potential is infinite; you have just to find the right opportunity for its expression, for its manifestation, for its realization.

Buddha says:

A MAN IS NOT BORN TO MASTERY.

Every man is born as a slave. It hurts to know it; we would like to be told that we are born as masters. We believe that we are masters -- nobody suspects it. The people who start suspecting their mastery are the only people who are capable of becoming, some day, masters. You doubt everything, but you never doubt your mastery over yourself, and that is the most doubtful thing, the most doubtable thing. What kind of mastery have you got? You are a slave, an utter slave of biological instincts, of sex, of anger, of greed, of ambition. You stink of all these things, you are full of all these things. And still you go on believing deep down somewhere that you are masters. And rather than making an effort to destroy this slavery you start proving your mastery over others. You try to become Alexander the Great or Genghis Khan or Tamerlane. That is an effort to deceive yourself. That is an effort to prove something which is not there at all. You are trying to gather proofs about your mastery. Of course, if you become powerful enough over many people you can believe more easily that you are a master. It is easier for Alexander to believe that he is a master, but it is only a belief with no foundation to it. He is as much a slave as anybody else; maybe he is a far bigger slave than anybody else.

When he was coming to India, Alexander met a rare man, Diogenes. Had Diogenes been born in India he would have been considered a buddha; he was one of the awakened ones. Even Alexander was immensely impressed by him. He lived utterly naked by the side of a river. It was early morning when Alexander went to see him; he was lying naked on the bank of the river taking a sunbath. Seeing the

man, feeling his presence, Alexander for the first time felt a kind of inferiority arising in him. He had come across many kings, he had defeated many kings, but here was a real king -- a master.

When you come across a master it is impossible not to feel the presence -- unless you are absolutely blind, absolutely deaf, utterly dead. Alexander must have been a little sensitive, a little alert, otherwise he would not have come to see this naked fakir. Just the fact that he came to see him, out of the way, shows that he had some deep feeling that all his possessions were not enough to make him contented: "There must be some other way to be contented. Life cannot be only possessions and power; life must have some more secrets to it."

He had heard many things about Diogenes: "He carries a lighted lamp in the day, in the full light of the day. Naked he is, but he carries only one thing in his hands -- a lamp, a lighted lamp. And people ask him, 'Why do you carry this lamp?' And he says, 'I am seeking and searching for a real man; I have not come across one yet. I carry this lamp so that I don't miss him.'"

A real man? Is he so rare? Alexander must have brooded over it. He must have thought, "I am a real man. Let me go and see this Diogenes." He had heard many stories about him: "He seems to be the most blissful person in the world. Nobody has ever seen him in anxiety, in anguish, in fear; he is utterly fearless."

Alexander had heard that once he was caught by a few people -- eight people were needed to catch this simple man -- but he told them, "Don't make so much effort, you need not. What do you want? Simply tell me."

They said, "We want to sell you in the slave market."
He said, "Then there is no need to strain yourselves so much -- I hate to give trouble to anybody. I am coming with you."
And he went with them, ahead of them. They followed him as if they were his followers. And when they reached the market where men were sold and purchased, everybody was attracted towards this beautiful man. He stood there on a platform and shouted, "Listen, all you slaves who have gathered here: a master is being sold! Is there any slave interested in purchasing a master?"
So many stories were in the air about Diogenes...
Alexander slowly slowly became so interested that he went to see him. The very interest shows that there was some deep feeling in him about the futility of his own endeavors to conquer the world. And seeing Diogenes he immediately felt himself a nonentity, while Diogenes was an authentic being. Still he tried to laugh it away.
Diogenes said, "Stop laughing! Don't try to befool yourself! You can see the fact that you are missing life."
And Alexander said, "Yes, sir, I can feel it. For the first time I have seen a really alive person. What can I do for you? I have enough money, I can do anything. Just you say and it will be done."
Diogenes said, "I don't need anything. You may have all the money in the world, but I don't have any desire, so all your money is absolutely irrelevant. But one thing you can do is stand aside, because you are blocking the sun. That's all that I can ask from you and you will be kind enough if you can stand aside."

He didn't ask for anything. Alexander said to him, "If I have to come into the world another time, I will ask God to make me Diogenes instead of Alexander the Great."
Diogenes said, "Why wait for the next life? You can be Diogenes right now! Can't you see the point?" he said. "Nothing is needed to be a Diogenes. You are making so much effort to conquer the world and even if you succeed, what are you going to gain out of it? You will be as miserable as ever, in fact far more miserable, because right now your mind is occupied with the idea, with the ambition of conquering the world. Once you have conquered it you will be at a loss what to do. Better stop now!"
Alexander said, "I can understand -- you are right -- but I cannot stop in the middle of my journey. I have decided to conquer the world."
Diogenes said, "Then go, don't stop -- but death will stop you in the middle. It always stops everybody in the middle, and then you cannot do anything. Then you will remember me. And your victories won't help you at all. When death knocks on the door, a slave, a poor man, a great king, a world conqueror, all are the same -- they are all equal in the eyes of death. Death cannot knock at my door," Diogenes said. "Listen, and look into my eyes. I have conquered death. That is a real victory because I have come to know my real being which is deathless. I have come to experience my consciousness which was before I was born and which will be there after I am gone. I am eternal."
And the day Alexander died he remembered Diogenes -- with bitter tears, of course, because Diogenes was right: his whole life had been a sheer wastage. He had struggled and struggled for nothing.

You have heard the proverb: Nothing succeeds like success -- that is absolutely wrong. I suggest to you another proverb: Nothing fails like success. But because very few people succeed very few people come to know about it. Those who succeed, they always come to know the utter impotence of success.
Buddha says: A MAN IS NOT BORN TO MASTERY. The first thing to be understood is that you are a slave of unconscious forces. This is the beginning, the first step towards mastery; to recognize your slavery. To see that you are unconscious is the beginning of consciousness. But you go on throwing the responsibility on others, you never look inwards; for ANY causes you never look inwards.

The judge looked sternly down at the defendant. "Young man, it is alcohol and alcohol alone that is responsible for your present sorry state."
"I'm glad to hear you say that, Your Honor," the man replied with a sigh of relief. "Everybody else says it's my fault."

Nobody wants to recognize that he is responsible for the sorry state he is in. You always try to find some excuse. Any excuse will do; if you cannot find one, you can always invent. But you never feel responsible.
The beginning of a religious life is: total responsibility for yourself. Whatsoever you are, you are responsible and nobody else. And your life is a mess.

Have you heard about the Polack who tried to throw himself on the floor... and missed?

Your whole life is a failure -- whatsoever you do, even throwing yourself on the floor -- the reason is that you are not conscious at all, not aware at all. You are living in such unconsciousness, you are almost a machine.
Gurdjieff used to say to his disciples, "You are not men, you are machines." And people used to feel very offended; nobody likes the idea that he is a machine. "I and a machine? Me -- a machine? Others maybe!" But Gurdjieff was saying something very essential: man IS a machine. Everybody else can see it; everybody else can see it about you -- except you. But that is not going to help unless YOU see it.

There were three travelers -- a Jew, a Hindu and an Italian -- who needed a place to stay overnight. They knocked on a farmer's door. The farmer said he only had room for two in the house, but one could sleep in the barn. The Jew said he would sleep in the barn.
They all settled down for the night. A little while later there was a knock on the door. The farmer answered it; it was the Jew. He apologized, but said there was a pig in the barn and as pigs were not kosher he could not spend the night in the same place as them. The Hindu said he would sleep in the barn as pigs did not bother him.
Again the farmer went back to bed. A little while later there was a knock at the door; it was the Hindu. He apologized and said he was sorry, but there was a cow in the barn and as cows were sacred animals it was not proper for him to

sleep in the same place as them. So the Italian offered to sleep in the barn as he had no problem with cows or pigs. Again the farmer went to bed, but a little while later there was a knock at the door. The tired farmer got up and answered it. There stood the cow and the pig!

Even cows can see, even pigs can feel that you are an Italian -- but not you! You never look at yourself, you always look at others. You are focused on others. You are so extrovert that you don't know how to turn your eyes in. And a hundred-and-eighty-degree turn is needed. Unless you start seeing yourself there is no possibility of mastery in your life; you will remain a slave.

When you fall in love you think you are a master. Are you, or is it just a biological, chemical phenomenon? If it is a biological and chemical phenomenon you are not the master. When somebody insults you and you become angry, are YOU angry or are you just a victim of some unconscious force that is being released in you? When you are angry, enraged, you are almost temporarily insane; you can do anything. You can destroy, you can kill, you can commit suicide. And whatsoever you do, if you survive the moment you will repent. You will say, "I cannot believe how it happened, how I could do such a thing? I did it in spite of myself!"

That expression is significant. Whenever you say, "I did it in spite of myself," you are recognizing, without knowing it, your slavery: that things happen in you which are happening without you -- you are just a victim.

Nobody is born as a master, but everybody is born with a tremendous potential to be a master. Everybody can be a

master, but very rarely do people attain to their potential. Very rarely do people attain to their maximum peak, to the crescendo of their being.

The psychologists say that the ordinary person only uses seven to ten percent of his potential in his whole life; ninety percent or more remains unused. And this is about the ordinary person. The psychologists say even the talented people, very talented people, don't use more than twelve to thirteen percent. And the people we call geniuses, they don't use more than fifteen percent of their potential.

Just think, if the whole of humanity were using one hundred percent of its potential -- which it is capable of -- there would be no need to IMAGINE a paradise, we could make it here. We will be in paradise if one hundred percent potential is being used by everyone. But if you don't use it, it remains like a weight. Rather than being a help in your life it becomes such a weight, like a rock hanging around your neck. That which could have become a boat becomes the cause of your drowning.

Religion is concerned basically with helping you to bring your potential into action, to make your potential actual, so it is not just there as a seed but becomes a flower and a great fragrance is released.

That's what happened to Gautama the Buddha, that's what happened to Jesus the Christ. These few people were just like you, made of the same stuff. There is nothing special about them, they are not special beings. Forget that idea. The priests have been preaching it down the ages -- that they were special, that Jesus was the only begotten Son of God. It is all sheer nonsense. You are as much a son of God as Jesus was, no more or less -- no difference between you

and Jesus. As far as the potential is concerned you are absolutely alike. But Jesus actualized it and you have not even touched it, it is simply lying there. It is a treasure which has not been used, and anything which is not used for a long time goes dead, becomes stale. It goes rotten, it becomes a dead weight on you, it makes you heavy and ill. Buddha has nothing special in him. Of course, the Buddhist priests say that he is special. Why do these priests go on saying that Buddha is special, Mahavira is special, Jesus is special, Krishna is special? Why? -- for a simple reason: that helps to protect our egos. They are special, what can we do? If they became enlightened they were bound to become enlightened, they came with a special capability. We are normal human beings, they were AVATARAS. They were direct descendants of God, we are very very faraway, distant relatives, and the distance is so much that it is impossible to bridge it. They were coming directly from the above; they were messengers of God, messiahs, prophets, TIRTHANKARAS -- and we are ordinary people. This is a way of defending our egos -- a very logical way, a very rational way.

Do you think you are paying respect by saying that Jesus is the only begotten Son of God? You are not paying respect, you are being very cunning; you are trying to protect yourself. You are saying, "You are special and we are ordinary, so we have to behave in an ordinary way. You can behave like an enlightened person. What can we do about it? We are made in this way. The responsibility is God's, not ours. It is not our fate to be a Buddha or to be a Krishna or to be a Lao Tzu. It is not our destiny to be a Zarathustra. They were destined and we are not destined.

So if something happened to them it was bound to happen, and if nothing is happening to us, nothing is happening to us because nothing is destined for us."

This is a trick, a strategy. Buddha wants you to be reminded that you are made of the same stuff, the same blood, the same bones, the same marrow, the same consciousness. The only difference is that you are not working on yourself, you are not using the opportunity, you are not transforming yourself. And you go on finding excuses: "How can we do it? We have so many children and the wife and the husband and the parents. And we have to work in the world and we have to earn money and a livelihood." You go on making excuses.

That's why my insistence is that none of my sannyasins are to leave the ordinary world. They have to become enlightened in the ordinary world so that this excuse, this traditional excuse, can be dropped forever.

And there have been people who have become enlightened living very ordinary lives. Kabir was a father and a husband, and he worked his whole life -- he was a weaver -- yet he became enlightened. He didn't renounce the world, he didn't escape. Or Raidas, he was a shoemaker. He continued his work, he remained in the world, and became enlightened.

And there have been many, but you will be surprised: priests don't talk much about these people because these people are dangerous. They talk about the renunciation of Buddha, that he renounced the world, went into the forest; they talk about Mahavira who renounced his kingdom. In the first place you have to have a kingdom to renounce. Where is the kingdom? And if you don't have the kingdom,

then in this life at least you can't become enlightened. Even if you have the kingdom, then you have to renounce it.

Jesus is presented in such a way that it becomes almost impossible to conceive of him as a human being. He is born out of a virgin mother -- now, what nonsense! You are not born out of a virgin mother, so at least this life you have missed the train. Next life choose a virgin mother, because everything starts from there! In the first place you have chosen a wrong train.... But there are difficulties: if you choose a virgin mother you are a bastard. If Jesus chooses a virgin mother he is simply exceptional -- it is God's grace. The priests have been trying to create a distance between you and the enlightened ones so that you can feel at ease. And the effort of all the buddhas is not to let you feel at ease, is to make you restless, to make you divinely discontented, to make you aware that you are capable of tremendous bliss and you are missing it, to make you alert that it is your birthright and yet you have not claimed it.
A MAN IS NOT BORN TO MASTERY.

A MASTER IS NEVER PROUD.

But Buddha immediately in the second sutra says something very significant, because there is every possibility that he will be misunderstood -- hence the second statement. He says that mastery is an achievement, but not in the ordinary sense of the word, because whenever you achieve something you become proud; you say, "I have achieved this." If mastery is an achievement -- which certainly it is -- it is in a totally different sense from

ordinary achievements. It is not like becoming a president of a country or becoming the richest man in the world; it is not like becoming famous -- it is totally different. The difference is that in the very achievement of it the achiever dies.

Remember it, never forget about it; otherwise your spirituality can also become a new ego trip. Hence, immediately, Buddha adds: A MASTER IS NEVER PROUD. He cannot be -- because he is no more! This is a very strange achievement: in the very process of achieving it, the ego melts, disappears. In fact it happens only when the ego is found no more. It is a very paradoxical achievement: an achievement certainly, but there is no achiever. Just as a sugar cube dissolves into the tea, the achiever dissolves into the achievement itself. He is no more found anywhere. He becomes one with the achievement. The achievement is not something that he can brag about, it is simply a natural flowering. He is not proud of it.

Roses are not proud, lotuses are not proud, of course, however beautiful they are. The sunrise is not proud, the sunset is not proud, the night full of stars is not proud, the full moon is not proud. It is natural; there is nothing to say about it. It is how it should be. There is no question of being proud about it, no ego enhancement about it.

Beware of the ego. If you start bragging about your spiritual attainment you have missed the whole point. It is no longer spiritual at all; it is again the same game played with new words. Only the words have changed, but nothing has really changed; there has been no transformation.

And people play the game of the ego in many ways. The Indian thinks that he is the holiest, the most spiritual person in the world; now that is the same game. The American thinks, for different reasons, that he is special, that he is higher than anybody else. And so is the case with everybody. You will not find a single race in the world, a single nation in the world which does not think that it is special. Now the game is played in the name of nation, race.

Every religion thinks, "This is the only way, the true way: all other ways are false." If you ask the Jaina he thinks all other ways are pseudo. If you ask the Christian he has the same idea: "Unless you are a Christian you are not going to be saved, you will suffer in hell." Ask the Mohammedan.... And you will be surprised: they belong to different religions, but do they really belong to different religions or do they all belong to the same religion -- the religion of the ego? They all belong to the same religion: the religion of the ego.

The white man thinks he is special, the black man thinks he is special....

I have heard a story about Dr. Radhakrishnan. He was the president of India and he was talking to a few friends.

One white man said, "We are the best -- otherwise why did God make us white?"

Radhakrishnan said to the white man, "You are half-cooked, that's why you are white!"

A black man was also present; he was very happy. He said, "That's right. We are the best!"

Radhakrishnan said, "You are cooked too much -- you are almost burnt! WE are the best, we are just in the middle, neither white nor black. Cooked just right."

People go on trying to defend their egos in every possible way.

An Egyptian and an Indian archaeologist were vying with each other.
"In our recent excavation we came across lengthy cables and have deduced that there was some kind of a telephone system then," the Egyptian boasted.
"We dug and dug and could find no cable. We have reached the conclusion that there was wireless during those times in India," said his Indian counterpart.

Beware! We are playing the same game in the name of religion, in the name of nation, in the name of race, in the name of color, but the game is the same. The name of the game is ego.
The spiritual man is one who has stopped playing the game. He is the master. A MASTER IS NEVER PROUD.

HE DOES NOT TALK DOWN TO OTHERS.

He has no holier-than-thou look. But look at your so-called saints -- they are all looking at you with deep condemnation. They know you are sinners and they are saints. They are higher beings, superior beings; you are mundane, worldly, ordinary. What have you done? What virtue can you claim? They can claim that they have been

fasting for years, that they are celibates, that they eat only once a day, that they sleep only three hours per night. And they have invented many kinds of torture for themselves. And of course torture has been thought for centuries to be the way towards spirituality. It is masochism, pure masochism: it has nothing to do with spirituality. But when a person tortures himself, of course he can feel his ego fulfilled. You cannot do it and he is doing it. And you certainly start feeling inferior because it is difficult for you to do it.

If you see a man lying down on a bed of thorns you cannot do it. Certainly he is higher, has superior powers. And if he looks at you as the condemned, as the people who are going to hell, you have to accept it because he is earning rewards. What have you done? You have not done anything like that. You cannot sleep on such a bed; you are a very ordinary human being. His will is like steel -- look at his willpower!

And it is nothing. He is simply more stupid than you are, he is more dull than you are, his body is less sensitive than yours. And there are methods to make your body less and less sensitive. If you sit naked in the hot sun your body starts getting burnt; slowly slowly, all the sensitive parts which are very fragile become hard -- they have to become hard. You become thick-skinned and the thicker the skin, the more easily you can lie down on a bed of thorns.

Have you not watched? Women can use sleeveless clothes more easily than men for the simple reason that their arms are less sensitive -- more beautiful but less sensitive. Even in cold countries they can move very easily with sleeveless clothes; man finds it difficult. Man's body is more sensitive

in that way and more fragile. In cold countries he needs a necktie to prevent any air going in. And look at the women -- their clothes are almost disappearing!

Their bodies are just less sensitive; they have to be less sensitive because they have to be mothers. Giving birth to a child and having a very sensitive body will be difficult, will be very painful, will be utterly painful. Have you any idea... if the body is very sensitive then carrying the baby for nine months in your belly will be a great torture. Just think of yourself carrying a baby in your belly for nine months... you will commit suicide! It will be impossible. Nature makes the woman's body less sensitive and compensates it with more beauty and more roundedness. Man's body is not that beautiful, not that rounded, but more sensitive -- sensitive to cold, sensitive to heat, sensitive to many things. That is one of the causes of the constant conflict between men and women: because the woman comes to orgasm very slowly; her sensitivity is much less. It takes a longer time for her to come to an orgasm. Man comes quickly; his body is very sensitive. And the gap between the man's body and the woman's body creates a great problem. Unless the man is very alert and takes every care to move slowly with the woman's body, the woman will never be satisfied.

And her dissatisfaction will show in many ways: your tea will be cold, your vegetables will have too much salt. The whole day, from the kitchen, such noises of breaking things will come, as if you are living in an earthquake! Not that she is doing it consciously, that too is absolutely unconscious -- nobody is a master, all are slaves -- but she is taking revenge in her own way.

So whenever you want to make love to a woman, immediately she has a headache, she is tired, she is no longer interested, for the simple reason that she never achieves the orgasm. Why should she participate in a game in which she is always the loser? It is only recently that man is becoming aware of the difference; that difference can be bridged, but skill is needed.

Just ask your wife to prick your back with a needle on many places, and you will be surprised: there are a few places which are absolutely insensitive -- the prick will not be felt at all -- and a few places where the prick will be felt. A few spots are blind. Those people who are lying on a bed of thorns have simply arranged the whole thing in such a way that the thorns are touching the blind spots. It is just a kind of skill; there is nothing in it, nothing holy in it.

You can eat once a day. There are tribes, many aboriginal tribes in India, in South Africa, in the Himalayas, who eat only once a day. The body is so adjustable: you can eat once a day, then it eats too much. You can eat twice, you can eat thrice, then it divides. You can eat five times... and, in fact, to eat five times is far more scientific than to eat one time, because to eat one time means putting too much load on the system. It is better to divide the load. And if man has really come down from the monkeys, look at the monkeys -- they are eating the whole day! Americans are doing exactly that, so whether Darwin is correct about anybody else or not, he is correct about the Americans!

You can eat one time a day; the body will adjust to that. These things are nothing to do with spirituality, but these are the things that your so-called saints go on bragging about.

A real master is not proud: HE DOES NOT TALK DOWN TO OTHERS. The real master is one who has recognized that everybody has the same potential. How can he talk down to others?
Buddha has said that when he became enlightened, immediately he saw that the whole universe had become enlightened with him. This is true as far as he is concerned. Of course the whole universe has not become enlightened -- you have not become enlightened yet -- but as far as Buddha is concerned it is absolutely true. He saw the potential, he saw that everybody is the same. Just that a few people are awake and a few are asleep; that is the only difference, and that is not such a big difference. Don't make such a fuss about it.
And even if your saints don't say directly, "We are holier than you," in a thousand and one indirect ways they go on telling you.

Every time the cowboy rode through the Indian village he would wave at the aged chief. In response the old man would give him the finger in the usual vertical manner, then he would turn his hand so that the third digit stuck out horizontally.
After a few weeks the cowboy could stand it no longer. He stopped his horse and said to the redskin, "I know what it means to get the finger straight up, but what does it mean when you turn it sideways?"
"I don't like your horse either!" replied the chief.

There are direct ways and indirect ways, gestures. The way your saints look at you -- they may not say a single word --

the way they behave, all points to one thing: that they are higher than you. And they keep you constantly afraid of hell. They are telling you, "Beware of hell. You are bound to go to hell." So they are making you alert in advance.

Preacher Pitts had undertaken that morning to describe the terrors of hell to his congregation.
"Brothers and sisters," he intones, "some of you have seen melted iron running out of a furnace, haven't you? It's white, sizzling and hissing. Well, in the place I'm talking about they use that stuff for ice cream!"

Their whole effort is to make you as frightened as possible. Look at the great idea of ice cream! And if you want to go to heaven you have to follow their advice, you have to follow in their footprints, you have to become imitators. And imitators are pseudo people. A real master is never an imitator.
Hence I say to you, never become Christians, be a christ, and never become Buddhists, be a buddha. Your potential is of such infinite possibility that why should you settle for some small thing? Just being a Christian is a poor substitute -- why not be a christ? Why not be a buddha yourself? Why be Buddhists?
But your preachers are telling you: Be Christians, be Buddhists, be Jainas, be Hindus! They are not telling you about your ultimate potential, they want you to be followers. And of course there is no Buddha, no Jesus available, so they are the representatives. They have created a strategy: Follow Jesus! Of course you will have to follow the pope -- where is Jesus? The pope is the representative

and the pope is infallible. Look at the foolishness of it all. Only a fool can say that he is infallible -- even God is not infallible.

Fallibility is part of the fun -- God must be fallible; otherwise he would not have made you! God must be fallible; otherwise why and how did he manage to create man? And since then he has not created anything; he stopped -- seeing what he had done he stopped the whole process. Since then nothing has been heard about him, where he is, what he is doing.

The Bible says that in six days he created the world -- okay; the seventh day he rested. And what about the next week? Did the Monday come or not? And since then what has he been doing? Seeing that he has committed a mistake he must be escaping as far away as possible.

Now the scientists say the world, the universe is expanding. The simple reason is that God is escaping, so with him of course the world goes on expanding; the boundary goes on expanding with tremendous speed. Do you know at what speed he is escaping from you? One hundred and eighty-six thousand miles per second! That is the speed at which the universe is expanding; that must be the speed of his escape. And I don't think we will be able to catch him; it seems impossible to make spaceships which can go at that speed, because that is the speed of light and anything moving at that speed will immediately become light. So if you are moving with that speed, the plane and the passengers and the pilot, all will disappear; they will become simply pure light. With that speed everything will melt and become light. Unless we can find some way not to follow him but to try to find him from the other side....

And I think that is the way of the buddhas. They don't try to reach God, they don't run after him, they simply stand silently. That is the other way, the other way round -- because how long can he escape for? If the universe is also round, finally he will come back to where these people are standing -- and there is the possibility of meeting.
HE DOES NOT TALK DOWN TO OTHERS.

OWNING NOTHING, HE MISSES NOTHING.

The buddha simply uses, the master uses. He owns nothing, he is not an owner. Either he owns nothing or he owns the whole universe -- which is saying the same thing in two different ways. There is no need to own anything -- he uses. You use the sun, you use the moon; you need not own them. So, if one day the sun is cloudy you need not become anxious, you need not go mad, you need not get worried: "What is happening to my sun?" It has nothing to do with you. If one day the moon has an eclipse you are not worried at all because you don't own it; if you own it, then trouble arises. If you own the garden and the roses are not blooming, then there is anxiety; if you don't own it then you just enjoy.
The master enjoys existence but he owns nothing; because he owns nothing he misses nothing.

HE IS NOT AFRAID.

There is nothing to lose, why should he be afraid?

HE DOES NOT TREMBLE.

Soren Kierkegaard says that every man is trembling inside, there is a constant trembling -- and he is right. The fear of death keeps you constantly trembling. You may keep yourself occupied in a thousand and one things and you may forget about your inner trembling, but it is there.
Soren Kierkegaard is one of the most important thinkers of the Western hemisphere. What he is saying he must be saying from his own personal experience; he was very much afraid of death. He was afraid only of two things: death and money. He never earned anything. His father had left a certain bank balance for him; he lived on it. Each month, on the first day, he would go to the bank and withdraw a certain amount and live on it. He lived in a very very economical way, but he was very much afraid: sooner or later the money was going to be finished -- that was his constant worry. People had seen him in Copenhagen going to the bank and coming home always in a state of trembling.
And then death... and death is certainly related to money. People who are very much afraid of death start accumulating money as a protection -- as if money can protect! People who are not afraid of death don't care much about money; they use money, but they don't care.
And one strange thing happened: Soren Kierkegaard died on the road the day he withdrew the last amount of money from the bank. He was coming home from the bank; this was the last amount, the bank balance was finished. The manager had said, "Next month you need not come -- all the money is finished." He fell in the middle of the road -- he didn't reach home -- and died then and there. If money is

finished, life is finished! He must have been a man of tremendous fear.
When he was young he loved a woman, a very beautiful woman, Regina. For three years the love affair continued and finally, when they were going to get married, he refused. It was very strange because Regina was a beautiful woman and he was an ugly man. If Regina had refused it would have been logical, but why did Kierkegaard refuse? He refused out of the simple fear that "If we get married and some trouble arises, then? If some fighting arises or if she falls in love with somebody else? -- she is such a beautiful woman...." Afraid of the possibilities of the future, he simply refused. He refused to live! He never left the city, he was so afraid of accidents. So when he says man is a trembling he is saying it from personal experience.

Buddha says: The master does not tremble. All his trembling disappears because he knows there is no death. Knowing himself he has transcended death. He has no fear of the future because he lives in the present. He is not possessive; hence nothing can be taken away from him.

NOTHING BINDS HIM.
HE IS INFINITELY FREE.

Because he is nonpossessive, NOTHING BINDS HIM. He is freedom, absolute freedom.

SO CUT THROUGH
THE STRAP AND THE THONG AND THE ROPE.
LOOSEN THE FASTENINGS.

UNBOLT THE DOORS OF SLEEP
AND AWAKE.

Three things are our bondage: body, mind, self -- THE STRAP, THE THONG AND THE ROPE. SO CUT THROUGH.... Be aware you are neither the body nor the mind nor the self. Awareness is the sword with which to cut through.
And LOOSEN THE FASTENINGS: lust, greed, anger, hatred, ambition, jealousy, possessiveness.
UNBOLT THE DOORS OF SLEEP: awaken yourself, become conscious.

On a crowded subway a well-built mulatto secretary felt behind her the presence of a sexually excited soul brother. She tried to move away, but her fidgeting only made things worse. Finally she turned around and snapped, "Mister, you are vulgar!"
"I didn't do nothin' wrong, honey!" said the black man. "But I can understand why you're a little peeved. I got paid tonight, the boss had nothing but small change, and it makes a lump in my pants pocket. Believe me, baby, that's all there is to it."
"I suppose," said the woman, "you also want me to believe that all the time we're standing here your boss is giving you raises!"

Just look at your sex, at your anger, at your greed. You are utterly in their power, helplessly in their power.
Buddha is not a metaphysician; he is a superb psychologist. He is the first to create the psychology of the buddhas.

He is saying: Cut through all this slavery. UNBOLT THE DOORS OF SLEEP AND AWAKE.

Mrs. Rafferty was sitting at home in Dublin with her children, all waiting for the man of the house to come home from his job in the local brewery. A knock came at the door. When Mrs. Rafferty opened it she saw Mick standing with downcast eyes and a sad look on his face. "Bad news," he said. "Pat fell into a vat of whiskey and drowned this afternoon."
Mrs. Rafferty and the children burst into anguished tears, but she managed to stammer, "Oh Jesus, did he suffer? Was it a painful death?"
Mick coughed reverently and took off his hat. "No, mam," he said, "I don't think so. He got out twice for a piss!"

Be awake. Just see what you are doing, just see what your life consists of. Is there any awareness or is it just an unconscious play of unconscious forces? Are you just a victim of forces you are not aware of -- either from where they come or what they are doing to you? Are you going to die in this way?

THE MASTER ENDURES
INSULTS AND ILL TREATMENT
WITHOUT REACTING.

The master cannot react. He responds, but he never reacts. Reactions come from the past, response is spontaneous; it is in the present. The slave reacts, the master responds. The unconscious mind reacts, the conscious man responds. He

has no ready-made answers. He encounters the situation, he reflects the situation. He accepts the challenge of the situation -- and acts accordingly. His action is born out of the present.

And remember one fundamental secret of life: if the action is born out of the present it is never binding; if it comes out of the past it is binding, it is karma. If the action comes out of your present awareness it is not karma, it is not binding. You do it and it is finished, you do it and you get out of it; it never accumulates in you. The master never accumulates the past; he dies every moment to the past. He is born anew every moment.

THE MASTER ENDURES INSULTS AND ILL TREATMENT WITHOUT REACTING.

FOR HIS SPIRIT IS AN ARMY.

He need not react. Insults cannot insult him, ill treatment only brings his compassion, because he knows his awareness is a citadel, is a shelter which cannot be broken. It is an ultimate protection; he is ultimately secure in his awareness.

HE IS NEVER ANGRY.
HE KEEPS HIS PROMISES.
HE NEVER STRAYS, HE IS DETERMINED.
THIS BODY IS MY LAST, HE SAYS!

LIKE WATER ON THE LEAF OF A LOTUS FLOWER OR A MUSTARD SEED ON THE POINT OF A NEEDLE,

HE DOES NOT CLING.

He does not cling to anything -- body, mind or self. He clings not, he is no more there to cling. He is just pure emptiness. And out of that pure emptiness arises innocence, out of that pure emptiness arises godliness.

FOR HE HAS REACHED THE END OF SORROW AND HAS LAID DOWN HIS BURDEN.

According to Buddha the only burden is the self, the ego. Put the burden aside and you are absolutely free. He does not talk about God; he only talks about the burden, the ego. Put it aside and you will know what God is. There is no need to talk about God; talking about God is utterly futile. He emphatically avoids talking about God; it is useless. He gives you the right way to experience godliness.
You are gods. Just the seed has to die, the self has to die, and you will start growing. That growth is divine. Religion is the process of inner growth, the process of actualizing the potential, the process of being reborn. Unless you are born again you cannot enter into the kingdom of God.
Enough for today.

The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 12

Chapter #2

Chapter title: Just throw the whole bag

22 April 1980 am in Buddha Hall

The first question:
Question 1
BELOVED MASTER,
YOU SAY THAT ENLIGHTENMENT CAN HAPPEN ANY MOMENT. TO ME IT FEELS LIKE A VERY SLOW PROCESS OF LEARNING AND BECOMING AWARE OF THE UNCONSCIOUS PARTS OF MY BEING. DO YOU HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY ABOUT THIS?

Dharmapriya, enlightenment is not a process of learning; on the contrary, it is a process of unlearning. Whatsoever you know has to be dropped. Knowledge, the knowledgeable mind, has to be renounced.
If it were a process of learning, then certainly it would take time, it would be gradual. But if it is a question of dropping something then it is not gradual, it need not be gradual. You can simply drop it instantly.

Once it happened:
A man came to Sri Ramakrishna with ten thousand gold coins to offer him. Ramakrishna accepted his offering and then said, "Now these coins are mine -- you go to the Ganges and throw them all into the river." Ramakrishna lived in a temple just on the bank of the Ganges.
The man was very much shocked. "Ten thousand gold coins, solid gold coins, and this fool is saying, 'Throw them into the river!' And I have always thought that this man had become enlightened -- he is simply mad!" He hesitated.

Ramakrishna said, "When you have offered them to me they no longer belong to you. Why are you hesitating? I can send somebody else to throw them away. You please go."
The man went, reluctantly of course, and he didn't come back. One hour passed. Ramakrishna inquired, "What happened to that man? Has he escaped with the coins? Go and inquire."
Somebody was sent. There was a great crowd, he had gathered a great crowd, and he was throwing each single coin, one by one, and counting them!
When Ramakrishna was told, "This is what is happening -- it may take a few hours more," Ramakrishna went himself, hit the man on the head and said, "Are you mad or something? When you collect coins, of course you collect them one by one, it is a gradual process. But when you are throwing them away, why are you counting? Just throw the whole bag! Whether they are ten thousand or a few more or a few less, it doesn't matter. The Ganges won't take any note of it!"

This is the situation. When you stop gathering knowledge you also unlearn slowly, not because unlearning has to be slow. It is only your clinging mind. It is the mind that does not want to renounce knowledge, hence it goes on postponing. It finds beautiful rationalizations.
The idea of gradual enlightenment is one of the most beautiful rationalizations, and it appeals to the mind because all that mind knows is gradual. The whole language of the mind is the language of time. Whatsoever the mind can do has to be done in time, it needs time.

But enlightenment does not happen in time. When I say it can happen in a moment, please don't misunderstand me -- the moment is not part of time at all! I am saying it can happen immediately; it needs no time at all, not even a single moment is needed. It can happen now... but you cling. You say, "How is it possible? I have to become slowly slowly alert, aware, meditative. Chunk by chunk I have to transform my unconscious being. I have to drop greed, anger, lust, jealousy, possessiveness, hatred, and there are a thousand and one things, and each thing is going to take time. I have to drop fear, I have to drop my identification with the body and the mind, I have to drop my attachments...." And the list is almost infinite. It will take eternity for you to become enlightened; in fact, you will never become enlightened. The very idea that it is going to be a gradual process is only a strategy of the mind to postpone it.

Enlightenment is always sudden. It is a question of understanding, insight, illumination. It is like sudden lightning. It has always happened like that.

Gautam Buddha was trying for his enlightenment for six years; it was a lengthy process. He was following many methods, many paths. He was doing whatsoever is humanly possible to do, but nothing was happening. He was moving in circles; he was where he had started, he was not going anywhere else. He was becoming tired, utterly tired. Finally one evening this sudden illumination happened to him that his whole effort was irrelevant.

Enlightenment is not something like an achievement; one cannot achieve it. One has to disappear for it to happen. It is a happening and it happens only in the absence of the

ego. And whenever you are doing something the ego becomes more and more strengthened. The ego is a doer, and enlightenment happens in a state of nondoing. It is simply the realization of who you are; it is not a question of achievement. You are already it! Just an awakening, just a turning in!

Seeing the point, Buddha relaxed; he dropped all his methods. That is the only use of methods: you get tired of them, you feel utterly bored with them. One day out of sheer boredom you drop all the methods.

That evening he dropped his whole spiritual search. He had dropped all worldly search six years before, but it is the same search whether you are seeking money or meditation, whether you are seeking power or enlightenment, whether you are running after prestige or God -- it is the same thing! The mind needs some object to run after. The mind wants something to desire. It wants an objective goal; whatsoever that objective goal is doesn't matter -- XYZ, anything will do.

Seeing the point, "It is the same mind -- I have renounced the world, but I have not renounced the mind, and the mind is the real world. And these six years I have only been changing the objects of my desire, but I have not dropped desiring. Instead of money, now I desire enlightenment. Instead of power, now I desire ultimate truth. But is there any difference? It is the same desiring mind, the same ambitious ego; in fact, it has become more subtle. It was gross before, now it is very subtle..." seeing it, he laughed. These six years he had not laughed at all, he had been serious. He laughed at the whole ridiculousness of the effort.

Spiritual effort is more ridiculous than the worldly effort. The worldly effort has a certain relevance, but the spiritual effort has no relevance.

He relaxed -- obviously, naturally. Not that he made an effort to relax: relaxation came to him because there was nothing to achieve, nowhere to go. Relaxation simply came to him; from the beyond something descended. He fell into deep rest.

That night he slept for the first time without dreams. When there are no desires there are no dreams; dreams are reflections of desires. That night there was no nightmare; for six years he had been suffering from many nightmares. A nightmare simply says that you are desiring impossible things; hence your night is disturbed, your sleep is disturbed. There is no rest; it is feverish, it is pathological, it is not healthy. For the first time in his life he relaxed and slept well, totally, like a small child newly born.

Deeply rested, in the morning when he opened his eyes the last star was disappearing from the sky. Seeing the last star disappear, the last trace of the ego disappeared in him. He had found it -- but he had found it without any effort. It had happened, but it had happened not as a goal, not as an achievement -- it had happened out of deep relaxation.

But remember, don't start trying to relax; that is the most absurd thing in the world. And there are many stupid people writing books about relaxation. I have come across one book -- the name of the book is YOU MUST RELAX! Now that very word 'must' is enough to keep you tense. Relaxation cannot be a "must," it cannot be an effort.

Try one night to go to sleep, make an effort to go to sleep, and it will become more and more impossible for you.

Every night you go to sleep very easily. If you want to suffer from insomnia this is the sure method to suffer from insomnia. Try, make an effort to go into sleep. Toss and turn and take long breaths and count sheep and jog in the room and take a bath and do some Transcendental Meditation. And then naturally sleep will become impossible, because all these things will be disturbances, distractions. How do you go to sleep? If somebody asks you, will you ever be able to explain? How do you manage? Every night when you fall asleep you are doing a miracle! You are moving from doing to nondoing, from action to no-action. How do you manage it? Is there any art? Have you learned it? What is the trick in it? Try to think about it, and then you will never be able to sleep.

I have heard about one centipede -- the centipede has one hundred legs. The centipede was taking a morning walk and a spider became very much intrigued. The spider must have been a mathematician or something like that. He said, "Uncle, can you satisfy my curiosity? How do you manage? One hundred legs! Which one to put first and which one to put next and then... a hundred legs! You don't fall, you don't get confused? Do you keep counting inside? If I had one hundred legs I am certain I would not be able to walk. My legs would become entangled with each other, I would fall immediately."
The centipede laughed. He said, "You mathematicians, you are always asking nonsense questions! You know that I am managing perfectly well -- but I have never thought about it. Let me think it over."

So he tried to walk and think -- and he fell down immediately. He was very angry at the spider and he said, "Listen! Never ask a centipede this question again -- now for my whole life I will be in trouble! I had never thought about it, things were going perfectly well. I had never looked into the matter. Now that you have asked me I will never be at ease until I have found the answer. Trying to figure it out... you see I am in a mess! Please never ask any centipede. You have crippled me for my whole life. Now I don't think that I will ever be able to walk. One hundred legs! Of course you are right, and I don't know how everything was being managed."

If somebody asks you how you go to sleep, don't try to find out the answer; otherwise you will suffer from insomnia from that very day. People who suffer from insomnia, all that they need is to forget about sleep; there is no need to worry about it. If you are not feeling sleepy, be happy, enjoy. Read something, listen to music, sing, dance, go for a walk -- you are more fortunate than the people who are fast asleep and snoring. But forget all about sleep. Watch the stars, enjoy the stars, feel yourself far more fortunate than the others, and you will fall asleep without any effort on your part. But don't make any effort.

Enlightenment is something like that. It is not a question of making effort.

Dharmapriya, you say, "To me it feels like a very slow process." It is not a process at all -- it is a jump, a quantum leap! And it has nothing to do with learning; it is UNlearning. You are conditioned. Enlightenment means becoming unconditioned again, becoming a child again.

You were a child once so you can be a child again. You have just to put aside all kinds of rubbish that you have gathered around yourself. You have to jump out of it, that's all. It is not a question of a slow process of learning, it is simply a question of seeing the point.

But we are cunning, mind is very cunning. It can't accept the simple fact that we still want to avoid enlightenment. We don't want to be enlightened, we are afraid of the fact, but we are cunning and we cannot accept it. Hence we find out ways -- ways to deceive ourselves that it is a slow process, a very slow process; that it takes not only one life but many lives to become enlightened. It does not take time at all, what to say about a life or many lives? It has nothing to do with time. It is immediate -- it can happen now!

See the point. Allow relaxation to happen, don't try to relax. Simply relax, don't make it a "must." Rest... and if you rest you will start falling into the deep abyss of your own being, and sooner or later you will reach the rock bottom of yourself. To experience that rock bottom of yourself is to be enlightened, is to be a buddha, is to be a christ.

That's why I insist again and again it can happen any moment, just to remind you that your mind is very clever. It can deceive others, it can deceive you. Beware of the mind! It keeps you clouded, it never allows you to see things as they are.

Enlightenment is your nature, hence there is no question of learning, no question of reaching somewhere. You are already there, it has already happened. It is your very being, your very ground. It is in your every breath and in every beat of your heart.

The second question:
Question 2
BELOVED MASTER,
WHY DON'T I FEEL ANY SURPRISES IN MY LIFE? ALL SEEMS SO DULL AND DRAB.

Gyano, I have given you the name Gyano: Gyano means knowledge. You are too knowledgeable, you know too much. And when one knows too much, life loses the quality of being mysterious. Then you are never surprised by anything. Your knowledge goes on supplying you all kinds of answers; even before you have asked, the answer is there, you seem to know everything. Knowing nothing you go on believing in borrowed knowledge, and slowly slowly, that borrowed knowledge hypnotizes you so much that you forget that you don't know. You start believing in your own knowledge -- and it is not your own, it is just borrowed. You may have read the Bible, the Gita, the Koran.... Krishna knew what he was talking about, but when you read you don't know. Jesus knew what he was talking about, but when you read the Sermon on the Mount you are simply collecting, gathering words -- words which are not meaningful to you at all, which cannot have any meaning because meaning comes from experience.
Jesus says: If somebody hits you on one of your cheeks, give him the other one too. You can read it, it is a simple statement. You can even try to follow it -- thousands of Christians are trying to follow it.

I have heard about a Christian saint who used to talk too much about this statement. A mischievous person came and

hit the saint on one cheek. Of course, true to his teaching, the saint gave him his other cheek hoping that now he would understand: "He will see how great I am, how compassionate, how considerate, how full of love!"
But the mischievous person was also a great devil; if the saint was great he was also great. He was not in any way inferior to the saint. He hit on the other cheek even harder. Now this was too much! The saint immediately jumped upon him and started hitting him. The mischievous person was surprised. He said, "What are you doing? What happened to your teaching? What happened to Jesus?"
He said, "Jesus has said: If somebody hits you on one cheek, give him the other. I have got only two cheeks, so his teaching is finished -- now I am free of the teaching. I will show you who I am! I have followed the teaching literally, exactly."

Once Buddha was asked by a man, "How many times do you say one should forgive?"
Now, the very question is enough to show the quality of the person. He is saying, "How many times...?" When you ask about how many times, you are not a man of compassion.
Buddha said, "Seven times."
The man said, "Okay."
Because of the way he said, "Okay," Buddha said, "Wait -- seventy times!"
The man felt a little reluctant about accepting seventy times, but still he said, "Okay."
Buddha said, "I withdraw my words. You have to forgive infinitely; even seventy times won't do. The way you are accepting it, it seems that when seventy times are over you

will take revenge. And you can do harm in a single blow, you can take revenge in a single blow. You are not a man of compassion. You don't understand me, it is not a question of how many times."

You can read Buddha, THE DHAMMAPADA, you can recite it every day; you will become knowledgeable. All questions will disappear because you will have all kinds of answers, but all those answers are borrowed. Hence they will destroy the beauty of life and they will destroy your sense of awe and wonder, which are the most essential religious qualities.

If someone asks me which is the most fundamental religious quality, I will say wonder. And knowledge kills wonder. You start knowing about everything and the more you know, the more your life will be dull and drab, because all that dust of knowledge that gathers around you makes your mirrorlike consciousness so clouded -- there are so many layers of knowledge -- that you lose the quality of childlike wonder. You can't see the beauty of flowers, you can't see the beauty of a sunset, you can't see the miracle of existence. And existence is full of miracles, and surprises are everywhere, all around you.

Just look, but look with open eyes. The knowledgeable person is blind; the most blind person in existence is the knowledgeable person.

Gyano, I have given you the name just to remind you again and again that that is your problem, that is your main characteristic. Gurdjieff used to say to his disciples, "The first thing for the disciple is to know what his main

characteristic is." Your main characteristic is knowledgeability.
Look around without carrying your burden of knowledge, and then you are stumbling continuously into new surprises and life again becomes worth living, worth rejoicing. Life again becomes a mystery to be loved and lived. It is not a problem to be solved, it is a mystery to be lived.

"Brothers," said the colored preacher, "the subject of my sermon today is 'liars'. How many in this congregation have read the sixty-ninth chapter of Matthew?"
Nearly every hand went up.
"You are the very people I want to preach to," the reverend said. "There is no such chapter!"

But nobody wants to accept that he does not know. Sixty-ninth chapter of Matthew.... Everybody wants to pretend. And I will not say that they were doing it very consciously, deliberately. Maybe they were thinking that they had read it, maybe they were believing that they had read it, and seeing so many hands going up they must become convinced that yes, there is such a chapter.

In the old days down South, a minister had a Negro named Ezra in his household. Ezra was smart and ambitious, but he could not read or write.
One Sunday the minister saw Ezra in the church, scribbling away industriously through the sermon. Afterwards, the minister asked him, "Ezra, what were you doing in church?"
"Taking notes, sir. I's eager to learn."

"Let me see," said the minister, and he glanced over Ezra's notes, which looked more like Chinese than English.
"Why, Ezra," he chided, "this is all nonsense!"
"I thought so," said Ezra, "all the time you was preaching it!"

Your preachers have poisoned you. Your knowledge has destroyed you; it has taken away the simple joy of not-knowing. Regain that joy of not-knowing. That's the whole purpose of meditation: coming out of knowledge just as a snake slips out of its old skin.

Slip out of your knowledge, Gyano, and then life is full of surprises. Every moment you will come across so many wonderful things. A seed becoming a sprout is a miracle. A bud opening in the morning is a miracle. A flower releasing its fragrance is a miracle. The night full of stars... what more miracles do you need? The whole existence is in a constant celebration!
And still you say, "I feel dull and drab and dragging"?
Then you must be at fault somewhere; nobody else is responsible for it. But we cling to our knowledge because it fulfills our ego.

D.H. Lawrence was walking in a garden with a small child. And, as children are prone to, the child asked, "Why are the trees green?"
D.H. Lawrence is one of the people I love and I respect. D.H. Lawrence is one of the people of this century who had tremendous insight into things. He stood there, thought for a moment, closed his eyes, meditated.

The child said, "Is it such a difficult question for you? Don't you know why the trees are green?"
D.H. Lawrence said, "The trees are green because they are green."
The child said, "Right! That's the right answer."
But you will not agree; no knowledgeable person will agree with D.H. Lawrence. He will say trees are green because of chlorophyll or some other nonsense. But his answer is tremendously beautiful: "Trees are green because they are green!"
And the child was immensely happy. He said, "Right, that's what I also feel. We agree about it!"

Drop your knowledge, become more childlike, and regain your joy in life. To rejoice in life is sannyas. My sannyas is not renunciation: it is rejoicing, it is celebration.

The third question:
Question 3
BELOVED MASTER,
YOU HAVE SUSSED ME OUT. NOW IS THE TIME TO TELL MY DREADED SECRET! I AM ONE OF YOUR POLACKS. WHAT TO DO?

Prem Veechi, that's the most beautiful thing about Polacks I love and like. You are not the first Polack who has declared it. Asha wrote a note saying that, "Beloved Master, I am also a Polack." Anupama wrote a note saying that her lover, Amitabh, is a Polack. And many others. This is beautiful!

And see what the British are doing. One British lady, Prem Lisa, has written saying, "We ARE superior so what can we do?"
Veechi, it is beautiful to be a Polack. It is beautiful to be a little foolish, not so superior as the British.

Why don't they have ice-cubes in Poland?
Because the woman with the recipe died.

One Polack arrived in New York seeking his fame and fortune. As he strolled down the sidewalk he noticed a great long ladder propped against the side of a building, stretching upward as far as the eye could see. He started to pass on by, but a voice high in the clouds called down, "Climb up the ladder to success!"
Somewhat nervously he began to ascend, rung by rung, all the way to the top of the fifty-story edifice. When he got there, a slender, blond, blue-eyed boy seated on the ledge of the building smiled sweetly at him.
"Hi, there!" he said. "I am Cess!"

The fourth question:
Question 4
BELOVED MASTER,
IF GOD IS A SHE, WHY DO YOU KEEP ON CALLING HER A HE?
AND ANOTHER QUESTION: YOU SAY THE ENGLISH ARE LADIES AND THE ITALIANS, WOMEN. WHERE WOULD YOU PUT THE GERMAN FEMALES?

Prem Prageeta, the German females are precisely that -- females -- neither ladies nor women. 'Female' is more scientific and more German, more scholarly, neutral; it has no evaluation in it.
And God, in fact, is neither he nor she.
So if you say he is a he I will say he is a she; if you say he is a she I will say he is a he -- simply to unhinge you from your convictions.

Once it happened:
Buddha entered a village. A man asked him as he was entering the village, "Does God exist?"
He said, "No, absolutely no."
In the afternoon another man came and he asked, "Does God exist?"
And he said, "Yes, absolutely yes."
In the evening a third man came and he asked, "Does God exist?"
Buddha closed his eyes and remained utterly silent. The man also closed his eyes. Something transpired in that silence. After a few minutes the man touched Buddha's feet, bowed down, paid his respects and said, "You are the first man who has answered my question."
Now, Buddha's attendant, Ananda, was very much puzzled: "In the morning he said no, in the afternoon he said yes, in the evening he did not answer at all. What is the matter? What is really the truth?"
So when Buddha was going to sleep, Ananda said, "First you answer me; otherwise I will not be able to sleep. You have to be a little more compassionate towards me too. I have been with you the whole day. Those three people don't

know about the other answers, but I have heard all the three answers. What about me? I am troubled."

Buddha said, "I was not talking to you at all! You had not asked, I had not answered YOU. The first man who came was a theist, the second man who came was an atheist, the third man who came was an agnostic. My answer had nothing to do with God, my answer had something to do with the questioner. I was answering the questioner; it was absolutely unconcerned with God.

"The person who believes in God, I will say no to him because I want him to drop his idea of God, I want him to be free of his idea of God -- which is borrowed. He has not experienced. If he had experienced he would not have asked me; there would have been no need.

"The person who believed in God, he was trying to find confirmation for his belief from me. I was not going to say yes to him -- I am not going to confirm anybody's belief. I had to say no, I had to deny, just to destroy his belief, because all beliefs are barriers to knowing the truth. Theist or atheist, all beliefs, Hindu or Christian or Mohammedan, all beliefs are barriers.

"And the person with whom I remained silent was the right inquirer. He had no belief, hence there was no question of destroying anything. I kept silent. That was my message to him: Be silent and know. Don't ask, there is no need to ask. It is not a question which can be answered. It is not an inquiry but a quest, a thirst. Be silent and know. I had answered him also; through my silence I gave him the message and he immediately followed it -- he also became silent. I closed my eyes, he closed his eyes; I looked in, he looked in, and then something transpired. That's why he

was so much overwhelmed, he felt so much gratitude, for the simple reason that I did not give him any intellectual answer. He had not come for any intellectual answer; intellectual answers are available very cheap. He needed something existential -- he needed a taste. I gave him a taste."

Remember this: God is neither man nor woman; he cannot be man or woman. Either he is both or he is neither. God is the ultimate synthesis of all opposites. Man is one extreme, woman the other. God is not an extreme, he is the whole existence. He is vast enough to contain the opposites; all opposites become complementaries in God.

So don't cling to my answers; they are not answers. I am not a teacher at all. I am not here teaching you a certain dogma, a certain creed. I am simply trying to help you to be unburdened of your knowledge so that you can be silent with me. And I am in a hurry because soon I want to go into silence, so you also have to be quick. Don't linger too much. Don't go on postponing because I will not be talking for ever and ever. Soon I want to be silent. You can sit in silence with me then, you can sing, you can play music, you can dance, but I want to stop all kinds of intellectual communications between you and me. I want to be existentially related to you. I am simply preparing the ground -- I am pulling out weeds.

So it depends: whatsoever your belief is I am going to destroy it. I am against all beliefs. That's why you will find Christian priests against me, the Catholic pope against me, the Hindu shankaracharya against me, the Mohammedans against me, even the communists against me; for the simple

reason that I am against all beliefs, communist or Catholic, Hindu or Buddhist, it doesn't matter -- belief is belief.
I want you to be in a state of no-belief, in a state of not-knowing. I want you to function from that state of not-knowing, from that innocence. Only in that innocence will you be able to know. So if you have communist weeds in you I will pull them out. If I need the help of Catholic instruments, I will use Catholic instruments to pull out communist weeds. If you are a Catholic and communist instruments are needed, I will use communist instruments to pull out Catholic weeds.
My function here is that of a surgeon. I am not much interested in what instruments are being used -- surgery has to be done. Something has to be pulled out of you. Your soil has to be completely cleared of all stones, of all weeds. Only then will your nature start growing roses.
So you will be puzzled. Many times you will find my statements contradictory -- they are, and I don't want to hide the fact. They are contradictory, they are absurd! Because I will say one thing one moment and I will contradict it the next moment. And I am not at all consistent -- or I am only consistent in one thing: about my inconsistencies, that is my only consistency. I am consistently inconsistent, that's all. I am always contradictory, for the simple reason that you have come here from different backgrounds and I am trying to destroy all backgrounds, all conditionings. So it depends on you.
God is neither a man nor a woman. In fact, God is not a person at all. The very idea of God being a person is anthropocentric. There is no God, in fact, but only godliness. Drop the idea of God as a person. You all have

that childish idea of God as a superfather sitting somewhere on a golden throne in the sky, pulling everyone's strings -- a puppeteer or something, controlling, managing, a superboss, a great manager, engineer, architect. You have this idea of God.

God is not a person at all; God is the ultimate harmony of existence. Remember the harmony, the accord, the music, the melody, the faraway, distant call of a cuckoo... and there is godliness in it. This bird calling... and there is godliness in it. This silence here in which you are all drowned... and there is godliness in it. Godliness certainly exists.

I perfectly agree with H.G. Wells; he has made one of the most profound statements about Buddha ever made. He said that Buddha was the most godless yet the most godly person who ever walked on the earth. The most godless and yet the most godly?

Yes, that's how existence is. It is a godless existence but tremendously godly. Godliness has to be remembered, God has to be forgotten. If you remember God you will go to the church and to the temple and to the mosque and you will do all kinds of stupid things which have been done down the centuries. If you remember godliness then it is not a question of going to Kaaba or Kashi; then it is a question of living it. Then live in a way which is godly. Live in harmony, live beautifully, live aesthetically, live sensitively, live lovingly. Let your life be a tremendous love affair.

Then there is no need for prayer, because there is nobody to hear it. It is a question of meditation, not of prayer. Then don't go on calling on God; you are wasting your time. Be

silent, more and more silent, and live out of that silence, act out of that silence. Meet people and animals and the trees and the rocks with deep reverence because all is divine. Existence is nothing but God.
Existence is synonymous with God.

The fifth question:
Question 5
BELOVED MASTER,
I AM A TOURIST. I AM HERE ONLY FOR ONE DAY. CAN I ALSO RECEIVE YOUR GRACE?

Tom, so you have come! I was always waiting. Where are Dick and Harry? And you are from California -- of course, you can't be from anywhere else. Californialand consists only of tourists!
"Tourist" is a new species: they are not ordinary human beings. That is a new development, a breakthrough -- or a breakdown. A tourist is a strange kind of person: he is always rushing to nowhere, he does not know why -- from one place to another place. When he is in Kabul he thinks of Poona, when he is in Poona he thinks of Goa, when he is in Goa he thinks of Kathmandu. He is never where he is, he is somewhere else; he is all over the place except the place where he is. He is never at home. You will never find him in his own home; he has always gone somewhere else, he is always dreaming of other places.
The tourist goes on missing everything; he is in such a rush that he can't see anything. To see things you have to be a little more relaxed, a little more restful. But the tourist is always on the go. He will take his breakfast in New York,

his lunch in London, and he will suffer indigestion in Poona!

He carries a camera, inevitably, because he cannot see anything right now, so he goes on taking photographs. Later on he makes albums -- he is a bum and makes albums! And then later on, when it is all over, he looks at the Himalayan peaks, at the Goa beach -- and when he was there he was not there! The camera was doing his work. He need not be there; in fact, why does he bother at all? He can purchase these photographs anywhere, better photographs than he can take because he is amateurish; professionals are already taking photographs. He can get beautiful albums and, sitting at home, he can look at them. But now the problem is that he cannot sit down.

It is one of the qualities that a few people are completely losing; they cannot sit. They have to do something, they have to go somewhere, and they have to go fast. They don't want to lose any time -- and they are losing their whole lives in not losing time! They will not appreciate anything because appreciation needs intimacy.

If you want to appreciate a flower you have to sit by the side of the flower, you have to meditate, you have to allow the flower to have its say. You have to experience the joy, the dance of the flower in the sun, in the wind, in the rain. You have to see all the moods of the flower in the morning, in the afternoon, in the hot sun, in the evening, in the full moon. You have to see all the moods of the flower. You have to become acquainted, you have to create a friendship. You have to say "hello" to the flower; you have to get into a dialogue, an existential dialogue. Only then can the flower reveal its secrets to you.

But the tourist is pathological. Why is he rushing? -- for the simple reason that he does not know what to do with himself if he is left alone, if he is not to go anywhere, if he has just to sit silently. He does not know what to do with himself. He feels awkward, embarrassed; he has to do something.

Man has become a doer. He has lost the quality of being a witness, a watcher.

The tourist cannot understand the Zen approach, the essential Buddhist approach of sitting silently doing nothing, spring comes and the grass grows by itself.

Zen people sit for years doing nothing -- just sitting, watching... what is outside and what is inside, watching their breath....

Now, the tourist will think this is absolutely ridiculous. Why watch your breath? What is the point of it all? Why not watch TV, some horror film? They are glued to their chairs only when the TV takes them into some torture story, into some murder, into some sexual orgy, into something so they can become participants. They are no more spectators, they become identified with the characters. They start becoming part of the story.

Now new dramas are being developed in the West in which the spectators can participate, for the simple reason that spectators cannot sit for three hours, so they are allowed to come on the stage. At least they can come on the stage from this side and go from that side, and the play goes on. Or they can say something, they can have a little chitchat with the actors -- on the stage! Now they are even developing new techniques where the stage should be just in the middle and it's okay if anybody wants to come in, sit

on the stage, do something, do some yoga postures. Now in a Shakespearean drama somebody comes and stands on his head... that will help! The people who have fallen asleep will wake up -- something is happening! Otherwise who wants to see Shakespearean drama? The universities have bored people to death with Shakespeare; people are finished with Shakespeare. Once they get out of the university they don't want to even hear the name of Shakespeare. It feels like a dirty word! But the real reason is that people cannot sit there for three hours; they have to do something. They have to be allowed some action; then they can sit.

A strange quality has happened to humanity, a very insane quality: that nobody can sit silently. And that is what meditation is all about.

You ask me, "I am a tourist. I am here only for one day."

I am grateful that you are here for one day, Tom, because there are tourists who are not here even for one day.

"Can I also receive your grace?" you ask.

My grace is available, but are you available to my grace?

An American tourist was gazing into the crater of a Greek volcano. "It looks like hell," he said.

"Ah, you Americans," said his guide, "you've been everywhere!"

Where are you going? And what is the hurry? Can't you be here a little longer? You will be going to Goa -- it is almost certain, it is predictable. What are you going to do in Goa? You can do all those stupid things here!

We run almost one hundred therapy groups -- for what? Just for people who can't sit silently, just to tire them. So they are pushed and pulled and they are massaged and Rolfed. Do you know what the latest thing in hell is? -- Rolfing! Learn it here because otherwise you will be in difficulty there. Ida Rolf has died and gone to hell; now she is training people there! But we have managed all kinds of groups here. If you pass through these one hundred groups and you can survive, then you need not be afraid of hell at all. In fact, the Devil and his disciples will be afraid of you! The moment they see the orange people coming they will close the doors. They will say, "Go to the other place!" And we do all kinds of stupid things with expertise. In Goa you will be just amateurish! Here we have the best experts in the world -- and package deals!
Tom, just be here a little bit more....

The sixth question:
Question 6
BELOVED MASTER,
I CAN'T MAKE UP MY MIND WHETHER I WANT TO BE A PSYCHIATRIST OR AN AUTHOR.

Veetrag, why not toss for it -- heads or tales? Get it...?

The seventh question:
Question 7
BELOVED MASTER,
I THOUGHT I HAD FOUND A NICE-A BOX-A, BUT SHE TURNED INTO AN ICE-A BOX-A. WHAT IS THIS

KARMA THAT THIS NEW YORK JEWISH BOY HAS TO WORK OUT WITH GERMAN WOMEN?

Prem Samvid, every nice-a box-a turns into an ice-a box-a finally; it is nothing special about you. "Nice-a box-a" is only the label -- "ice-a box-a" is the reality! But you are fools, you go on being befooled by the labels. Nobody else is responsible for it.
Every ice-a box-a carries a beautiful facade written in big neon letters: NICE-A BOX-A. Once you are caught, then you know: every woman is a nun!

Hattie and Aretha were standing on a street corner talking when two nuns passed.
"Say," asked Hattie, "why do they call them ladies nuns?"
"Because," replied Aretha, "they ain't had none, they ain't got none, and they ain't never gonna get none."
"No wonder they wear mourning!"

But every woman basically is a nun -- and no man is a monk! That is the trouble. God loves troubles! He creates puzzles, jigsaw puzzles. There is no way to solve them; one simply learns to accept.
Samvid, you accept the ice-a box-a. And it is summer and you will need an ice-a box-a! And when winter comes, we will see. Who knows about tomorrow? By that time you may be befooled by another box-a.
And it has nothing to do with any karma; it is simply the sheer stupidity of the human mind. Women are always attractive when they are not available to you. They are seducers, they are all coquettish. That is natural, that comes

just naturally, part of their femaleness. And man is constantly befooled, again and again. Once he is befooled he thinks for a few days, becomes very wise -- but only for a few days. That wisdom does not last long; after a few days again he is deceived. He starts thinking, "Maybe all women are not the same." But I tell you: all women are the same and all men are the same!

Be more aware. Either accept things as they are... then you are not miserable about it because you have no more expectations; you know this is how things are going to happen -- a deep acceptance of things as they are. Or, don't be deceived again, if you are fortunate to get out of this trap this time -- which is not easy, which is very difficult. To get into the trap is always easy.

And the beauty is that it is the man who tries in every possible way to get trapped. The woman knows there is no need to go after you, she simply waits. She believes perfectly in your stupidity, that you will come. The more aloof she remains, the more you are attracted. Once a woman starts running after you, you will escape, you will become afraid. That is like a mousetrap running after a mouse! The mousetrap simply sits there, knowing perfectly well that the mice are bound to come. Where else can they go? And they circle around.... And the mousetrap has all the allurements -- bread and butter and everything... spaghetti! And once the mouse is in, there is no way out -- no exit!

Jean-Paul Sartre has defined hell as "No Exit." Once you get in, you are in forever, you cannot get out of it. That's why it is called hell. And even if by some chance you get out of it you will feel very lonely. You have become so

accustomed to the comforts of the mousetrap, to the security. There is some security; if you are inside a mousetrap, no cat can catch you. You see the security, the safety! Outside the mousetrap there is always danger. So sooner or later you will enter into another mousetrap -- of a different color. The hair will be different, the nose will be different, the body will be different -- just a few differences, but the inside is the same.

Once this is understood -- that every man and every woman carries on the same program -- once this is understood, you can deprogram yourself, you can decondition yourself. Then you can remain with a woman; there is no problem about it. She has turned into an ice-a box-a because you still want her to be a nice-a box-a. If you don't want her to be a nice-a box-a, then what does it matter what she is? Let her be a nice-a box-a or an ice-a box-a -- it is perfectly okay! You become cool and calm.

And the same is the problem with the woman from the other side. Again and again she thinks that this man will fit, this man is going to deliver the goods. No man ever delivers the goods, no man can ever deliver, that is beyond their capacity. No man is responsible really, but your expectations are so high that nobody can meet them. They are impossible; hence everybody falls short. Every woman finds sooner or later just a henpecked husband and nothing else. And who loves a henpecked husband? No woman can love a henpecked husband.

Just watch your life, whether you are man or woman, watch your program, your biological program. Be aware of it so it can be deprogramed. Then wherever you are you will be free of it because you will be free of expectations.

The last question:
Question 8
BELOVED MASTER,
I AM A RUSSIAN. CAN YOU TELL ME A JOKE ABOUT THE RUSSIANS?

Darshan, I am never miserly about jokes. If you ask me for one I will tell you two. The first:

Brezhnev, the head of the Russian Communist Party, invites his aged mother to leave the village where she has always lived to come visit him in Moscow. When she arrives he proudly shows her his huge luxury flat inside the Kremlin... the priceless Persian carpets, the imported Swedish furniture, the antique silverware and crystal tableware, and the latest labor-saving machines from America.
"It's beautiful, son," she says.
"That's not all, Mama," he replies.
So he takes her in his huge, chauffeur-driven limousine to his country villa outside Moscow and shows her his private forest, the swimming pool, the stables full of race-horses and the household staff of fifty servants.
"So what do you think of all this?" he asks, sweeping his arm around the estate.
His mother looks a bit worried and whispers, "But, Leonid, what will you do when the communists come back?"

And the second:

Ivan, a small Russian boy, is having great difficulty grasping the basic principles of Soviet communism. After several hours of instruction, his father finally says to him, "Well, look at it this way. Imagine that I, your father, am the party, that your mother is the motherland, that your brothers and sisters are the unions and you are the people." Ivan still cannot understand the relationship between these institutions, and in a fit of rage his father locks him inside a cupboard in the parental bedroom.
Later that night, forgetting Ivan is still there, his father makes love to his mother. When he is finally released by an embarrassed father the next morning, Ivan exclaims: "Now I know what you meant, father. The party rapes the motherland while the unions sleep and the people stand by and suffer!"

Enough for today.
The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 12
Chapter #3
Chapter title: With love among the unloving
23 April 1980 am in Buddha Hall

HE LOOKS DEEPLY INTO THINGS
AND SEES THEIR NATURE.
HE DISCRIMINATES
AND REACHES THE END OF THE WAY.

HE DOES NOT LINGER

WITH THOSE WHO HAVE A HOME
NOR WITH THOSE WHO STRAY.
WANTING NOTHING,
HE TRAVELS ON ALONE.

HE HURTS NOTHING.
HE NEVER KILLS.

HE MOVES WITH LOVE AMONG THE UNLOVING,
WITH PEACE AND DETACHMENT
AMONG THE HUNGRY AND QUERULOUS.

LIKE A MUSTARD SEED FROM THE POINT OF A NEEDLE
HATRED HAS FALLEN FROM HIM,
AND LUST, HYPOCRISY AND PRIDE.

HE OFFENDS NO ONE.
YET HE SPEAKS THE TRUTH.
HIS WORDS ARE CLEAR
BUT NEVER HARSH.

WHATEVER IS NOT HIS
HE REFUSES,
GOOD OR BAD, GREAT OR SMALL.

HE WANTS NOTHING FROM THIS WORLD
AND NOTHING FROM THE NEXT.
HE IS FREE.

THE MASTER LOOKS DEEPLY INTO THINGS

AND SEES THEIR NATURE.
HE DISCRIMINATES
AND REACHES THE END OF THE WAY.

Only the master can look because only the master has eyes. Without meditation you are blind. You can see, but only the most superficial things, only the surface of things, only the circumference and never the center. You cannot penetrate into the nature of things. And truth remains hidden at the very core.

Meditation gives the master an insight into himself and the same insight becomes his bridge to the whole of existence. He is no more blind. Only a man of meditation is not blind. Unless you have attained meditation think of yourself as blind. Yes, you can see, but you can see only outwardly. And the real nature is inside you; it is in your interiority, it is in your subjectivity.

You live outside the house of your being; you have never entered into the innermost shrine. Not knowing yourself, you know nothing. And if you don't know even yourself, what else can you know? All that you think you know is only inferences -- not knowledge, not authentic knowledge but only guesswork.

All your knowledge depends on guessing. Sometimes it works only by coincidence, sometimes it does not work. When it works you think you are very intelligent, when it does not work you think fate is against you. But you never realize the fact that you have no eyes yet to see into things.

Two men were riding on a train for the first time. One of them had a bunch of bananas. He offered one to his friend

and began to peel one for himself. Just then, the train entered a tunnel.
"Have you tasted your banana yet?" asked the first man, very alarmed.
"No, I haven't," replied his friend.
"Well, for heaven's sake don't!" said the first man. "I took one bite and went blind."

This is what your knowledge is -- just inferences from coincidences.
Just the other day I told you a joke about a Polack who had come to New York to earn name, fame, money, power, prestige. He heard a voice coming from far away in the sky, "Climb up to success!" A little hesitant, a little scared, he tried; he started climbing the ladder, a fifty-story-high ladder, rung by rung. He reached the very end and there he found a young man who said, "Hi there, my name is Cess!" And would you believe that last night the young man came to take sannyas! In my whole life this is the first time a man with the name of Cess has come to take sannyas! I must have given sannyas to more then one hundred thousand people; thousands of Johns and Peters have turned up, but Cess for the first time! And I think it may be the last time too.
Life is full of coincidences; there is nothing esoteric about it. And he looked exactly like the description! But he was an intelligent man -- he wanted to change his name.
You go on inferring. Inference is not knowing, inference is just guesswork. Yes, sometimes it may work, but more often it fails. Knowing is totally different; it is never guesswork, it is a clear insight into things, into the very

nature of things. To see into the very nature of things is the whole purpose of meditation.

Meditation is not something occult, it is very scientific. It is a process of cleansing your eyes, of giving you clarity, of making you alert. Your minds are so full of prejudice that you can't see. Your minds are so full of a priori conclusions that whatsoever you see is colored by your conclusions, by your conditionings. Your observation is not pure; it is polluted, it is poisoned. You don't see what is the case, you go on seeing what you want to see or what you are prepared to see or what you are conditioned to see. This is not real seeing.

Meditation means removing all your prejudices, putting all your conclusions aside -- seeing without any hindrance, seeing without any curtains, seeing clearly without any mediation of any thought, seeing without Buddha standing between you and reality, or Krishna standing or Christ standing.

That's why Buddha is reported to have made one of the most strange statements; only a man of the caliber of Buddha can say it. He said to his disciples, "If you meet me on the way, kill me. Don't allow me to stand between you and the truth. Immediately kill me, remove me; otherwise I will be the barrier."

The true master is one who helps the disciple finally to get rid of the master too, so that the disciple can encounter reality directly, immediately. The false master is one who creates more and more dependence in the disciple, makes him a slave, so much so that the disciple cannot even think of being without the master.

That's what is happening all over the world. So many so-called saints go on creating dependence in you; their whole effort is how to enslave people. They condition you in such a way that their conclusions become your conclusions. They don't give you eyes, they give you ideas.
The real master gives you eyes, not ideas. He gives you insight into reality and then leaves you in total freedom to function out of that insight.

Buddha says:

HE LOOKS DEEPLY INTO THINGS
AND SEES THEIR NATURE.
HE DISCRIMINATES
AND REACHES THE END OF THE WAY.

'Discrimination' is one of the very important words to be understood. Buddha has used the word again and again; his word is VIVEK. Vivek has far deeper meanings than the English equivalent 'discrimination'. Vivek contains awareness, and discrimination through awareness. One can discriminate without being aware; then it will not be discrimination according to Buddha. You can be told what is right and what is wrong and you can discriminate, "This is right and this is wrong," but because it is not your awareness it is not discrimination. Unless you see what is right and what is wrong it is not going to help much.
The Ten Commandments are of no help to you unless they are handed over to you by God himself, not to Moses. They may have been of infinite value to Moses because he came to those insights himself, independent of the whole past, of

the whole tradition. But you are simply repeating like parrots.
From their very childhood we start teaching children what is right and what is wrong, what should be done and what should not be done. And they become conditioned so much that they forget completely that this is not their own voice. They start thinking this is their conscience -- it is not. It is a strategy of the priests and the politicians, a conspiracy against man. They have created a conscience in you and because they have created a conscience in you they have prevented the growth of your own conscience. Your own conscience comes out of your own consciousness; it can't come from the outside. Nobody can give it to you, it has to happen to you in your deep aloneness.
Buddha says: The master knows what is false and what is true. He knows on his own authority, not on any other authority. He does not know according to the Koran and he does not know according to the Talmud, he does not know according to the Vedas -- he knows himself. And only when you know yourself does your knowing have a validity, an authenticity -- an authenticity that can transform you, that can give you a new birth.
And he REACHES THE END OF THE WAY.... The moment that authentic insight has arisen in you, your consciousness is born, YOU are born. This is a rebirth. You are born anew. You have reached the end of the way, there is nowhere else to go. You have arrived home.

HE DOES NOT LINGER
WITH THOSE WHO HAVE A HOME
NOR WITH THOSE WHO STRAY.

WANTING NOTHING,
HE TRAVELS ON ALONE.

In India, people are divided into two categories; this is a traditional division. It was so in Buddha's time too, it is a very ancient division. Buddha is trying to make a distinction: he is trying to make his disciples a third category. The old, ancient categories are two. The first is the worldly, the householder, those who have a home. They are called householders for the simple reason that they live in the fallacy of security, safety -- a safety that they think comes through money, power, prestige, a security that they think comes out of relationships. The wife thinks she is safe with the husband, the husband thinks he is safe with the wife, the parents think they are safe with their children. The safety is fallacious because neither the family nor money nor anything else of this world can save you from death. When death comes it shatters everything; it shatters all your sandcastles. The householder lives in a kind of dreamworld, a world of his own projections. It is not true, it does not correspond to reality; it is his own projection. The wife thinks the husband is her security and the husband thinks the wife is his security. Now, both are insecure. How can two insecure persons give security to each other? Two insecure persons together become doubly insecure, but the fallacy is created.

This is the first category: the GRIHASTHA, the householder.

And the second category is of those who have renounced the first category, who have moved to the other extreme -- who don't live in houses, who don't live in families, who

don't earn money, who don't even touch money, who have moved to exactly the opposite extreme. They are known as sannyasins. They used to wander around the country in small or big groups.

Jaina monks are not allowed to move alone. In Buddha's time there were thousands of Jaina monks because Jainism had existed for at least three thousand years before Buddha. Thousands of Jaina monks -- they are not allowed to move alone, they have to move in a group of at least five, for the simple reason that a person moving alone cannot be trusted. He may fall into some error and, knowing that nobody is with him, nobody knows, he may drink wine somewhere or he may fall in love with a woman or he may go and visit a prostitute or he may do something.... But moving with four others it is impossible; the other four are constantly watching.

So that was a strategy to prevent anybody getting any kind of freedom, any kind of license -- a psychological strategy. Unless all the five decide to conspire together... and that is very difficult, that is almost impossible. Sinners are known to become friendly to each other, saints are not known to become friendly to each other. They don't know what friendship is, they can't conspire. They will watch, they will try to find every kind of fault in the other and they will report to the master. And Hindu monks used to move -- even now they do the same -- in big groups of hundreds.

Buddha says: You have dropped a small family and now you have moved into a bigger crowd -- you have become another family. Nothing has changed. First you were thinking that was your security, now you think this is your security, but the old idea of security still persists.

He says that to be a sannyasin means to accept the natural insecurity of life. That very acceptance is sannyas -- to accept that, "I am born alone and I will die alone, and between these two alonenesses all ideas of being together with somebody are just fantasies. I am alone even while I am alive." One is born alone, one lives alone, one dies alone.

Buddha's emphasis is very much on the fact of your aloneness; he wants you to be aware of it. Once you are aware of it you will be surprised at the beauty of it, at the joy of it. You will not be scared; you will rejoice in it because it has a freedom, it has an ecstasy in it, it has a purity and innocence in it. And why hanker for security? Life is insecure in its very nature, hence it is simple logic: those who want to be more alive, they have to live in insecurity. The greater the insecurity, the more will be your aliveness; the greater the fallacious, so-called security, the less will be your aliveness.

That's why you see so many dead people in the world, almost dead, for the simple reason that they have become so much attached to the idea of security. And the more dead you are, the more secure you are. Don't do anything that can create any insecurity, remain confined to the familiar, don't ever go beyond the limits. You will never know the ecstasy of going beyond the limits. You will never know the ecstasy of exploring the unknown and the unknowable.

According to Buddha, both categories are the same people. Of course they are extremists and they appear opposite to each other, but don't be deceived. They are not really opposite; they have found different kinds of security.

A Jaina monk wrote to me that he would like to come here. He has been reading my books and he wants to become my sannyasin, but he is afraid he will lose all his security because now the Jaina community protects him, feeds him, takes every care of him, respects him. Once he leaves the monkhood, the Jaina community won't be protecting him anymore.

He asked me whether I am ready to take his life in my hands, whether I will be his security. Now he wants to change from one security to another security, he cannot take a jump into insecurity. And my sannyas is insecurity. Real sannyas is always insecurity because real life is insecurity. There is a great security in being insecure. In dropping the very idea of security you are secure with the whole, with God, with the total. And there is great excitement then, because each moment you don't know what is going to happen.

Buddha says that the master... DOES NOT LINGER WITH THOSE WHO HAVE A HOME. He does not linger with the first category, the people who are obsessed with money, power and prestige. He does not waste his time with these people, he does not linger with these insane people.

And he says: ... NOR WITH THOSE WHO STRAY -- nor with those who go on roaming around the country in groups because that is another kind of security, a subtler kind, but the mind is the same. One wants to belong, one can't be alone.

He says: WANTING NOTHING, HE TRAVELS ON ALONE -- because the real master has no desire, not even desire for life; hence he is not afraid of death. He has no desire in this world or in the other; hence he is not

concerned with creating all kinds of safeties around himself. He is not concerned. He can be alone, utterly alone. He is not trying to be clever and cunning with existence; he trusts existence.

People are trying to be very cunning with existence, although they call their cunningness their intelligence. They always give good names to ugly things. Just look at your life, how cunning you have been trying to be -- even with existence. On the one hand you will go to the church and pray, and on the other hand you are trying to be very cunning in every possible way, seeking your ends, sacrificing everybody else for your ends, not caring about anybody, utterly uncaring, having no respect, no love, no reverence for life. And on the one hand you go on praying in the churches and the temples; that too is part of your cunningness. You know what you are doing in your life; to compensate you go to the church every Sunday, or you go to Kaaba....

At least once in his life every Mohammedan is expected to go to Kaaba. For what? -- to repent for all the sins that he has committed, so that he can be forgiven. Hindus go to the Ganges as many times in their lives as possible, just to take a dip in the Ganges because they think the Ganges cleanses you of all your sins. You commit sins and the Ganges has the responsibility of cleansing you of your sins. And what will happen to the Ganges, taking so many people's sins? It must be the most polluted river in the whole world, the most impure! Each drop of the Ganges must be full of millions of sins. So many Hindus for so many thousands of years have been cleansing their sins there. Avoid the

Ganges! Even if by chance you come near the Ganges, escape as fast as you can!

Once a man came to Ramakrishna; he was going to the Ganges to take a dip, a holy dip. He asked Ramakrishna, "Paramahansadeva, you bless me -- I am going for a holy dip. Do you think all my sins will be cleansed?"
Ramakrishna was a very polite man. He said, "Of course, when you take a dip in the Ganges all sins fly away from you; you are freed."
The man said, "When YOU are saying it, I trust it. So it is worth going."
Ramakrishna said, "It is worth going, but remember one thing: when you dive in the Ganges, don't come out."
The man said, "What are you saying? Have you gone mad? I will have to come out, I cannot survive under the water for more than a few seconds!"
Ramakrishna said, "Then it is futile because whenever you come out... have you seen the big trees standing on the banks of the Ganges?"
He said, "Yes, I have seen."
"Do you know their purpose and their function?"
He said, "That I don't know. It is not mentioned in any scriptures."
Paramahansadeva said, "I will tell you the secret. When you take the dip, when you dive in, your sins have to leave you because of the purity of the Ganges, but they sit on the trees waiting for you. When you come back they jump upon you! And the danger is that some other sins may also jump upon you which were not yours in the first place. So be very alert -- if you take a dive, then don't come out!"

People have found cunning ways to continue their lives as they are. All your so-called religions are your cunning ways of avoiding God, not of finding God.

A young clerk in a telegraph office got married and, after a couple of years, was going to attain fatherhood. He was sure that the child would be a boy. However, he wanted to keep the whole thing secret from his co-workers so that he could surprise them with the news that he was the father of a male child.
As the delivery was imminent, he sent his wife to her father's place and asked her to send a telegram to him. The telegram, he told her, should contain only the following words: "Cycle arrived," so that he would know that she had safely delivered.
When the time was ripe she gave birth to a female child. As the telegram, "Cycle arrived," was to be given only after the delivery of a male child, the wife was in a fix as to what to do. Luckily her brother was an intelligent person and he sent the telegram in this fashion: "Cycle arrived with front tire punctured."

Now these people are thought to be intelligent. All kinds of cunning people are thought to be intelligent people. And you have to watch your own cunningnesses. To be cunning is not to be intelligent; to be intellectual even is not to be intelligent. Intelligence has a totally different flavor from intellectuality. Intelligence is the fragrance of meditation -- only a master is intelligent.

WANTING NOTHING, HE TRAVELS ALONE. He can see that the householders are living in a projection, in a projected world of their own; and the so-called monks and nuns are living in another projection, but again it is a projected world. He moves alone -- it has not only to be an outward act, it has to be an inward feeling also.

To be alone is the most fundamental thing for a meditator -- to experience aloneness, to sit silently and just be yourself, just be with yourself, not hankering for any company, not hankering for the other. Enjoy your being, enjoy your breathing, enjoy your heartbeat. Enjoy the inner accord, the harmony. Enjoy just that you are, and be utterly silent in that enjoyment.

People find a thousand and one ways to avoid this aloneness; there are worldly ways and there are otherworldly ways. The worldly person will start listening to the radio or he will turn on his idiot box -- his television. He can't be alone. And the otherworldly person, the religious person, will start praying or reading the Bible. He is also doing the same.

You have to be constantly aware that there are religious ways of avoiding yourself too -- irreligious ways, religious ways, all kinds of ways are available to avoid yourself. The religious person will start a dialogue with God. He will start praying in a formal way -- the Christian prayer, the Lord's Prayer, or the Jewish prayer or the Hindu prayer -- and he will recite mantras, just like a gramophone record, meaning nothing. All that he wants is occupation. All that he wants is somehow not to feel alone. All that he wants is that God is there: "If nobody is there then at least God is there; I am not alone."

The whole idea of God as a person is the fiction created by the people who cannot be alone; hence they have created God. When nobody is there, at least God is always there; you need not be worried about that, he is everywhere. To have an idiot box you need some money and you cannot carry the idiot box everywhere, but God is always there following you like your own shadow. He is always with you. Even when you are in your bathroom he is not gentlemanly enough to leave you alone; he comes with you. You are lying down in your bath naked and he sits by your side. He is a kind of Peeping Tom -- he goes on looking at you! You are making love to your wife and he is standing there; you don't even allow him to be a little gentlemanly. No need for him to be British, but if he is a little gentlemanly, there is nothing wrong in it.

This idea of God is created out of fear -- fear of aloneness. When you close your eyes you are alone, but God is there. Even in your inner being he persists, he insists on being there. This is violence! But there is no God -- it is your idea.

It is like when you are alone and moving into a dark lane in the night or you have lost your way in the forest and you start whistling, just to cheer yourself up. Now that is stupid. It is your whistling, there is nobody else, but even that helps. It is psychologically helpful. You start whistling, you start singing, humming -- to forget that you are alone, to forget that you are lost.

All your prayers are nothing but whistling in the dark. Buddha is not in favor of prayers. And this difference has to be understood: he is absolutely in favor of meditation, but never in favor of any prayer. Prayer is again the old

trick, the old game which does not allow you to be alone. Meditation is the art of being alone. He says: WANTING NOTHING, HE TRAVELS ON ALONE.
Aloneness is not loneliness, remember it. Aloneness is not solitariness, remember it. Aloneness is solitude. It is tremendously beautiful; it is innocent because there is nothing to pollute it, there is nothing to disturb it, to distract it. It is pure stillness, it is silence. It has a music of its own. Once you have heard the music of your own aloneness you will not like any other music. Then all other music is only noise; howsoever beautifully arranged, it is noise.

HE HURTS NOTHING.
HE NEVER KILLS.

It is impossible for him to hurt or to kill, because now he knows that he is not separate from existence, that there is nobody else. It is all one, it is one organic unity. We are all waves of the same ocean. Hurting another wave is hurting yourself. It is like hitting your hand, one hand with another hand. It is childish, it is insane. Sometimes small children do that. If the table has hurt them they hit the table hard; they are hurt more, but they enjoy. They think they are punishing the table.
Whenever you punish somebody you are punishing yourself. Whenever you torture somebody you are torturing yourself -- because there is nobody else. The master knows it. It is not only a belief for him, it is his experience. Reaching his own center he has reached the center of the whole existence.

This fundamental has to be remembered: that as far as the circumference is concerned we are all different, but as far as the center is concerned we have only one center. That one center you can call God or truth or nirvana.

HE MOVES WITH LOVE AMONG THE UNLOVING,
WITH PEACE AND DETACHMENT
AMONG THE HUNGRY AND QUERULOUS.

HE MOVES WITH LOVE AMONG THE UNLOVING.... His work is difficult. He is talking to his bodhisattvas, making them aware of the arduousness of their work. It is not going to be easy, it is not going to be cheap, because the awakened one has to move amongst those who are fast asleep. The person who has eyes has to live with those who have no eyes. Communication becomes impossible. He says one thing, they understand something totally different. He tries to help them and they feel offended. He tries in every possible way to save them, but they think that he is trying to exploit them or something.

Just a few days back, a friend from Germany took sannyas. His name was Richard; I have called him Veet Richard. Richard means "hard"; German names are like that. Strange, that all German names I come across, either they mean "hard" or they mean "strong" or they mean "masculine" or they mean "bear-strong" or they mean "the walk of the wolf" -- Wolfgang. I told him, "Go beyond your hardness. VEET means going beyond. Become soft, become a little less German."

And just the other day he wrote a question, saying, "While you were giving me sannyas I was looking at your shoulders and I could not believe that 'This man is my master.'" Now, what do my shoulders have to do with my being a master or not? This is something new! I have come across thousands of definitions of what a master means, but neither Buddha nor Lao Tzu nor Zarathustra nor Jesus, nobody has said anything about the shoulders! And he was looking at my shoulders, not looking into my eyes -- I had asked him to look into my eyes.

But this is how things are. When you are moving with people who are fast asleep they have their own ideas. Then, Veet Richard, go to Muhammad Ali! Find some stupid wrestler for your master. And now I am wondering -- whatsoever I was saying to him, was it worth saying to him? I was simply wasting my time and his time. There is no possibility of any communication. He was in his own world; maybe he was looking for Adolf Hitler or somebody. I am not Adolf Hitler and I am not Muhammad Ali either, but he must be carrying some idea....

Everybody is carrying some idea -- strange ideas people are carrying. And I cannot fulfill your ideas. You are so unloving and I go on pouring my love on you and there seems to be no response.

People write me such ugly letters that if you come to know about those letters you will be simply shocked. You will not be able to believe it. One woman wrote just the other day, "Either you are mad or you are a fool!" Madam, can't I be both together? Is there any contradiction? Not all fools are mad, true, not all madmen are fools, true, but there are a

few who are both together. I belong to that third category. And certainly I must be mad; otherwise why should I be working on you? And I should be a fool, I must be a fool; otherwise I would not have initiated this madam into sannyas. You don't belong here.

But the problem is, everybody who comes is asleep, unloving, and they can't see their sleep, they can't see their unlovingness, they can't see their prejudices.

So many questions have come from British ladies and British gentlemen saying, "The British lady is just a myth and you should not be so interested in a myth. It is not a reality -- the British lady exists nowhere." But these same people believe that the Polack exists, the Italian exists, the Jew exists; they are not myths... because when I am joking about Jews or Italians or Polacks no British lady or gentleman writes to me that these are myths -- they are realities.

Now, no Jew, no Italian, no Polack is writing to me that the British lady is a myth. Why are only the British writing to me about it? Can't you see the point? And if it is a myth -- and I know it is a myth! -- why not enjoy it? Why become so much worried about it? Somewhere deep down you believe it is not a myth, otherwise why? Have a good laugh and it is finished!

But your concern to make me aware of the fact that the British lady does not exist... I KNOW it! I am surrounded by British ladies! I have more British ladies around me than I have Jews or Polacks or Italians. I know it is a myth -- but a beautiful myth!

And one thing is very good about British ladies: they never disappoint you because from the very beginning they are

ice-a box-a. That must be said in their appreciation. The Italian lady begins with a nice-a box-a; ultimately, finally, you find out, but then it is too late, that she is not a nice-a box-a, she is an ice-a boxa. But the British lady from the very beginning is clear; she never disappoints anybody. She is truthful, sincere. If you want an ice-a box-a, it is your responsibility.

Buddha says: HE MOVES WITH LOVE AMONG THE UNLOVING.... Yes, the master has to move among the Polacks and the Italians and the Jews, the British and the French... and he has to move with people who know nothing about love, although they all believe they love. And the love of the master is so different that you cannot understand his love. His love is very cool; to you it appears it is cold because you know only two categories, cold or hot. You don't know the third category: cool, neither cold nor hot.

Coolness is not coldness, remember. The master is never cold, but certainly he is not hot either. You know a love which is hot, passionate, lusty, and you know a love which has gone dead, has become cold -- ice-a box-a -- everything has become frozen, it is a corpse. But you don't know the third possibility: the coolness of love and the freshness of that coolness. And the coolness has a paradoxical quality in it. If you compare it with cold, then it is cool; if you compare it with hot, then it is warm. It is exactly in the middle where warmth and coolness are one. The master has a warmth which is cool and has a coolness which is warm, but that is very difficult for people who live in extremes to understand.

HE MOVES WITH LOVE AMONG THE UNLOVING,
WITH PEACE AND DETACHMENT.... He loves but he is never attached, and you cannot understand a love which is not attached. To you love and attachment are always associated; it is impossible for you to keep them separate. Love is always attachment to you; the deeper the attachment, the more you think it is love. But the master's love is utterly detached. He loves, yet he is not bound by it. He loves, but he is not binding on you. You know a love which creates excitement. The master's love is utterly peaceful; there is no excitement. It is nothing to do with romance.

HE MOVES... AMONG THE HUNGRY.... The people who are always desiring more, Buddha calls them hungry, constantly hungry. They go on stuffing themselves with every kind of thing and they are never satisfied. Their hunger is impossible, their thirst is unquenchable. The more you give, the more they want. They are never grateful.

... AND QUERULOUS. And, of course, when they are always hankering for more they are quarreling with each other. The master is never querulous, he is never hungry. He is fully contented, utterly contented, absolutely contented. He has arrived! He asks for nothing. Hence it becomes more and more difficult for you to understand him.

LIKE A MUSTARD SEED FROM THE POINT OF A NEEDLE
HATRED HAS FALLEN FROM HIM,
AND LUST, HYPOCRISY AND PRIDE.

The most important thing to remember is: these things have fallen from him. He has not dropped them, they have fallen. If you drop them they will hang around you. He has not repressed them, he has transcended them -- and the difference is great. If you repress them they will always be with you. If you repress lust it will spread deep down inside your being like cancer. If you repress hypocrisy you will be creating a deeper kind of hypocrisy, that's all. If you repress pride you will become a pious egoist.
Beware of it. Millions are befooled by this because repression is easy, anybody can do it. It needs no intelligence; it needs only a little stubborn stupidity and you can do it. You just have to be a little stubborn, you have to insist and you have to force something inside yourself. You have to put pressure on it, you have to sit upon it. But then you will be in trouble. It is always there boiling, ready to explode any moment.

Three priests -- an archbishop, a bishop and a rather young, newly ordained priest -- stood in the lobby in the airport. The archbishop told the priest to get the tickets while they took care of the baggage.
The priest approached the ticket counter, noting the shapely, seductively dressed young woman behind the counter. By the time she got around to him he was quite flustered by her and stammered, "I would like three pickets to Tittsburgh."
Embarrassed and ashamed, he ran from the counter back to his two companions. He told the archbishop, "Father, I am sorry, I cannot get the tickets. Furthermore, I have sinned... I was tempted by the flesh!"

The archbishop said, "You are young, my son, and weak -- we shall pray on your problem."
The archbishop then sent the bishop for the tickets. The bishop, though not easily swayed in his faith, was also quite taken with the young woman's beauty. He said, to her, "I must apologize for my brother -- he is young. Now, I would like three tickets to Pittsburgh and I would like the change in nipples and dimes."
Shocked by his slip and completely overwhelmed by embarrassment, he returned to the archbishop without the tickets.
The archbishop was by now quite angry at both the priests and the young woman. He then went for the tickets himself. He said, "I would like three tickets to Pittsburgh and I would like my change in nickels and dimes."
As the young woman began processing the tickets, the archbishop said, "Look at you... you should be ashamed. How do you dare to leave the house that way? Why, your breasts are not covered and your skirt is entirely too short. Every man who approaches you is tempted. When you go to heaven," he said, with his voice raising in pitch, "Saint Finger will surely shake his peter at you!"

That is bound to happen. Hence Buddha says: LIKE A MUSARD SEED FROM THE POINT OF A NEEDLE HATRED HAS FALLEN FROM HIM.... He has not dropped it or repressed it; it has fallen of its own accord. ... AND LUST, HYPOCRISY AND PRIDE.
How does this miracle happen that these things fall of their own accord? They fall of their own accord if you become more aware of them -- not repression but awareness is

needed. Repression makes them more unconscious and more dangerous. Become more conscious of them, watch them, meditate over them. And as you become more and more capable of watching all kinds of thoughts in your mind, you will become more and more detached from them. You will come to know that the observer is separate from the observed, that they are there like the traffic on the road and you are just a spectator. They have nothing to do with you, they are not part of your being. Repress them and they become part of your being. Repress them and you become more and more controlled by them. You will remain afraid your whole life if you repress anything. Repression creates fear, because you know it is there -- any opportunity and it can arise again.

My approach is also the same: don't repress anything -- watch. Nothing has to be repressed, everything has to be watched. Just by being watchful things start dropping on their own. And then there is a beauty because a silence comes to you, a stillness comes to you which is not forced, not cultivated.

HE OFFENDS NO ONE.
YET HE SPEAKS THE TRUTH.
HIS WORDS ARE CLEAR
BUT NEVER HARSH.

HE OFFENDS NO ONE -- he cannot because all violence has disappeared from him -- but HE SPEAKS THE TRUTH. If truth offends you, then he is helpless. There is no intention to offend you, but if you are living in lies then truth offends. About that the master cannot do anything, he

has to say the truth. In fact, he says only the truth; otherwise he is not interested in saying anything to you.

The little baby was very quiet. He never cried or chuckled or said "Mama" or "Dadda."
When he was three, the parents began to get rather worried, thinking he might never talk at all.
At last, when the child was seven years old, he suddenly spoke. They were sitting having lunch when he said, "Not enough salt."
"Good gracious!" exclaimed his mother. Then she asked, "How is it that in seven years you have never said a word?"
"Well," said the child, "up to now everything has been alright!"

The master speaks only if something is wrong; otherwise he keeps quiet, he remains silent. He speaks only if something is wrong. But that can hurt you, that can offend you. To show that something is wrong with you seems to be offensive to you. You love to be appreciated, not criticized. You love to be buttressed, not to be criticized. You love that your lies should be supported, not destroyed. But about that the master cannot do anything. He has to shatter your lies, he has to bring the truth to your notice. If truth hurts, then that is another matter; otherwise, the master has no intention of hurting anybody. HIS WORDS ARE CLEAR BUT NEVER HARSH.

"How was Lady Hastings' party?" Lord Peter was asked. With an absentminded, faraway glance in his eyes, he said, "Had the soup been as warm as the wine, had the wine been

as old as the chicken, had the chicken been as tender as the maid and had the maid been as willing as the Lady, it would have been a great party!"

The master will not be that roundabout. He will simply say it clearly, although he is not harsh. But he can appear harsh to you -- that is your problem. He is always sweet, and if sometimes he appears harsh to you, ponder over it, why he appeared harsh to you. Maybe something was inside you that started pinching, that started hurting. Maybe there was a wound inside you that you were hiding and the master hit the wound. He has to hit your wounds. He has to pull much pus out of your being. It hurts. The master is a surgeon. Buddha himself has said again and again: I am not a preacher but a physician.

WHATEVER IS NOT HIS
HE REFUSES,
GOOD OR BAD, GREAT OR SMALL.

That's exactly the definition of meditation according to Buddha and according to all other buddhas too. Watch your mind, and whatever is not yours, whether it is good or bad, great or small, don't get identified with it, don't accept it, go on refusing.
In the East this method is called -- even prior to Buddha it was called -- NETI, NETI, neither this nor that. Go on saying that "I am not this, I am not this, I am not that either." Go on rejecting inside your being whatsoever you can observe you are not.

Slowly slowly, eliminating all that you are not, one day only that is left which you are. That day is a day of great rejoicing. Then the watcher turns over onto itself. Nothing else to watch, it starts watching itself. Nothing else to see, it starts seeing itself. That is the moment you become a seer. That is the moment your wisdom explodes. That is the moment when darkness disappears and there is just light and light and nothing else.

HE WANTS NOTHING FROM THIS WORLD
AND NOTHING FROM THE NEXT.
HE IS FREE.

Once you know that all that the mind contains is not you, all that the mind craves is not you, all that the mind is hungry for is not you, you are becoming free. Slowly slowly, desires disappear. Seeing that all desires are basically futile, that all desires end in frustration, seeing it on your own -- not because I say it or the Buddha says it -- seeing it on your own, desiring evaporates. You are left without any desire and there is no smoke of desire. Your flame of awareness burns bright, and freedom is the fragrance of that flowering of awareness.
Ordinarily we are living like robots. Ordinarily we are living mechanically. We are not conscious at all, although we believe that we are conscious. We are not conscious at all. And because we are not conscious, if we drop the desires of this world, then we start desiring something in the other world. It is absolutely ridiculous.
See your so-called saints and mahatmas desiring the same things that they have dropped desiring in this world, but

now they are desiring the same things in the other world.... Mohammedans believe that in their paradise there are streams of wine. Now this seems to be very illogical! Here wine is a sin and there it is the reward -- reward for all your virtues. And you don't have to go to a pub -- streams are flowing everywhere! Here the woman is hell and the woman has to be renounced, and there...?

In the Hindu paradise beautiful women are available, always young, stuck at the age of sixteen; they don't grow beyond that. In fact, I always wonder how they reached sixteen! They must have been born sixteen years old from the mother's womb. Since then they have not grown. And they have bodies of gold -- solid gold, it seems! And not American gold, mind you, pure gold, twenty-four-carat gold! And their eyes are made of emeralds, pure green emeralds. And their bodies don't perspire of course, how can they perspire? If their bodies are made of solid gold it is impossible to perspire. They may melt in the heat, but they cannot perspire!

Here women have to be renounced. And the Hindu scriptures say: The woman is the door to hell. And there the mahatmas are provided with beautiful APSARAS, beautiful women. What kind of nonsense is this?

And the same is the case with all the religions. Because in Mohammed's time when the Koran was written homosexuality was very prevalent in the Arabian countries, provision is made for gay people also! In the Mohammedan paradise not only are beautiful women available but beautiful boys too. They never grow their mustaches, they remain always the same -- young. Now here, in all the Mohammedan countries, homosexuality is one of the

greatest crimes. The homosexuals have to be beheaded, death is the penalty. Can't you see the absurdity? In paradise you will be provided with all kinds of beautiful boys! I am not against homosexuality, I am simply against this absurdity. It is perfectly good, generous -- but then why are you against it here?
It is the stupid, unconscious mind of man. He is ready to let go of something in this world, but then he moves to the other extreme. He lets it go here, he renounces it here, and he starts asking for it in the other -- the same thing. The problem does not change. From one problem he moves to another problem, from one desire to another desire.

A fat, round-bottomed Italian woman comes to the doctor's office with her husband. "My husband no shit-a!" she exclaims.
The doctor gives her a small bottle of cod-liver oil, saying, "Give him this tonight and he will be alright tomorrow."
But the next day the woman returns and says, "My husband no shit-a!"
So the doctor gives her a bigger bottle with the same instructions.
The following day the woman is back again: "My husband no shit-a!"
The doctor finally gives her a huge bottle of cod-liver oil.
The next day the woman comes back again.
"Doctor, Doctor," she exclaims, "no husband, only shit-a!"

But the problem remains; now it is the other extreme.
The seeker of truth has to be very watchful not to move from one prison into another, from one desire into another.

He has to be very alert and aware. He has to de-automatize himself. He has to become a man, not continue as a machine. You are born as a machine, and unless you make a great effort, you will remain as a machine and you will die as a machine. Make every effort to become aware so that you are no more a machine. Then the real man is born.

A wild West cowboy purchases a horse from the local priest. "This horse is very special," the priests explains. "When you shout, 'Praise to the Lord' this horse will start galloping like crazy and the only way to stop it is to call out, 'Amen!'"
At once the man jumps up on the horse's back and shouts, "Praise to the Lord!"
He shoots like an arrow across the desert. Suddenly he becomes aware of a steep canyon ahead of him. "Goddam! I forgot the other command," he says. "What shall I do with no means to slow down this mad horse?"
Cursing and sweating, he approaches the deep canyon, and at the last moment he remembers: "Amen!" And just above the gorge the horse comes to a standstill.
Trembling and relieved, with tears in his eyes, the cowboy looks up to the sky and says, "Praise to the Lord!"

Enough for today.

The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 12

Chapter #4

Chapter title: Music comes closest
24 April 1980 am in Buddha Hall

The first question:
Question 1
BELOVED MASTER,
IS IT REALLY SO DIFFICULT FOR THE AWAKENED ONES TO WORK WITH US BLIND PEOPLE AS GAUTAMA THE BUDDHA SAYS?

Aseema, yes, it is even more difficult than Gautama the Buddha says, because man has become far more blind now than he has ever been before -- he has become more knowledgeable. That is his blindness. Now he lives under the illusion that he knows and that is the greatest illusion of all. Once you start believing that you know, the work of an awakened one becomes almost impossible.
The awakened one can work easily only when you are ready to accept the fact that you know nothing, that your knowledge is borrowed, that it is mere information, that it is not any inner flowering of your being, that it is not your own music, that it is not your own experience. Once a person accepts this, things become very simple. The very acceptance of ignorance is the beginning of disciplehood.
But as time has passed, man has been accumulating more and more knowledge, his mind has become more and more capable of memorizing. He has become a walking encyclopedia. Today man knows more than ever, hence the difficulty is greater today than ever before.
The eyes are blind in proportion to the weight of knowledge that you carry. Children are not blind. The younger the child, the more clearly he sees, far more

clearly. His perspective is totally different from the so-called grown-up.

Just the other day there was a letter from a young boy from Germany. One month ago he also wrote -- that he wants to become a sannyasin. He is only sixteen years old so I told him, "You inquire of your parents, ask their permission; otherwise they will create difficulties for you. If they allow, you are welcome."
His answer has come and what he says is tremendously beautiful. He says, "Beloved Master, my parents will never understand you. We went to see the film about your ashram -- I was the only one in my family who understood it. My father and mother were absolutely unable to comprehend it, what it was all about. And I am afraid that if I become more grown-up like them I may miss the opportunity.
Moreover," he says, "I have dyed all my clothes orange so I am already half a sannyasin -- just the mala is needed."
He says, "I understood the film completely but my parents were simply confused by it. I have been trying to explain it to them, but they seem incapable of understanding." He also says, "I am afraid that if this is what happens when one becomes grown up, then I may miss the opportunity of becoming a sannyasin. So please, send the mala immediately before I become blind!"

A child is not burdened with knowledge. You have to become a child again; then the work of a Buddha is very simple. It is the simplest work in the world -- because the Buddha is not going to make you achieve something, he is

simply helping you to see what is already the case. What can be more simple?
But grown-up people are really blind, utterly deaf. Their hearts are closed, they can't feel, they are hung up in their heads, and to communicate with a Buddha you need an open heart. People are encapsulated in their thoughts, so much so, that they live in their own world, continuously imprisoned in their ideologies, in their words. You can't talk to them. You say one thing and they immediately understand something else.

Just the other day I received a letter dated April 18, from the Ritz Hotel, Mysore:
"Dear Sir,
I am very upset since one of your devotees staying at this hotel, a friend of Swami Anand Hasyo, informs me that you make fun of our new president, the Reverend Canon Banana, in your daily Sufi dances. I am told that your devotees are taught to sing: 'You are a banana to me.' This is very disrespectful. How would you like it if in Zimbabwe we taught our people to sing, 'You are not my Bugwan'? Trusting that you will deal with this matter without delay...."
The song is this:
"You can fall in love with a star,
You can fall in love with a tree.
I love you just the way that you are.
You are a mystery to me."
Or, if your partner looks serious, say "banana" instead of "mystery to me."

This Sufi dance has been going on for years, and this fellow, Reverend Banana, became president only on 7th April this month, only one week ago. In fact the nation of Zimbabwe is only one week old. On 11th April he became the president elect, on 17th April he actually became the president. We have been using the word 'banana' for years; it has nothing to do with Reverend Banana.

The letter-writer has also sent a picture of Reverend Banana -- and he LOOKS like a banana, so I can very well understand why he is upset!

Now he should approach the UNO to change the English language; bananas should not be called bananas anymore. And what will you do about the expression "He has gone bananas"? Now you will have to say, "He has gone Reverend Bananas." That will be much more suitable. All the other bananas will be very happy.

Now, these stupid people are all over the world....

And would you believe what the name of this man is? His name is Israel Tomato!

Now I am waiting for some letter from Michael Potato! I really got worried about the whole thing. I love bananas, I love tomatoes, I love potatoes. Now to eat them will mean you are a cannibal!

I immediately went into the garden and asked a bunch of bananas, "What do you think? What should I do?" The bananas were so ashamed they didn't speak a single word. I shook them and I said, "You have to say something!" They said, "We are sorry, but once in a while a banana falls.... But this man has fallen too much! Please don't include him in our family. No other banana has ever been a politician

before. Yes, we have fallen and we have committed many sins before, but this is too much. We feel ashamed!"
I asked the tomatoes, and they are such innocent people -- they look so meditative, almost like Zen masters sitting silently, doing nothing. And they all laughed and they said, "Don't be worried. Continue to eat us. That is the only way for us to become buddhas!"
And he says, "How would you like it if in Zimbabwe we taught our people to sing, 'You are not my Bugwan or Bhagwan'?" I would love it -- please do it! ANYway, if your people start remembering me, that will be good. In fact, my sannyasin kids already call me Bugwan, and it sounds so beautiful! It is far smoother than Bhagwan -- nothing is wrong with it.
But this fellow has not given his address; otherwise I was thinking to send him my answer! And these people are all around the world.
Now my South African sannyasins will be very very happy because they were writing to me again and again, "Beloved Master, you never say anything about the South Africans." Veena, Vidya, Veetrag, they were all worried because I am talking about the Italians and the Jews and the British, and nothing is being said about the South Africans. This Tomato has given me an opportunity to say something.

The doctor advises an African to jog ten miles a day for two weeks.
The guy reports that he feels fine; his only complaint is that he is one hundred and forty miles from home!

One African applying for a post as footman in a country house is asked by her ladyship to raise his trouser leg so that she may ascertain whether his legs will be sufficiently shapely in plush knee-breeches. He does so. She then appears satisfied but asks to see his testimonials.
"And that," he says, recounting the event, "was where I made my big mistake and spoiled everything!"

Get it?

"Why are you so angry?" the doctor at the maternity ward asked the African father. "You should be proud that your lovely wife had twins."
"Oh yeah," snarled the leaping African. "Just wait till I find the other guy!"

The African sergeant gave an order for the whole company to raise the right leg. One confused draftee raised his left leg in error. The sergeant looked down the line and saw the upraised left leg of one soldier right next to the upraised right leg of the recruit beside him. "Who is the smart aleck in the middle of the line," he bellowed, "who raised both legs?"

And to Mr. Tomato I would like to say that I have no respect for politicians; whether they are African or American or Indian or European, it does not matter.

A cannibal rushed into his village to spread the word that a hunting party had captured a politician.

"Good," said one of the cannibals. "I've always wanted to try a baloney sandwich."

Three surgeons were at the pub, chatting about their experiences.
The first said, "One guy who came to me had been in a car accident and had lost both his legs. I fixed him up and today he's a champion runner."
"Wow," said the second. "I had a patient once who had been hit by a train and his body was completely smashed. We gave him surgery and today he's a famous dancer."
"That's nothing," said the third. "One guy came to me -- he was a bomb disposal expert. One day a bomb went off and all they found was an asshole and a pair of ears... today he's the president!"

The second question:
Question 2
BELOVED MASTER,
I AM A MUSICIAN AND I HAVE COME ACROSS MANY MUSIC TEACHERS OVER THE YEARS. BUT NOW IT SEEMS THAT I HAVE NOT ONLY FOUND A MASTER BUT ALSO THE ULTIMATE MUSIC TEACHER. IS IT PERHAPS THE SAME THING? AND COULD YOU PLEASE SAY SOMETHING TO US ABOUT MUSIC AND MEDITATION?

Harisharan, music comes closest to meditation. Music is a way towards meditation and the most beautiful way. Meditation is the art of hearing the soundless sound, the art of hearing the music of silence -- what the Zen people call

the sound of one hand clapping. When you are utterly silent, not a single thought passes your mind, there is not even a ripple of any feeling in your heart. Then you start, for the first time, hearing silence.

Silence has a music of its own. It is not dead, it is very much alive, it is tremendously alive. In fact, nothing is more alive than silence.

Music helps you from the outside to fall in tune with the inner. Music is a device; it was invented by the buddhas. All that is beautiful in the world, all that is valuable in the world has always been discovered by the buddhas. Only they can discover because they have traveled the inner country, the inner, immeasurable universe. Whatsoever they have found in the inner world, whatsoever they have experienced in the inner world, they have tried to make something similar on the outside for those who can only understand that which is objective, who are not yet able to enter the interiority of their own being, who are not yet even aware that there is an inner world. Devices can be created on the outside which can help.

Listening to great music you suddenly become silent -- with no effort. Falling in tune with the music you lose your ego with no effort. You become relaxed, you fall into a deep rest. You are alert, awake, and yet in a subtle way drunk.

Once it happened:

A great musician came to the court of a king. The musician must have been an awakened master, must have been a buddha. He said to the king, "I will play on my instruments,

but you will have to fulfill one of my conditions. Unless this condition is fulfilled I cannot play."
The king said, "Whatsoever the condition is, it will be fulfilled. You say it." He had never thought what the condition could be: "Maybe he will ask for much money -- that can be given easily -- or for some other favor which can be given easily." The king had been waiting a long time for this man.
But the condition was very eccentric. The condition was: "While I am playing nobody should move his head. If anybody moves his head, his head has to be cut off. So the audience has to be informed beforehand that people should come knowing that they are playing with fire. If they start moving their heads in tune with the music, then they will lose their heads -- make it clear to everyone who comes. And surrounding the audience let at least one thousand soldiers stand with naked swords so everybody remains aware and never forgets."
The king was so interested in hearing the musician -- he had heard about him for years and he was not ready to lose this opportunity even at this cost. Of course, whatsoever he was demanding was simply insane, but the king had to agree. He said, "Okay, your condition will be fulfilled."
The whole capital was informed. Thousands of people would have come, but now they were afraid -- only one thousand people came to listen to the musician. Even seeing one thousand people come, the king was surprised: "So many lovers who are risking their lives!" And one thousand soldiers were standing with naked swords. Again it was declared, "You have to remember and go on looking at the swords -- they are standing for you. Nobody can

escape." And there were people standing who would take notes -- whoever shook his head, moved his head, would not reach home alive.

The musician started playing, and he was such a master! After only a few minutes, a few heads started moving in tune with the master's music. The king was very much afraid. He saw heads moving, swaying -- people were getting drunk. He himself was afraid for his own head! But a tremendous desire arose in him too, he could not resist it. He himself started moving his head, he forgot all about it. What to say about the audience? The people who were standing with naked swords, many of them started moving their heads and their swords were swaying!

The queen was very much worried. She saw that there were going to be hundreds of people unnecessarily murdered. But sooner or later almost everybody was drunk with his music.

When he finished in the middle of the night, the people who had to report, they reported that "Not a single soul has remained without swaying, and we are sorry to say that we are also on the list!"

The king said, "Now, Master, what do you want? -- all these people butchered, murdered? I am also on the list, my wife is also on the list, my whole court is on the list!"

The master laughed and he said, "I was waiting for these people. These are the right people for whom I can play. Forget all about the condition! It was just a strategy to prevent those who were not ready to risk their lives, it was to prevent the cowards. These are the people for whom I will play. And not only today -- I am going to stay in this town for months together because these are MY people.

They have forgotten about their lives, or even if they had remembered they could not resist. The joy was so tremendous that they were ready to go, even with the risk; they were perfectly aware. These are the people for whom I exist because these are the people who can be turned inwards. They were fully aware and yet drunk."

And that is the whole secret of meditation. The paradox disappears -- the paradox between drunkenness and awareness. And its first experience can happen in music more easily than in any other place, than in anything else. Music, dance... all these are devices, discovered by great awakened masters. They have fallen into wrong hands.
To be a teacher of music is one thing -- he can teach you the technique. I am not a teacher of music -- I cannot teach you the technique -- but I can help you to listen to the inner music, and that is real music.
In China they have the saying: "When the musician becomes perfect he throws away his instruments" -- because they are no more needed. He can close his eyes, he can turn himself inwards and he can listen to the music that is already there and always there. And when the archer becomes perfect he throws away his bow and his arrows; there is no need for them.
Whenever any art is perfect it ends in meditation -- it HAS to end in meditation. If it is not leading you towards meditation then something has gone wrong.
That's why much of the modern art is not art, it is insanity. Much modern music is not music; it simply makes you sexually excited. It is just the opposite of real music. Real music helps you to transcend your biology, your

physiology, your psychology. Real music takes you to the world of the beyond -- what Buddha calls the farther shore, even beyond the beyond.
Gurdjieff used to call real art "objective art." Modern art is not, in that sense, objective art. In the past the awakened masters have used all kinds of devices: painting, sculpture, music, dance, drama. Every kind of device has been used to help you, because there are different types of people who can be helped in different ways: somebody through music, somebody through painting, somebody through poetry.
And that's my function here: to create a buddhafield, a commune where all kinds of devices are used. But the purpose is one, the purpose is single, one-pointed. All these paths are leading you to the same goal -- to your own inner being.
Harisharan, you have come to the right place. I am not a teacher of music because I don't teach you the technique of music, but I am certainly the master of the inner music. I have heard it and I can help you to hear it -- not only to hear it but to be it.
And to be it is to be for the first time. To be it is to be reborn. To be it is to know what bliss is and benediction is.

The third question:
Question 3
BELOVED MASTER,
TWO YEARS AGO I WAS A CALIFORNIAN TOURIST. AFTER ALL THIS TIME YOU STILL FILL ME WITH WONDER AND AWE. I LOVE YOU.

Deva Nartano, I am not a consistent man. With a consistent man you are bound to get bored because the consistent man goes on repeating the same thing. I am so inconsistent, so unreliable, so unpredictable that you never know what I am going to say and what I am going to do. What is going to happen in this commune tomorrow nobody knows -- not even me! I will know only when I have done it. I know only when I have said it.

Hence you can be here your whole life and your wonder and awe will not disappear; in fact it will deepen, it will become more and more profound.

And I am not imparting information to you, because it kills wonder. And wonder is such a valuable treasure; no information is of such worth.

I am not here to help you to learn about anything; on the contrary, my work is to help you unlearn. If you become knowledgeable, naturally whatsoever you know has no surprise for you in it anymore. Your awe and wonder disappear, it becomes old. You know it -- how can you still feel wonder for it? You can feel wonder only if you remain in a state of not-knowing.

That's what I call meditation: the state of not-knowing. I cleanse you. I don't allow any dust to gather on your mirrors. I want you to remain fresh and young. The moment you become knowledgeable you will lose wonder. The moment you become knowledgeable you have lost contact with me.

This place is not for pundits and scholars. This place is for people who have the quality and the courage of remaining ignorant before the immense mystery of existence.

Winslow walked into the saloon and asked for a double bourbon. Suddenly he looked up and realized that tending the bar, apron and all, was a large dog.
"What's the matter?" asked the canine. "Haven't you ever seen a dog tending a bar before?"
"Oh, it's not that," replied Winslow. "What happened to the horse? Did he sell the joint to you?"

This is how the knowledgeable person functions -- nothing can surprise him.

McCarthy walked into a saloon where there were only the bartender, a dog and a cat.
As McCarthy ordered his drink, the dog stood up, yawned and said, "Well, so long, Joe," then walked out.
"Did you hear that?" said McCarthy to the bartender. "The dog talked!"
"Don't be a jackass," said the barkeep, "a dog can't talk."
"But I heard him."
"You think you heard him. Dogs can't talk. It's just that wise-guy cat over there -- he's a ventriloquist."

The moment you start feeling that you know something, remember, you are losing your contact with existence. Knowledge is the barrier, the only barrier that prevents you from communing with God. Remain innocent, remain ignorant. Go on dying to the past and go on dying to all your experiences. Don't collect them, don't be a collector. Remember that every night before you go to sleep, be finished with that day, be totally finished. Go to sleep again as a child and in the morning when you wake up, again

wake up as a child. And you will never lose the eyes of wonder and the heart which can feel awe.
And this is what I call the fundamental quality of a religious person: not that you know the dogma, not that you know the creed, but that you know nothing, or that you know only one thing -- that you know nothing. It is better to be a fool with the trees, with the rivers, with the mountains, than to be a scholar, because as the scholar reaches the trees, the trees simply stop any communication, they close their doors. As the scholar reaches close to the flower it is not the same flower; it stops sending its fragrance.
If you reach as a fool and you can say "Hello!" to the tree and you can say "How are you?" the tree feels rejoiced: "Here is a man who is worth talking to, with whom I can have a dialogue." Sit with the tree, hug the tree, kiss the tree, feel the tree. Of course, people will think that you are mad. Let them think! It doesn't matter. What people think about you is absolutely immaterial; don't pay any attention to it. But make friends with trees, because they have deeper secrets to reveal. Make friends with rocks, feel their texture, their coolness, their weight, their age. Commune with nature and soon you will be surprised that if you are available to nature, nature starts becoming available to you. And it is not only that YOU say hello -- the tree responds. It sends its messages to you clearly and loudly.
Now even scientists are aware of the fact that the tree behaves with different people differently. When the woodcutter comes, the tree trembles in fear. Now there are machines like cardiographs which can detect the trembling; they make a graph of what is happening in the inner being

of the tree. Seeing the woodcutter with his axe coming to cut the tree, the tree is trembling, the tree is afraid, the tree is angry, the tree is full of hate, the tree does not like this man. If the tree could run the tree would run away from this man. If the tree could attack this man the tree would attack him, in sheer self-defense. But because the tree is rooted and she cannot do anything, at least she can become utterly dead.

But when the gardener comes to water the tree, there is a different graph on the cardiogram. The tree is dancing and swaying, she is all open to the gardener as if she is ready to embrace him, to kiss him. If the tree could make love to the gardener the tree would do it. She is full of love. The fragrance of the flowers is more when the gardener is close by.

Now these are scientific facts -- although there are mythological stories about Buddha that trees would become greener when he sat underneath them and meditated. It is possible -- now it can be said on scientific authority, it may be possible. A Buddha sitting underneath the tree, what more happiness can a tree have? And the tree underneath which Buddha became enlightened must have felt tremendous joy.

Now scientists say that the tree Buddha became enlightened sitting underneath is the most intelligent tree of all the trees: the bo tree. It has the same chemical in the biggest proportion that makes a man capable of having a mind. No other tree has that quantity of that particular chemical. Buddha must have chosen that tree. And the tree has been preserved, still it is there. It has a different quality, but the quality can be felt only by those who are innocent.

And the same is true about the whole of existence: it is full of God, overfull, overflowing with God. All that you need is an innocent heart to receive it. You are not open, you are closed.

My whole message to you is: function from a state of not-knowing and you will know the truth -- not through knowledge but through innocence.

Nartano, I am happy that you say, "Two years ago I was a Californian tourist. After all this time you still fill me with wonder and awe. I love you."

It is really difficult for a Californian tourist because California is so gullible that all kinds of fools have gathered there -- Muktananda in Palm Beach... all kinds of stupid people from all over the world. They are being attracted towards California as if California has a magnetic force. And any fool can gather disciples there. All that you have to know is some esoteric nonsense. You talk about seven chakras and seven planes and you talk about kundalini and the serpent power and you talk about SIDDHIS, spiritual powers and astral travels, and you will find people coming to you -- intelligent people, far more intelligent people than these Muktanandas. In fact, it is a miracle!

I have met Muktananda. Once I was passing by the side of his ashram and he invited me in, so just for a few minutes I went there. I have come across all kinds of stupid people -- he tops them all! But in California he has a great following. And what is he doing there? -- arranging Hindu marriages! Now, any kind of nonsense -- as if the Hindu marriage is something spiritual. It is the most absurd thing in the world, but people are ready to do anything outlandish.

It is difficult for a Californian tourist, but you made it. That's really creditable. I appreciate it, because to be with me one needs guts. One needs to be ready to drop all bullshit. And Californians are carrying so much bullshit because they are going from one so-called guru to another guru and collecting it from everywhere. Tibetan lamas are there and Hindu monks are there and Japanese Zen gurus are there and the so-called Sufis are there....

In fact, real masters never go anywhere. The disciple has to seek and search, the disciple has to come to the real master. The thirsty person has to come to the well; the well does not go running after the thirsty.

If two years have not destroyed you and your innocence, that means now nothing will ever destroy it. Even if you are not here you have tasted the beauty of being silent, you have tasted the beauty, the joy of being innocent. Wherever you are you will never allow anybody to disturb your innocence, to destroy your beauty.

Be alert. If you can simply live an ordinary life with joy, if you can relish the ordinary things of life, then nothing else is needed. Religion is not something exotic, it is not something supernatural. It is the very ordinary experience of being silent and innocent, of being full of wonder and awe.

The fourth question:

Question 4

BELOVED MASTER,

WHAT IS THE MEANING OF MATURITY?

Prem Lalit, maturity means the same as innocence, only with one difference: it is innocence reclaimed, it is innocence recaptured. Every child is born innocent, but every society corrupts him. Every society, up to now, has been a corruptive influence on every child. All cultures have depended on exploiting the innocence of the child, on exploiting the child, on making him a slave, on conditioning him for their own purposes, for their own ends -- political, social, ideological. Their whole effort has been how to recruit the child as a slave for some purpose. Those purposes are decided by the vested interests. The priests and the politicians have been in a deep conspiracy, they both have been together.

The moment the child starts becoming part of your society he starts losing something immensely valuable; he starts losing contact with God. He becomes more and more hung up in the head. He forgets all about the heart. And the heart is the bridge which leads to being; without the heart you cannot reach your own being, it is impossible. From the head there is no way directly to being; you have to go via the heart. And all societies are destructive to the heart; they are against love, they are against feelings. They condemn feelings as sentimentality. They condemned all lovers down the ages for the simple reason that love is not of the head, it is of the heart. And a man who is capable of love is sooner or later going to discover his being. And once a person discovers his being he is free from all structures, from all patterns. He is free from all bondage. He is pure freedom.

Every child is born innocent, but every child is made knowledgeable by the society. Hence schools, colleges,

universities exist; their function is to destroy you, to corrupt you.
Maturity means gaining your lost innocence again, reclaiming your paradise, becoming a child again. Of course it has a difference, because the ordinary child is bound to be corrupted, but when you reclaim your childhood you become incorruptible. Nobody can corrupt you, you become intelligent enough. Now you know what the society has done to you and you are alert and aware, and you will not allow it to happen again.
Maturity is a rebirth, a spiritual birth. You are born anew, you are a child again. With fresh eyes you start looking at existence. With love in the heart you approach life. With silence and innocence you penetrate your own innermost core. You are no more just the head. Now you use the head, but it is your servant. First you become the heart, and then you transcend even the heart....
Going beyond thoughts and feelings and becoming a pure isness is maturity. Maturity is the ultimate flowering of meditation.
Jesus says: Unless you are born again you will not enter into my kingdom of God.
He is right, you have to be born again. The whole process of sannyas is a process of rebirthing.

Once Jesus was standing in a marketplace and somebody asked, "Who is worthy of entering into your kingdom of God?"
He looked around. There was a rabbi and the rabbi must have moved forward a little, thinking that he would be chosen -- but he was not chosen. There was the most

virtuous man of the town -- the moralist, the puritan. He moved forward a little hoping that he would be chosen, but he was not chosen.
He looked around. Then he saw a small child who was not expecting to be chosen, who had not moved, not even an inch. There was no idea, there was no question that he would be chosen. He was just enjoying the whole scene -- the crowd and Jesus and people talking, and he was listening.
He called the child, he took the child up in his arms and he said to the crowd, "Those who are like this small child, they are the only ones worthy of entering into my kingdom of God."

But remember, he said, "Those who are LIKE this small child...." He didn't say, "Those who are small children." There is a great difference between the two. He did not say, "This child will enter into my kingdom of God," because every child is bound to be corrupted, he has to go astray. Every Adam and every Eve is bound to be expelled from the garden of Eden, they have to go astray. That is the only way to regain real childhood: first you have to lose it. It is very strange, but that's how life is. It is very paradoxical, but life is a paradox. To know the real beauty of your childhood, first you have to lose it; otherwise you will never know it.
The fish never knows where the ocean is -- unless you pull the fish out of the ocean and throw it on the sand in the burning sun; then she knows where the ocean is. Now she longs for the ocean, she makes every effort to go back to the ocean, she jumps into the ocean. It is the same fish and

yet not the same fish. It is the same ocean yet not the same ocean, because the fish has learned a new lesson. Now she is aware, now she knows, "This is the ocean and this is my life. Without it I am no more -- I am part of it."
Every child has to lose his innocence and regain it. Losing is only half of the process. Many have lost it, but very few have regained it. That is unfortunate, very unfortunate. Everybody loses it, but only once in a while does a Buddha, a Zarathustra, a Krishna, a Jesus regain it.
Jesus is nobody else but Adam coming back home. Magdalene is nobody else but Eve coming back home. They have come out of the sea and they have seen the misery and they have seen the stupidity. They have seen that it is not blissful to be out of the ocean.

The moment you become aware that to be a part of any society, any religion, any culture is to remain miserable, is to remain a prisoner, that very day you start dropping your chains. Maturity is coming. You are gaining your innocence again.
But every child is not a saint. Of course every saint -- real saint -- is a child. The child has the same quality, but he is unaware of it. And what is the point of having something if you are not aware of it? You may have a great treasure and you are not aware of it; then it is as if you don't have it. Having it or not having it makes no difference.

A very rich man was very much puzzled because his whole life he tried to be rich and rich and rich, and finally he succeeded. He became rich, he became the richest man in the world, but there was no bliss. And he was thinking that

once you become rich, bliss is attained. He was very frustrated. That is the fate of all successful people. He started going around asking for any wise person who could help him to attain bliss.

Somebody suggested a Sufi master. He went to the Sufi master on his beautiful horse. He was carrying a big bag full of diamonds, maybe the most precious stones in the world, and he told the master, "I have all these diamonds, but not a drop of bliss. How can I gain bliss? Can you help me?"

The master jumped -- the rich man could not believe his eyes -- the master snatched away the bag and ran away. The rich man followed him crying, shouting, "I have been robbed! I have been cheated! This man is not a master, this man is a thief -- catch hold of him!"

But in that village the master was well acquainted with all the roads and all the lanes and all the streets, so he dodged the rich man. And the rich man had never run after anybody; it was difficult. A crowd started following. They knew the Sufi master, that his ways were very strange. Finally they came back to the same tree where the master had been sitting and the rich man had found him. The master was again sitting under the tree with the bag. The rich man came there, the master gave the bag to him, and the rich man held the bag close to his heart and said, "I am so blissful. I am so happy that I have found my lost treasure!"

And the master said, "Have you tasted a little bit of bliss? Unless you lose it you cannot taste it. I have made you taste it. This is the way to taste bliss -- lose something."

If you can lose your ego you will gain yourself -- what Buddha calls no-self. He calls it no-self for the simple reason that it is not your old ego anymore. It has no shadow of the ego at all; hence he calls it no-self. Lose the ego and gain the self or no-self, and suddenly you are mature. Lose the mind and gain consciousness and you are mature. Die to the past and be born to the present and you are mature. Maturity is living in the present, fully alert and aware of all the beauty and the splendor of existence.

The fifth question:
Question 5
BELOVED MASTER,
WHAT DO YOU CALL THE AMERICAN FEMALES?

Vivek, they are also ladies, but not in the British sense. English English has one meaning of 'ladies'; the American English has another meaning. A lady is one who is a good lay -- but that is the American meaning!

The American hangman comes home.
"It's terrible, darling," he says to his wife. "I'm going to change my profession."
"Why?" asks the wife.
"I'm so fed up with seeing one hanging!"
"Me too," says his wife. "That's why I'm going to divorce you."

The American is the most alive person on the earth today. He is the most alive person for the simple reason that "American" is not a race, it is a mixture -- a mixture of all

races. It is a meeting-place -- a meeting-place of all the countries. America has become the richest country for the simple reason that crossbreeding brings out the best in every child. Other races are small ponds breeding amongst themselves; it is as if you are breeding in your own family. The smaller the race, the lower the standard of its intelligence becomes. That's why it is prohibited for brothers to marry their sisters -- for the simple reason that the child will be just dumb, he will not have any salt. He will not be really a man, he will be more a banana or a tomato! He will not have any intelligence.

Intelligence comes through crossbreeding. And America is the most fortunate country in that way, because its whole history is only of three hundred years and all the world has met there. It is the future of the world; that's how the whole world is going to be. All other countries should learn something; crossbreeding should become the normal thing. Marry somebody as far away as possible from you. But people marry in just the opposite way. They find somebody in the neighborhood, somebody of the same religion, of the same race, of the same color. That is destroying humanity. Now, you can ask animal breeders -- they have raised the quality of all kinds of animals. Ask the people who are working on raising the quality of fruits and vegetables; they have raised the quality of fruits and vegetables for the simple reason that they have used crossbreeding. But about man we are very unscientific and very superstitious.

In America all these superstitions have broken down. They had to because it was a new country and the whole world converged there. People from every country, from Spain, from Portugal, from Italy, from France, from Holland, from

Poland, from England... from everywhere people gathered together there. A totally new kind of human being has been born which is far more intelligent, far more healthy, lives longer, has tremendous capacities for adventure, has courage. And it has created the richest country in the world.

An Indian, an Englishman and an American were walking in a cemetery. "When you die, who would you like to be placed alongside of?" asked the American of his buddies.
"Mahatma Gandhi," said the Indian.
"Winston Churchill," said the Englishman.
"Well," said the American, "I would like to be next to Raquel Welch.
"Wait a minute," said the Indian, "she ain't dead yet!"
"I know," said the American. "But neither am I!"

Even small children in America are showing great insight, intelligence, far more than anywhere else.

Jimmy decided it was time to lecture his young son who was something of a screwball.
"Bob," he said, "you're getting to be a young man now and I think you ought to take life more seriously. Just think if I died suddenly, where would you be?"
"I would be here," replied the kid. "The question is, where would YOU be?"

The last question:
Question 6
BELOVED MASTER,

SO THIS IS NOT THE NUT-HOUSE I THOUGHT IT WAS -- IT IS A ZOO! TODAY A SPIDER, A CENTIPEDE, A MOUSE, A CAT (NOT TO MENTION THE MONKEYS ON THE ROOF), YESTERDAY A PIG AND A COW, AND BEFORE THAT FISHES, FROGS, PRINCESSES.... ARE YOU NOAH?

Premananda, you have stumbled upon a truth. I am Noah and this is Noah's Ark!
You say, "So this is not the nut-house I thought it was."
There you are wrong. It IS a nut-house, but now you yourself have become one of the inmates! That's why you can't see that it is a nut-house. No nut will see it as a nut-house. Of course, it is a zoo too. It is many things....
And you say, "Today a spider, a centipede, a mouse, a cat (not to mention the monkeys on the roof)...."
There too you are wrong. They were not monkeys... they were American tourists on the way to Goa!
And you have mentioned a spider, a centipede, a mouse, a cat, monkeys, pig, cows, fishes, frogs, princesses... you have forgotten ducks, so I will tell you a joke about ducks; otherwise many orange ducks will be angry at you. Nobody here wants to be forgotten. I am being reminded every day. The Australians are writing every day, "Have you forgotten us?" Norwegians, Swedish, Swiss, they are all writing letters, "Beloved Master, when is our turn coming?"

When their father died, three brothers inherited one duck each. They decided to sell their ducks and see who could get the most money.
The first brother sold his for five dollars.

The second sold his for ten dollars.
The third brother was walking along a country road when he met a pretty young girl.
"Give you my duck if you'll make love with me."
"Sure," said the girl.
When they finished, the girl was so pleased she said, "I'll return your duck if you'll make love with me again."
"Sure," said the third brother.
Walking along the road again, the duck got free from the brother's arms and ran out into the path of an oncoming car. The car ran over the duck. The driver agreed to pay fifteen dollars for the dead duck.
When all the brothers had gathered together again the first brother said, "I got five dollars for my duck."
The second brother said, "I got ten dollars for mine."
Then they both turned to the third brother and said, "What did you get for yours?"
The third brother replied, "I got a fuck for a duck, a duck for a fuck, and fifteen dollars for a fucked-up duck."

Enough for today.

The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 12

Chapter #5

Chapter title: He is the moon
25 April 1980 am in Buddha Hall

DESIRING NOTHING, DOUBTING NOTHING,
BEYOND JUDGMENT AND SORROW

AND THE PLEASURES OF THE SENSES,
HE HAS MOVED BEYOND TIME.
HE IS PURE AND FREE.

HOW CLEAR HE IS.
HE IS THE MOON.
HE IS SERENE.
HE SHINES.

FOR HE HAS TRAVELED
LIFE AFTER LIFE
THE MUDDY AND TREACHEROUS ROAD OF
ILLUSION.

HE DOES NOT TREMBLE
OR GRASP OR HESITATE.
HE HAS FOUND PEACE.

CALMLY
HE LETS GO OF LIFE,
OF HOME AND PLEASURE AND DESIRE.

NOTHING OF MEN CAN HOLD HIM.
NOTHING OF THE GODS CAN HOLD HIM.
NOTHING IN ALL CREATION CAN HOLD HIM.

DESIRE HAS LEFT HIM,
NEVER TO RETURN.
SORROW HAS LEFT HIM,
NEVER TO RETURN.

Gautama the Buddha is describing the indescribable. He is describing the inner world of a master. He is defining what a master is, what the quality of his consciousness is. Where does he exist? -- in time or beyond time, in space or beyond space? Does he have any limitations? any boundaries? or has he only a pure vastness, the vastness of the sky? The very phenomenon is so mysterious that it is beyond the words that we use, that we can use. But still a few indications have to be given. These are only hints -- don't cling to these hints. They are not scientific statements; think of them as pure poetry. Yes, fingers pointing to the moon, but forget the fingers and remember the moon.

No word is adequate enough to define a master. All words do injustice to the master because words are meant to describe the ordinary and the master has transcended the ordinary. Words belong to the world; the master is in the world and yet he is no more of it. He exists here and still he does not exist here. He is only a reflection in the lake. He is only a shadow lingering on this shore; the real one has already reached the other shore.

If you can remember this, then even these words will be of great help; otherwise you are bound to misunderstand them.... I have been telling you again and again that life is a mystery to be lived, not a problem to be solved. And Prem Mukta informs me, "Osho, this really happened: I overheard an Italian sannyasin enthusing after the lecture, 'Osho really knows what life is like. It is so true what he says, that: Life is not a problem to be solved but a misery to be lived.'"

Words are dangerous! You can hear in them something which is not there. You can project into them something

which is your own, and it is impossible to detect what you are doing. It is good that the sannyasin was saying it to somebody else, but if you don't say it to anybody else... and there are a thousand and one things that you will never say to anybody else -- then they simply remain part of your inner world. And if you have utterly misunderstood them in the first place, then you can start making a foundation out of them for your life. Words can be dangerous.

A true story:
Two mothers were overheard talking about their sons.
"My boy has taken up meditation," said one.
The other replied, "Well, I suppose it's better than sitting around doing nothing."

But that's exactly what meditation is: sitting around doing nothing -- REALLY nothing, not even inside, not even thinking, not even feeling. When action as such stops in toto, meditation begins. When doing ceases utterly, categorically, when there is no movement in your being, then for the first time there is the flowering of meditation. So listen to these words. These words are beautiful if understood rightly -- which is very difficult because you are so unconscious, you are so blind. You are living in a state of stupor. You are almost drunk -- although you never think of it that way. You may see the drunkenness of others, but you never think that you are also drunk -- drunk with greed, lust, ambition, ego. And these are more alcoholic than any alcohol.

One of the greatest problems with man is: he can see very easily that others are wrong but he cannot see that he himself is in the same boat.

Two pink elephants walked into a pub.
The barman looked up and said, "He's not here yet!"

Get it? He is thinking of some other drunkard who sees pink elephants. He is not drunk, it is some other guy who gets drunk and starts seeing pink elephants. Now he is seeing them, but he is telling the elephants, "Wait, he has not come yet. He must be coming sooner or later."
The moment you start seeing your own state, a great, radical change sets in.
So listen to these sutras with great alertness, awareness, not in a kind of half-asleep, half-awake state. People are mostly in that state twenty-four hours a day: half asleep, half awake. Something they hear, something is always missed. And the trouble is that whatsoever is more significant is always missed because that is beyond their capacity. Whatsoever is nonessential is immediately heard, is understood by them; that is within their capacity. But they go on forgetting the essential -- even if they hear it.
Just watch yourself. Understanding a Buddha, a Christ, a Krishna is one of the greatest exercises in awareness.

Paul was riding his bicycle on a blistering hot summer day. But the heat and fatigue had finally so gotten to him that he stopped and sat down beside the road. Minutes later, a small Mercedes pulled up.
"Anything wrong?" asked the man behind the wheel.

"No, sir, I'm on my way to town," replied the black boy. "I'm just plumb tuckered out."
"As you can see I don't have enough room for you and your bicycle," said the occupant of the Mercedes. "But if you tie your bike to my rear bumper you can sit on it and I will tow you."
In a few moments the car, pulling the black boy on his bicycle, headed down the highway. At the first stop-light a Jaguar pulled alongside. "Hey," said the man inside, "wanna race?"
"You got it!" was the reply.
They were soon racing at over one hundred and twenty miles an hour, the Mercedes driver having completely forgotten about the black boy behind him on the bike. Both cars were up to one hundred and forty when they passed a squad car. The bewildered police officer quickly picked up his radio mike. "Hey, Sarge, you ain't gonna believe this!" he shouted. "A Jaguar's racing a Mercedes all hell bent for leather, and there's some white kid keeping up with them on a bicycle!"

Listen to these beautiful sutras very consciously, meditatively, in tremendous reverence, in deep trust, because Buddha is revealing the greatest secrets of life.

DESIRING NOTHING, DOUBTING NOTHING,
BEYOND JUDGMENT AND SORROW
AND THE PLEASURES OF THE SENSES,
HE HAS MOVED BEYOND TIME.
HE IS PURE AND FREE.

Go slowly -- each word is significant. DESIRING NOTHING, DOUBTING NOTHING.... You have been told by the priests down the ages, "Don't doubt, drop doubting." But why in the first place do you doubt? You doubt because you desire. Buddha is bringing the very root of the problem to your consciousness. If a man desires nothing he has no need to doubt anything at all; it is desire that brings doubt in its wake.

This is something very special, nobody has said it so clearly. In fact, nobody had said it before Buddha. If you desire you cannot get rid of doubt because desire brings belief and belief brings doubt. And what your priests are doing is simply ridiculous. They insist that you should believe and you should not doubt. They are putting you in a difficult situation which is impossible to maintain. If you believe, you are bound to doubt; all believers are doubters. This is the great insight of Buddha: no believer can ever get rid of doubt.

Belief means basically that there is doubt and you are covering it with belief. Doubt is there like a wound and you are covering it with beautiful flowers of belief. But by covering a wound with flowers you are not curing it, it is not being healed. In fact by covering it you will make it far more dangerous. It will be growing deep inside you, it will go on spreading; it will become a cancer finally. Why do you believe in the first place? If you don't doubt, what is the need to believe?

Buddha's approach is always very fundamental; he goes to the very root of the problem. You believe because you doubt. And why do you doubt? He does not stop there.

Why do you believe, why do you doubt? -- because you desire.

For example, you believe in an afterlife and you also doubt an afterlife. Both the belief and the doubt persist in you side by side. You believe in afterlife because you desire; there is a great lust for life, you don't want to die. Because you don't want to die, any priest can exploit you. He can tell you, "Don't be worried, only the body dies; your soul will live forever. Your soul is immortal." And you are immediately ready to believe. Why? Without inquiring into such an important matter, you believe some stupid priest who knows nothing about it, who has not experienced anything about it himself, who has not gone deeper into his own being. Maybe he knows the scriptures, he can quote the Bible and the Koran and the Gita, but so what? By knowing the Gita or the Koran or the Bible he does not know that the soul is immortal. How does he know? On what authority is he speaking? On the authority of Christ? -- then it is borrowed. On the authority of Krishna? -- then it is not his own. And unless it is his own there must be doubt in him.

Unless some experience arises in your own being, doubt cannot be dispelled. You can go on believing in light sitting in a dark room, but that does not mean that the darkness will disappear by your believing. You can recite the Gita and you can talk about light, but darkness will remain. You can deceive yourself by believing in light, you can say there is no darkness, you can pretend that there is no darkness, but you know that there is darkness. Otherwise, why are you talking about darkness at all if there is no

darkness? Why are you saying there is no darkness? If there is no darkness there is no darkness! Why waste your time? Why are the priests continuously teaching people that the soul is immortal? They know people are afraid of death and desire life. The fear of death and the desire for life are two sides of the same coin.
Buddha says: If you desire something then you have to believe. Why do you believe in God? Have you seen God? Have you experienced God? You can say Jesus saw God, but he may have been a deluded man. Either he himself lived in an illusion or he was deceiving you. Who knows? How can you be certain that he knew? What grounds have you got that anybody has ever seen God?
If you are suffering from a headache, nobody else can know except you yourself. Yes, if you say it, people can sympathize with you. They may not say so -- they may agree with you, they may disagree with you -- but how can they know that you are suffering from a headache? Only you know.

A visiting psychiatrist, wandering through the wards of a state asylum, saw a patient huddled in a corner scratching himself incessantly.
"Excuse me," said the doctor, "why do you scratch yourself like that?"
"Because," replied the man, "I'm the only one who knows where I itch."

There are things which can only be trusted if they become your personal experience.

But you are afraid of death, you believe in an afterlife, you desire an afterlife. You are afraid of being alone, you want protection. You want a God, a father figure. You are still childish. You can't live on your own, you can't stand on your own feet. Your real father may be dead or if he is not dead now you know perfectly well that he is as limited as you are -- he has his own fears, he has his own tremblings. Now you cannot believe in him in the same way as you used to believe when you were a small child; then your father was all-knowing, all-powerful.

Every child brags about his father, saying, "He is the greatest man in the world!" But sooner or later, he finds he is just an ordinary man like everybody else. He knows that, "He suffers from the same fears as I do." Now he is no more a protection to him.

You cannot hide behind your mother anymore.... You need a greater father, hence the projection of God. It is just your need, your desire for security, safety, for protection. You are not mature enough yet; hence you believe in God.

And look at the qualities of God: omnipresent... obviously. If he is not everywhere, then what is the point of believing in him? You may fall in a ditch and he is not there, and you may go on shouting and he is not there, or he is engaged somewhere else. And there are millions of people on this earth and this is not the only earth. Scientists say there are at least fifty thousand earths which are populated with life, millions of stars. If he is not omnipresent -- and you are so small and the universe is so big -- how is he going to take care of you? Of course you believe he is omnipresent, he is everywhere, so wherever you need him he is immediately available, instantly available.

So he may be omnipresent, but if he is not omnipotent, then? He may not be capable enough to help you; he may have only two hands, and with two hands how much can he do? Hence there are people who believe that he has thousands of hands. But even thousands of hands won't do much, so you have to believe that he is infinite, that his power is infinite, he can do anything.

And not only that: you also have to believe that he is omniscient because he may be omnipotent and he may be omnipresent, but if he is not omniscient then he can only take care of the present. That means when you have fallen in the ditch, only then can he help you, but you have fallen and broken your leg and you have fractures. He is omniscient, he can see the future, he can see everything, so before you fall in the ditch he can prevent you from falling in the ditch.

Just look at the qualities that you have given to your God. Those are not the qualities of God, those are your desires of how God should be. Then you can believe in him; if these qualities are missing then doubts will start arising. And God has to be infallible; if he is fallible, then there is danger. How can you believe in a fallible God? You cannot believe in a fallible God because he may mismanage, he may mess you up. Rather than helping you he may create more trouble. He has to be infallible. And when God is infallible, his son Jesus Christ has to be infallible, because if the father is infallible how can the son not be infallible? And then his representative, the pope of the Vatican, has to be infallible.

Now, you see how your logic goes on in this way... but it is rooted in desire. You believe in such foolish things -- that

the pope is infallible. And even now, after two thousand years, you still believe that the pope is infallible. And the popes have done so many stupid things.

Galileo said that the earth moves around the sun, not vice versa.... The Bible says the sun moves around the earth, all the scriptures of the world say that the sun moves around the earth, because it is apparently so. All the languages have these words -- 'sunrise', 'sunset'. We experience it every day; every day we see the sun rising in the morning and setting in the evening. We see the whole movement of the sun from the east to the west, and then in the night it disappears; it has gone to the other side of the earth, it is going round the earth. It is our experience! That's what we know, so before Galileo, all the scriptures of the world believed that the sun went round the earth.

Galileo was the first man who said that the reality is just the opposite: the earth goes round the sun. Now this was against the Bible and to find any fault in the Bible is dangerous. If one thing can be faulty in the Bible, then what about other things? Maybe they are also faulty; they just need some other Galileo to find the faults. Then where will it end? And if prophets are faulty, what about the pope? And all the popes had believed....

Galileo was called into the court of the pope. He was forced -- he was very old, seventy years old, ill -- he was dragged in chains to the court. He was in bed and so ill that he was going to die any day. And he didn't live long after. He was forced to apologize. And Galileo must have been a man of great insight. He said, "Of course, if the Bible says and if all the prophets agree and if all the popes, who are

infallible, if they say that the sun moves around the earth, I apologize, I am sorry."
The pope was very happy, the court was very happy that they had brought a sinner back to his senses.
Then Galileo said, "But one thing I must tell you: I can apologize, I can say if you want me to that the sun moves round the earth -- but the sun won't listen to me and the earth has no obligation to follow my orders. Still the earth will go on moving round the sun, my apologies apart. I apologize, but what can I do? If the earth moves around the sun I cannot stop it."

And these popes have been preventing all scientific growth. Still in the twentieth century millions of Catholics go on believing that the pope is infallible. But this is really a logical consequence: if you believe God is infallible, then of course his son is infallible, then his son's representatives are infallible.
But deep down, why do you believe in such nonsense? And this is not only so about Catholics; it is so about Hindus, about Mohammedans, about Jainas, even about Buddhists. They all go on believing in utter nonsense.
Buddhists believe that Buddha was born while his mother was standing in the garden; she had gone for a walk. Not only that, he was also born in a standing posture himself. He came out of the womb, stood on the earth, walked seven steps and declared, "I am the awakened one!" Now for twenty-five centuries Buddhists have believed in this nonsense. No baby can do that, but if you suspect it then you suspect the scriptures. If you doubt the scriptures then great trembling arises in you because then you become

afraid. Doubting is not good, doubting is irreligious; one should believe. And the more absurd the belief, the greater is the test for the believer.

Buddha is saying: DESIRING NOTHING, DOUBTING NOTHING.... The master desires nothing, hence he doubts nothing -- because he believes nothing. A master lives without desire, without belief, without doubt. And then what is left in the inner being of the master is trust. Trust is not belief; it is absence of both doubt and belief. Buddha calls it SHRADDHA. It can only be translated as trust -- trust in existence.

Belief is rooted in desire and every belief carries its own counterpart, doubt, as a shadow. Trust is absence of desire, belief, doubt. It is purity of the heart, innocence of the heart. In that innocent heart there is a meeting and merging with the universe. That is trust; it has nothing to do with you. It is not that you trust; you are no more there, only trust is.

DESIRING NOTHING, DOUBTING NOTHING, BEYOND JUDGMENT AND SORROW.... The master goes beyond judgment; hence there is no question of belief or doubt. He never judges; he never says, "This is right and that is wrong." He has dropped the mind which is a constant process of judgment. The mind continuously judges; its judgment has become an obsession.

You see the roseflower and before you have even seen it, the mind has said, "It is beautiful." You see a man passing by and before you have seen the man rightly, the mind says, "He is ugly." The judgment is instantaneous, it seems to take no time. You are continuously judgmental.

The master looks at the fact but has no judgments, because in fact beauty and ugliness all are our projections. When you say a rose is beautiful it is your idea, nothing else. The rose is a rose is a rose; it is neither beautiful nor ugly, it is simply itself. The ugly man is not ugly and the beautiful man is not beautiful; it is only a question of your idea of what beauty is. Hence with different people different things are thought to be beautiful.

In China beauty has a different color, a different form; in India it has a different form and color, in Europe obviously it is going to be different. Each country has its own idea of beauty and those ideas go on changing, they come like fashions. One thing is beautiful today and tomorrow it becomes ugly; today it is ugly and tomorrow suddenly it becomes beautiful.

Can you believe that Picasso's paintings would have been thought beautiful just two hundred years ago? Impossible! Not even a single person would have been found in the whole world who would have said they were beautiful. And whosoever would have said they were beautiful would have been thought insane.

Vincent van Gogh could not sell one of his paintings, not even one, for the simple reason that everybody thought they were just insane -- not only ugly but insane too. Now only two hundred paintings are in existence and each painting has so much value that if those people come back and see that Vincent van Gogh's paintings are being sold for millions of dollars they will not be able to believe their eyes, what has happened to man. "What kind of beauty have people started seeing suddenly in Vincent van Gogh's

paintings? Nobody thought them beautiful." The idea of beauty has changed.
Modern poetry is not beautiful in the same way as Shakespearian poetry is; it is not beautiful in the same way as Kalidas or Bhavabhuti, as Byron or Shelley. It is a totally different kind of beauty. Just our idea! If man disappears from the earth there will be nothing beautiful and nothing ugly. Weeds will be as valuable as roses; there will be no difference, there will be simple equality.
A master is one who has dropped all human ideas about things, hence he has no judgments. He lives in a nonjudgmental way. And can you see? -- when you live in a nonjudgmental way you attain to great serenity, naturally; nothing disturbs you, nothing offends you, nothing attracts you, nothing infatuates you.
BEYOND JUDGMENT and you are BEYOND SORROW. Buddha says: If you really want to go beyond sorrow, go beyond judgment. But going beyond judgment means going beyond mind. Mind is judgmental; if you live in the mind it will keep you tethered to all kinds of judgments. If you drop the mind then suddenly the whole existence becomes available to you. For the first time you are unclouded.

"Come on, let's screw," the Italian told his new date five minutes after he called for her.
"Oh, you're so sophisticated, Pietro," she said.

"So sophisticated" -- after five minutes only! But in Italy it may be sophisticated; after five minutes, in India, it will be rape and the girl will shout for the police. It will take months for you to woo the woman, to persuade her, to

bring her down to earth. It is a long long process. But things in Italy seem to be quick: five minutes and she says, "You are so sophisticated, so cultured!" It all depends on your ideas.

DESIRING NOTHING, DOUBTING NOTHING, BEYOND JUDGMENT AND SORROW AND THE PLEASURES OF THE SENSES, HE HAS MOVED BEYOND TIME. HE IS PURE AND FREE.

These four things have to be understood. The first is the senses and their pleasures; that is the lowest kind of life. And remember, by calling it the "lowest" Buddha is not judging it, it is not an evaluation -- it is simply stating a fact. Just as you say "the lowest rung of the ladder" -- there is no judgment. It is not bad, it is no more special than the highest rung. It is simply a statement of fact. This has to be continuously remembered, otherwise you will forget; you will start thinking that Buddha himself is judging. Then is he a master or not? He is not judging, he is simply stating a fact.

Senses are the lowest because they are on the circumference, they are part of your body. There are people who live only in the senses, they are still living like animals. Again remember, it is not a judgment: animals are not bad, animals are not immoral. There is no question of hierarchy. But animals live in the body, and the man who lives only in his senses is living an animal kind of life. He is living in the porch of his palace. Not that he is immoral, but certainly he is unintelligent. He could have lived in the palace and he is living in the porch -- and suffering the heat of the sun, and in the rains he suffers the rains and in the cold he suffers from the cold. He could have been in the

safety and the comforts and the coziness of the palace. The palace belongs to him, but he lives in the porch believing that that's all there is to life.

The man who lives only in sensuality, lust, who is obsessed with food, who is obsessed with his body, continuously thinking of the body, is not yet a man. He is a good animal, but utterly blind to the potential that he is born to, utterly blind to what he can become, unconscious of the whole range of his being.

The second circle, deeper than the body, is that of the mind. Mind has its own pleasures which are a little higher. Again, remember, it has nothing to do with judgment. They are a little deeper, they are a little closer to the innermost shrine. They actualize a little bit of your potential. The man who enjoys mathematics, science, philosophy certainly has a deeper sense of joy. Plato has a deeper sense of joy than Nero.

It is said about Nero that he used to keep four physicians constantly with him even when he went to war. Those four physicians were to help him vomit because he liked to eat so many times in the day. Now you cannot eat so many times a day; there is a limitation. You can eat three times, four times, five times at the most; more than that will be impossible. The body will not contain it, you will burst. So after eating, the physicians would help him to vomit immediately so he could eat again. He used to eat at least twenty times per day. He must have been the greatest eater in the world. But what kind of life is this? -- twenty times vomiting to eat twenty times! -- as if he lived only in the buds of the tongue, in the taste buds.

Of course Plato is far deeper. He enjoys a contemplative life: he contemplates the stars, he contemplates the sunrise and the sunset, he contemplates the possibility of human progress. And he enjoys it -- and he enjoys it so much that many times he forgets to eat, he forgets completely that he has missed a meal.

It happened once:
Albert Einstein was brought his breakfast and he was so deep in contemplation -- it must have been some great mathematical puzzle he was involved in -- that he was sitting with closed eyes. So the servant did not disturb him; he left the breakfast in front of him and went away. Meanwhile a friend came. He also saw him so deeply absorbed that he thought, "It is better... the breakfast is getting cold." So he ate the breakfast and pushed the plates aside.
At that moment Einstein opened his eyes, looked at the empty plates, looked at his friend and said, "Sorry, you came a little late. I have taken my breakfast."

Now, this is better than being a Nero. But there is a third layer still higher, still deeper: the layer of the heart -- love, music, poetry, dance. People who enjoy art, people who can enjoy and appreciate harmony, color, people who can see some poetry in life and existence, who can feel some celebration going on all around, of course they are going still deeper. A Rabindranath... the poet goes deeper than the mathematician, the musician goes deeper than the philosopher. But these are still concentric circles around your center.

The fourth -- the mystics in India have called it simply, "the fourth," TURIYA -- is the world of your being, the innermost core. Those who enjoy meditation, neither food nor philosophy nor poetry, but who have gone beyond all these and entered into the world of utter silence, of absolute emptiness, who know how not to be.... Yes, the question is, "To be or not to be?" Those who have chosen not to be, they are the meditators. They have moved from the senses to samadhi, and that is the highest experience of life.
Buddha says: DESIRING NOTHING, DOUBTING NOTHING, BEYOND JUDGMENT AND SORROW AND THE PLEASURES OF THE SENSES, HE HAS MOVED BEYOND TIME.
The man who has moved into his being has moved beyond time. Time exists with the body, with the mind, with the heart, but with the being there is no time. You suddenly experience timelessness -- or you can call it eternity. It is only in that state when you have transcended mind, transcended time, that you are pure and free. For the first time you know what purity is. It is not something to be cultivated; it is something like a fragrance of deep meditation. The joy, the song, the celebration that arises out of silence, the sound of soundless silence -- that is purity, that is innocence; you have become a child again. And that is maturity too, that is growth. You have come of age. You are really born, you are born anew.

HOW CLEAR HE IS....

Now the master has clarity because all the clouds have disappeared, the clouds created by the body.... The body

creates the darkest clouds, the densest clouds, the thickest clouds. As you go further inwards the clouds are less dark, less thick, less dense. When you have reached the fourth, turiya, all clouds have disappeared; there is pure clarity. You can see through and through. The whole existence becomes transparent. Nothing is hidden from you anymore. HOW CLEAR HE IS.

HE IS THE MOON.
HE IS SERENE.
HE SHINES.

At this point, suddenly there is an alchemical change in his energy. Ordinarily a man lives as a sun energy; the master lives as moon energy. These are just metaphors, but tremendously significant, very expressive indicators. Moon energy means cool energy, sun energy means hot energy. When you live in passion, lust, anger, greed, jealousy, possessiveness, hatred, you live as fire. It is not only that others are burned through you, you are burning yourself. In fact, if you want to burn others you have to burn yourself first; only then can you burn others. You are constantly in a fever. The sun energy is feverish, it creates insanity, it drives you crazy. It keeps you running and rushing after illusions.
Meditation is the miracle that transforms the sun energy into moon energy. The moon creates magic every night. The moon has no rays of its own, it simply reflects the sunrays. It absorbs the sunrays and reflects them back; the moon functions only as a mirror. Hence the moon represents two things: first it is a mirror. The master is a

mirror, meditation makes you a mirror -- without any dust, absolutely clean and pure, so everything is reflected in you as it is, with no judgment but simply as it is in its absolute facticity.

And second, the moon, just by reflecting them, transforms the hot rays of the sun into cool energy. That's what happens through a master. He absorbs the same energy that you absorb, he eats the same food as you eat, he drinks the same water as you drink, he breathes the same air as you breathe, but some alchemical change is constantly going on in him.

Out of your food you become more and more sexual, out of your breathing you become more and more hot. The master breathes the same air, but some miracle happens within him that is not perceptible to you. The same air no longer creates the same results for him as it creates for you, the same food no longer creates for him the same problems as it creates for you. The master does not live in another world; he lives in your world and he lives in the same way as you live.

Those who escape from the world are not real masters; they are afraid of the world. They are afraid to absorb this crazy energy. The world is full of it; hence they escape to the Himalayas. But they simply show by their escape that they are not yet masters. The real master lives here in the world. He absorbs the same crazy energy, but when it comes back, when it is reflected back through him, it is no longer crazy. It becomes a grace, it becomes cool. He showers a thousand and one blessings even on those who are not worthy, even on those who are not receptive, even on those who will

never feel thankful, even on those who may do harm to him.
Jesus even kissed Judas and washed his feet, and he knew the man had betrayed him. He knew perfectly well, because before he washed the feet of Judas he told his disciples, "Tonight I am going to be betrayed by one of you." But he cannot do otherwise: he can only kiss, he can only wash the feet. He has no ego, he is utterly humble. In fact, he has no self; he is a nonself. Buddha's word for it is ANATTA -- no-self. And he is constantly radiating the cool energy of the moon.
HE IS THE MOON. HE IS SERENE. HE SHINES -- he is as serene as the moon and he shines as beautifully as the moon.

FOR HE HAS TRAVELED
LIFE AFTER LIFE
THE MUDDY AND TREACHEROUS ROAD OF ILLUSION.

He knows from bitter experience. He has every compassion for you. If you are deep in your mud he only has compassion for you. He makes every effort to pull you out of the mud because he has been in the same mud for lives. He has traveled the same path, he has gone astray thousands of times, he has suffered in the same way.
That is one of the most beautiful things Buddha taught, because all other religions were trying to prove something else. Hindus were saying in India that Krishna, Rama and all their AVATARAS, they descend from heaven, they are parts of God, they are incarnations of God. That is the

meaning of 'avatara'; avatara means "descending from above." They are not part of us, they came as messengers of God. They have not traveled on the same muddy path. How can they understand our misery? How can they understand our problems? They have never suffered the same problems.

And the same was the case with Judaism. And remember, these are the only two religions; all other religions are born out of these two. Judaism was also preaching the same idea: that God sends his messengers, messiahs, prophets. Those are special people, they are not ordinary like you. Buddha's approach is tremendously human; he is the first humanitarian mystic. He says, "I have traveled on the same muddy path, I have suffered in the same way you are suffering, I have committed the same mistakes. Hence I can understand you, and I can understand why you are unable to understand me, because I have come across many buddhas in my other lives, many buddhas; I never understood them, I always misunderstood them. So if you are misunderstanding me there is nothing to make a fuss about. It is simple, it is natural, it is inevitable. So whatsoever you do to me," Buddha says, "it is okay. Still I will go on showering my flowers on you because I have nothing else to shower."

Buddha is not an avatara. He has not come from the above, he has risen from the below. He is a lotus: he has grown out of the same mud in which you are struggling. And I completely agree with him. The Hindu and the Jewish concept is utterly inhuman; that concept is not right. That cannot help humanity to be transformed.

Buddha brings a totally new insight. His approach is not mythological, his approach is scientific. FOR HE HAS TRAVELED LIFE AFTER LIFE THE MUDDY AND TREACHEROUS ROAD OF ILLUSION -- so he knows and he understands you. You may not understand him, but he understands you.

A little girl was being driven very erratically in a car by her grandma.
"Don't go round corners so fast, Gran," she pleaded.
"Do as I do, dear," said the sweet old lady, "and close your eyes!"

Blind people are leading other blind people and they have created all kinds of superstitions, mythologies, religions. Only a buddha is capable, only one who is awakened, only one who up to now had belonged to you. You are asleep and he is awake, that is the only difference; there is no other difference. He can help you to be awakened because he knows how he has become awake, how difficult it is, what problems have to be faced. He knows your state.

The bandage-covered patient who lay in the hospital bed spoke dazedly to his visiting pal. "Wh-wh-what happened?"
"You had one too many last night and then bet that you could jump out of the window and fly around the block."
"Why didn't you stop me?" he screamed.
"Stop you, hell! I had twenty-five dollars on you!"

The receptionist of a five-star hotel picks up the phone: "May I help you?"

"Yes," is the reply, "can you please tell me when your bar opens?"
"Yes, sir. The bar opens at five o'clock."
"Thank you."
An hour later the phone rings again and the same voice asks, "C-c-an you tell me, p-p-please, when the b-b-b-bar opens?"
"At five o'clock, sir," says the receptionist.
"Th-th-thank you!"
Another hour passes and the phone rings again. "Please, when doesh... doesh... doesh the bar (hic) o-open?"
"I repeat, at five o'clock," answers the annoyed receptionist.
Still another hour later, the phone rings again. "Hic! Hic! Heelloo!"
"You again!" exclaims the receptionist, "I told you we open our bar at five o'clock, but in your state of inebriation we cannot allow you into our bar!"
"But... but... but -- hic -- I don't want to get in!" cries the drunk. "I want to get out!"

Only somebody who has been in knows the ins and the outs. Only one who has been drunk like you can help you. That's why the organization called Alcoholics Anonymous is so helpful. It has helped thousands of drunkards for the simple reason that other drunkards are helping. They understand each other, they understand the problems. They are not standing high above the others looking with eyes of condemnation at them, looking at them with that stupid holy look, "holier-than-thou," and preaching to them to be good. They have been in the same plight, they have suffered much; they understand each other's language.

Hence Buddha helped more people to become enlightened than anybody else in the whole history of humanity. I don't think Krishna helped anybody to become enlightened; he was enlightened, but he could not help anybody else. I am afraid Jesus could not help anybody, not even among his own twelve apostles. They remained very ordinary to the very end; not one of them became enlightened.

Buddha seems to be an exceptional master -- in fact the first master whom we can really call a master, because through him thousands of people became enlightened. And the reason why Buddha's appeal is so deep is that he is not a pretender. He is not a messiah, he has not come from above, he claims nothing. He is not the only begotten Son of God; he does not talk about God at all. He does not talk any nonsense. He is very sensible and very down-to-earth. He means business. And he can help immensely. He says:

FOR HE HAS TRAVELED -- the master has traveled --
LIFE AFTER LIFE THE MUDDY AND
TREACHEROUS ROAD OF ILLUSION.

When are you going to wake up? You go on postponing, you go on saying tomorrow. And you have been doing this for centuries, and tomorrow has not come yet. When is it going to come? Stop postponing. Postponing is a trick of the mind.

After a smooth take-off the captain of the Boeing 707 welcomes his passengers: "Ladies and gentlemen, welcome aboard. I, Captain Cook, and my crew wish you a pleasant flight. We land in Amsterdam in approximately five hours."

A few minutes later the same voice is heard through the speakers: "Shit, Johnny, I feel like a nice cool beer and a good screw...."
As the stewardess runs towards the cockpit to inform the pilot that the speakers are on, a passenger grabs her by the arm and says, "Hey, lady, what's the rush? We still got another five hours to go!"

We are always thinking in terms of the future. Stop thinking in terms of the future; that is the way of the mind to live, to prolong, to get nourished. The future is the food of the mind. The moment you become decisive about the present, the mind has started dying. It is the beginning of the end, the end of the mind. And the end of the mind is the beginning of your real existence, your real life.
And can't you see that life has been very treacherous, that it has been deceiving you again and again? Still you go on being deceived. How gullible you are! And you go on falling in the same ditches -- they are not even different -- the same traps.

A Jew and a Polack are sitting together in a train compartment. The Jew is eating some apple seeds.
After some time, the Polack becomes curious and asks the Jew, "Why are you eating apple seeds?"
The Jew replies, "Apple seeds make you smart!"
The Polack, even more curious, asks, "Are they for sale?"
The Jew answers, "Yes, of course, You can have these five apple seeds for five dollars only."
The Polack agrees to the deal and starts eating the seeds.
Suddenly the Polack turns to the Jew and says, "Hey, you,

listen, for five dollars I could have bought five kilos of apples!"
The Jew turns to him with a satisfied smile and answers, "Now you see -- it has started working already!"

You go on repeating the same mistakes. You go on being exploited by the treacherous life, by all kinds of traps which are all around you. And the emperors and the beggars are all in the same boat; there is no difference. The poor and the rich are in the same boat; there is no difference because all are full of desires. And wherever desire exists ego exists, and wherever ego exists illusion exists because ego is the greatest illusion there is. Even in a beggar who has nothing else you will find the same ego as you will find in Alexander the Great, because desiring is the same. Alexander the Great may have much money and much power, that does not matter; he is still desiring. The beggar may not have anything, but he is also desiring.
The distance between you and your desire always remains the same. It is like the horizon: between you and the horizon the distance is always the same. You can go on moving towards the horizon your whole life; the distance is never shortened, it remains the same. You can renounce the world, you can start running away from the horizon, but then again you will be facing another horizon. And now the desire to reach the other horizon.... If you were heading west, now you will be heading east, but it is the same horizon -- or south or north. You can go in any direction, it is the same horizon. Escaping won't help. You can renounce the world, it will not change you.

There is only one change -- only one change, only one revolution and that is the revolution of dropping the illusion of the ego. It is the ego that keeps you on the muddy and treacherous road of illusion.
And remember, don't fool yourself that "Alexander the Great is an egoist. I am a poor man, a humble man. I go to the church every Sunday -- how can I be an egoist?" You are in the same boat, in the same way. You have the same ego.

As a chauffeur-driven Rolls Royce stopped at some traffic lights, a tramp tapped on the window and held out his hand. The somewhat literary English gentleman in the back seat rolled down the window and said in a very cultured voice, "'Neither a borrower nor a lender be'... William Shakespeare." And the Rolls Royce drove on.
The tramp, seeing that the Rolls had stopped at the next set of lights, raced down the road and tapped on the window again. The gentleman rolled down the window and the tramp said, "'Fuck you'... D.H. Lawrence."

HE DOES NOT TREMBLE
OR GRASP OR HESITATE.
HE HAS FOUND PEACE.

He has no fear. Once desire has gone fear cannot exist. When desire is there you are always afraid -- are you going to make it this time or not? Or if you have achieved the goal of your desire then you are afraid whether you are capable of keeping it forever or not. If you want to become the president then comes the fear -- how are you going to

make it? Millions of people want to be the president. There are so many neurotic people -- you are not the only one. The whole world is mad; you are not the only mad person. Are you going to make it? And you have to be really the maddest to make it because you will have to fight with other madmen. There is always trembling.

And if by chance -- and it is always a chance -- if by some coincidence you become the president, then a new fear arises: are you going to keep it? -- because so many people are pulling you. Your legs are being pulled, people are pushing you from your chair. And there are so many people around you and everybody is dangerous because everybody wants to sit in the same chair, but the chair can contain only one person. Now there is great fear, you cannot sleep. In fact now you are more afraid than you ever were; you know sooner or later they will topple you. They are so many and you are alone. They will gather together to topple you.

But the master has no trembling because he has no desire. And he does not cling to anything because he knows that there is nothing worth clinging to; he has that clarity of vision. All that is his is always his, nobody can take it away. He sees it now. And all that is not his is going to be taken away whether you cling to it or not, so what is the point of clinging? Why waste time?

He never hesitates -- his clarity is such. For a master it is never a question of deciding between alternatives; he simply sees... and he acts. It is not a question of either/or. Never! He sees the door and goes out through it. It is not a question of deciding whether to go through the wall or through the door. It is always a question for you to decide whether to go through the wall or through the door. In fact,

the wall looks more appealing because millions of times you have tried through the wall and you are really angry at the wall and you want to prove that one day you are going to defeat this wall. This dumb wall has been defeating you again and again; you want to take revenge. In fact, you can't see the door; you only see this wall and that wall. It is always a question of choosing which wall you want to go through.

For the master it is never a question of choice. He lives choicelessly because he lives consciously. He is alert, he has eyes to see, and you are blind; hence you always hesitate. Because he has no fear, no clinging, no hesitation: HE HAS FOUND PEACE. Naturally, there is tremendous peace in his being.

CALMLY
HE LETS GO OF LIFE,
OF HOME AND PLEASURE AND DESIRE.

CALMLY HE LETS GO OF LIFE.... He does not make any fuss about it, he does not brag about renunciation. Whatsoever he sees is futile, he drops it. In fact, to say he drops it is not right -- he lets it go, he allows it to be dropped. He does not resist, that's all. He makes no effort to keep it. And very calmly, without any effort. His life is effortless.

OF HOME.... Home represents security -- he drops the idea of security. What security can there be here when death is going to take everything away? In this life there can be no security, on this shore there is no security; hence he does not bother about security.

AND PLEASURE... because he knows pleasure always brings pain. He has seen it clearly, that pleasure is only a facade; behind it comes hidden pain. He can see through and through; hence he lets it go. And desire he has lived for many many lives and seen that it is unfulfillable. It is always after more: the more you have, the more you ask for. It is an absolutely absurd exercise in futility.
Seen, all these things start disappearing from his life. Not that he renounces.... That's what my emphasis is: never renounce anything. If things are worthless they will fall of their own accord. And when things fall of their own accord there is tremendous beauty in them, because they leave you peaceful, calm and quiet, collected and centered.

NOTHING OF MEN CAN HOLD HIM.
NOTHING OF THE GODS CAN HOLD HIM.
NOTHING IN ALL CREATION CAN HOLD HIM.

When there is no desire, what can hold him? What can make him a prisoner? Neither this world nor the other world, neither the earth nor paradise.
All the religions of the world talk about heaven and hell. Buddha says there is something beyond heaven and hell and that is the true existence. He calls it nirvana. No other religion talks about nirvana; nirvana is a totally different vision. It means you are not hankering for heavenly desires, heavenly joys and pleasures, because it is the same stupidity again repeated on a bigger scale, on a higher plane, but the stupidity is the same.

The master knows the futility of desire; hence he has no desire for heaven, he has no desire at all. Nothing binds him and nothing holds him.

DESIRE HAS LEFT HIM,
NEVER TO RETURN.

... Because he has seen that it is futile. If you drop it because I am saying it, then it will return again and again. If you drop it out of your own experience through meditation, then it has gone forever, NEVER TO RETURN.

SORROW HAS LEFT HIM,
NEVER TO RETURN.

And sorrow is only a shadow of desire. Remember it always: everything has to happen to you through your own experience.
Buddha's last words to his disciples were: Be a light unto yourself. And how can you be a light unto yourself? Go beyond the body, the mind, the heart. Find the center of your being and suddenly there is light. It is already there, it is already burning bright. It is your very being; you just have to discover it.
Discovering it one discovers truth.
Discovering it one discovers peace.
Discovering it one discovers bliss, nirvana.
Enough for today.

Chapter #6
Chapter title: Life, love, laughter
26 April 1980 am in Buddha Hall

The first question:
Question 1
BELOVED MASTER,
RAMAKRISHNA STAYED IN HIS BODY THROUGH SHOWING INTEREST IN FOOD. NOW TELL ME THE TRUTH -- IS IT THE JOKES THAT KEEP YOU HERE?

Anand Masta, yes, in a way it is true. Religion has for centuries lacked many things. One of the most important of them all is laughter; religion has been too serious. Seriousness is a kind of disease: it is the cancer of the soul. It is very destructive, it is suicidal. Hence, if you don't see religion flowering on the earth -- although there are three hundred religions, millions of churches, temples, mosques, still the earth goes on missing religious consciousness -- the simple reason is that seriousness has killed religion. Seriousness tends to become sad. You cannot be serious without being sad; they are two sides of the same coin. And you can be serious and sad only if you have missed your roots in life and existence. Only the pathological people are serious; the healthy, the whole will never be serious, cannot be serious.
It was one of the most unfortunate accidents in human history that religion became associated with seriousness. That association has to be destroyed, mercilessly destroyed. Religion has to be freed from the imprisonment of

seriousness. Only then will it be healthy, only then will it be able to sing and dance and rejoice. The serious religion has always been rooted in the idea that there is something wrong in life, something basically wrong in life, as if life is a punishment.

Life is a gift of God, not a punishment. And there is nothing wrong in life. If something is wrong it must be in you. You don't know the art of living, you are incapable of moving into the depth and into the mystery of life. You must be a coward; hence you cling to the shore, to the known, to the familiar. And life always goes on moving into the unknown. Life is adventurous and you are a coward, hence you soon part company. Life goes on its way of adventure and you cling to your security. Clinging to your security you become dead, and when you become dead, life seems to be a drag, a dull affair. In fact, you have lost contact with life.

It is as if you uproot a rosebush from the earth -- soon it will start dying, it will lose its greenness, its roses will wither away. Nothing is wrong with the rosebush, nothing is wrong with the earth either, only you have disconnected them. The rosebush needs nourishment, then it can bloom in thousands of flowers, it can have all the green of the world and all the red and all the gold. Man also is a rosebush. He needs his own soil, he needs roots into existence.

When you are born you are born only with the potential to exist, to survive, not with the art of making life a joy, a bliss, a celebration. That art has to be learned. To me, religion is that very art, the supreme art: the art of transforming the lower into the higher. Religion to me is

alchemy. It is the process of transforming the potential into the actual. Man has lived at the minimum; hence he looks so dull. Man can live at the maximum and then there will be great brilliance and great radiance and then there will be great flowering.

Laughter is as precious as prayer or even more precious than prayer, because the man who cannot laugh cannot pray either. A prayer that does not come out of a joyous heart is already dead. It cannot reach God, it cannot leave the earth, it has no wings. It is like a rock: it will fall back to the earth, it cannot fly into the sky.

Religion has lived without laughter, that's why religion has been a corpse. And you are worshipping corpses in your churches and in your temples and in your mosques, you have become worshippers of death. Rather than worshipping life you have been worshipping death.

My approach is totally different -- I bring you a new vision. Religion is against laughter, is against love, is against rejoicing, is against celebration. The religious person, the so-called religious person, condemns everything of this world; he lives surrounded by a thousand and one condemnations. He lives in fear, in trembling. He does not live, he only vegetates.

Your so-called saints and mahatmas are not real people, they don't have the guts to be real, they are phony. But you have worshipped them for so long, and you still go on worshipping them. And the reason you worship them is because they are so dead, because they are so serious, because they are so ugly, because their whole approach towards life is so negative. They are anti-life, anti-love, anti-laughter -- how can they be FOR God? It is only

through love and laughter and a tremendous joy in life that you start feeling the presence of something that is beyond. When life becomes an adventure, a dance of ecstasy, then only do you move beyond the confinement of the body and the mind and soar high towards the infinite.

Yes, Masta, you can say I live on your laughter. I rejoice seeing you dance, sing and laugh. I rejoice seeing you in deep love. I rejoice seeing you dropping the garbage of centuries, the rotten, stupid superstitions of centuries. I rejoice seeing you getting out of the old, being born anew.

All the religions were born thousands of years ago; everything has changed. Those religions don't fit anymore, they have no relevance, their context has disappeared. But they go on sitting on your head, heavy mountains, and they don't allow you to move. In fact, the older the religion, the more precious you think it is. It is not so: the older the religion, the more irrelevant it is.

Religion has to be as new as life itself. Religion has to be new every day, each moment. And that's how the religious person lives: he goes on dying to the past every moment, he is born anew every moment. He moves with life. He has no clinging to the Vedas and no clinging to the Bible and no clinging to the Koran. He can read them as beautiful literature, but he does not cling to them. Those who cling to them are being stupid because something may have been relevant two thousand years ago, but it has no meaning anymore. And you know it perfectly well, but you don't have courage enough to get out of the old fold.

All the vested interests are against you getting out of the old fold. All the vested interests want you to remain committed to the past because then you can be exploited

more easily. If you are not committed to the past the priests will disappear, because they represent the past. Who will pay any attention to the pope or to the shankaracharya? They will become laughingstocks! In fact they are ridiculous, utterly ridiculous. All their ideas are so out-of-date that you go on tolerating them only because it is risky to say that they are out-of-date. It is risky because you may lose something in your business, in your investment. You may start falling apart from the society. You are afraid of being individuals, you want to remain part of the crowd. And religion's whole purpose is to make you individuals. Religion loses all meaning when it starts making you, forcing you, in fact, to be part of the crowd. Christian, Hindu, Mohammedan, Buddhist -- these are crowds. You have not chosen to be a Christian; it is accidental that you are born a Christian or a Jew or a Hindu. How can religion be accidental? Is such an important phenomenon decided by the accident of birth? You have to be consciously alert to choose your path towards God. You have not chosen your path, you have not even chosen God. You have been forced to choose, and you have allowed all this to happen. It is a bondage! Your being a Christian is a bondage.

The people gathered around Christ were real Christians, were the only Christians, because they had chosen. They were going against the crowd, they were risking their lives, they were moving in danger. They were born as Jews. They would have been more comfortable, they would have lived more conveniently if they had not followed Jesus. Following Jesus was dangerous. It proved dangerous to Jesus himself; he was crucified. His disciples were

victimized in every possible way. Those were real people, authentic people. To be a Christian now means nothing. The people who were gathering around Gautama the Buddha were real Buddhists. They were religious people, because going against the whole crowd of the Hindus, against the whole pattern of the society and following a very rebellious man, being with him, was accepting the life of insecurity. They were genuine, authentic seekers. But the man who is born a Buddhist has not risked anything; it is just a coincidence that he is born a Buddhist.

If you had been adopted by a Mohammedan when you were a small child you would have been a Mohammedan; if you had been adopted by a Jew you would have been a Jew. And you would have never known who you were by your birth, because nobody is born as a Christian or a Buddhist or a Hindu -- everybody is born free. God gives you freedom to choose.

But society does not want you to be free. Neither the state nor the church nor other vested interests want you to be free. They want to cripple you and paralyze you, they want to destroy your intelligence. They don't want you to be very happy either because happy people can be dangerous. Miserable people are good, miserable people are always controllable, miserable people are always ready to become enslaved. They are so miserable, they are always seeking somebody who can give them support, who can make their lives a little easier. The happy person becomes independent; the happier he is, the more independent.

A Jesus or a Buddha or a Krishna or a Confucius, these are the most blissful people the earth has known. They are utterly independent people. They don't care a bit about

what others say; they don't bother about their opinions for the simple reason that they don't depend on anybody else. Their bliss is inner.

The society does not want you to be really blissful. It wants you to be sad and ill; it wants you to be pathological, neurotic. Only a neurotic society can be dominated by the priests and the politicians. Only people who have lost all intelligence can be led by idiots like Adolf Hitler and Benito Mussolini. People who have intelligence can't be led by such people. These people are insane! In a better world, there won't be any possibility of Adolf Hitlers. The moment there is somebody like that he will be put in a mental asylum: he has to be treated, he is mad. But right now these mad people have become very influential. Their very madness makes them powerful. They are so mad that the people who are not so mad start following them. They look like leaders.

And people are different only in degrees. Somebody is more mad than you and you are a little less mad than him; of course, one who is more mad than you is going to be your leader. He will be more stubborn, more dogmatic, he will appear more determined, he will appear to have more willpower, he will have a certain hypnotic influence, but that is possible only if you have lost all your intelligence. My effort here is to give you back that which is really yours. I don't want you to become part of any religion. I simply want you to be religious -- neither Christians nor Hindus, nor Mohammedans -- just religious. That is enough! There is no need to choose a particular doctrine. Religion has nothing to do with doctrines, it is more existential.

And unless you love life you will not be able to love God either. If he is the creator you have to love his creation to love him. To hate his creation and to show love to the creator is absurd. To condemn the creation and to praise the creator is utterly stupid, illogical, unintelligent. If you love the music, only then do you love the musician, or vice versa. And this existence is so beautiful!

Except in man you will not find any sadness anywhere. The trees are not sad and the animals are not sad and the stars are not sad, even rocks are not sad, only man -- because only man has been manipulated, exploited, distracted from his center.

Yes, Masta, when I see you laughing, loving, rejoicing, dancing, singing, I feel like lingering a little more in the body for you.

I have given you the name Anand Masta. ANAND means bliss and MASTA means mad -- madly blissful, utterly drunk in blissfulness. And very few sannyasins are so deeply fulfilling their names as you are doing. I am absolutely happy with you, all my blessings are for you. Get more and more drunk!

God is not far away. Just when you lose yourself in love he is as close as he can ever be. When you lose yourself in dance, when you abandon yourself in dance, when the ego disappears in your dance, he is just your partner in the dance -- nobody else but him. Whoever the partner is, he is the partner. When your heart is throbbing with joy and ecstasy in singing, he is in your heart, at the very core of your being. And when you laugh, if the laugh is total, if every fiber of your being is laughing....

That's why I love jokes. Jokes are very religious, very spiritual! All jokes are spiritual because they suddenly trigger a process in you and you forget all your seriousness. For a moment you are again an innocent child, again full of wonder and awe. And the laughter overwhelms you, you are drowned in the laughter. The ego is not found when you are deep in laughter. And whenever ego disappears, God is. Remember it as one of the most fundamental laws: whenever the 'I' is absent, God is present -- they both cannot be present together. The relationship between the ego and God is just like the relationship between darkness and light. If light is present, darkness cannot be there, because darkness is nothing but the absence of light. How can there be presence and absence together? If darkness is there then light cannot be there.

There is an ancient parable:
After many many millions of years, Darkness approached God and told him, "This is too much! I have been patient enough, but for no reason at all your Sun goes on torturing me, chasing me every morning. I have not even taken enough rest and he is back and the chase begins. And I have to run and he goes on running after me. Now it is getting tiring. I have not done anything wrong to this Sun. Why is he so much after me? Why is he carrying such enmity for me?"
God also thought, "This is unfair!" And he called the Sun. The Sun came and said, "I don't know what you are talking about. Have you gone mad or something? What Darkness? I have never come across any Darkness. I have never seen her, I have never met her, so of course, why should I chase

your Darkness? I don't even know her! Where is she? You bring her before me! And unless you bring her before me, how can I answer? Both parties have to be present in court. First I have to see who this Darkness is who has been complaining against me and with whom I am not even acquainted. All these millions of years since you have made me I have never seen her, I have never met her. I don't even know her whereabouts."
And God said, "That is right. I will call her."
And since then, millions of years have again passed and God has been trying. You have heard that God is omnipotent -- he is not, because he has not been able to call both of them together yet. Yes, sometimes Darkness comes and complains and sometimes the Sun comes and says, "This is unfair -- let us both be present." But even God is not capable of making that happen. So it is just pending, it is in the files. One day, just looking in the files I came across it, and I think it is going to remain forever in the files.

Darkness and light cannot be present together. The ego is just darkness; absence of consciousness is ego. When you become conscious, ego disappears. When consciousness is total, ego is not found at all. And the totality of consciousness is another name for the experience of God. God is not a person, let me remind you again and again -- God is only an experience of absolute awareness, of ultimate ecstasy. Hence I say laugh deeply, love deeply, live deeply. Risk everything for love, laughter, life. Let your life be a great exploration and go on always moving into the unknown and the unknowable.

Nobody else has used jokes in a spiritual way; hence sometimes people are shocked. When they come for the first time to listen to me, naturally they are shocked because they want to hear something very serious -- as if they are not serious enough already! They want to hear something esoteric, something nonsensical, something which makes no sense to them; then they think there must be great meaning in it. When something is incomprehensible to them they think this is great philosophy! Whenever they come across something written in stupid jargon, esoteric, occult, spiritual, they become very much interested. They think they are going to find some treasure in it.

The treasure is not hidden in big words, the treasure is hidden in you. And it is to be discovered, not through big words, it is to be discovered through wordlessness, it is to be discovered through silence.

And haven't you felt after deep laughter that a sudden silence comes to you in the wake of it? -- the silence after a storm. For a moment it is as if the mind stops functioning... you are utterly relaxed, in a deep rest.

Those are the moments, Masta, when you start feeling the presence of God. Those are the first glimpses that God is. There is no other proof.

Hence my commune is going to remain a shock to the traditional people. They have seen many spiritual communes, but they were all serious. Jesus will understand what I am saying, but not the pope of the Vatican, because these fools go on saying that Jesus never laughed. And I tell you, on my own authority, that he must have been one of the most hilarious persons. Who else can laugh so

beautifully as Jesus? Who else has the right? He was not a deadly kind of saint; he lived, and lived very close to the earth. He lived with all kinds of ordinary people -- with drunkards and gamblers and tax collectors and prostitutes -- and he loved eating and drinking.

Indian spiritual phonies are very much against drinking. That's why they cannot believe that Jesus is enlightened. Many Jaina monks have asked me, "Why do you say that Jesus is enlightened, as Buddha and Mahavira are? He used to drink wine!" There is nothing wrong in it, one just has to learn the art of drinking wine. One should not drink too much; the golden mean has to be followed. Nobody has ever heard that Jesus was lying in the street! He must have known how much to drink and when to drink and when not to drink.

And moreover, wine is absolutely vegetarian; far more vegetarian than milk which Hindu, Jaina and Buddhist monks think is the purest food. It is animal food! It is closer to nonvegetarian food than to vegetarian food. It is part of the human body or the animal body. Wine has nothing wrong in it. And if one is foolish one can drink too much water and can get into trouble. So it is not a question of drinking.

And what is wrong with enjoying eating? He must have enjoyed eating because we have many references that every night with his disciples the gathering used to continue late into the night, eating, drinking.... And do you think he was eating and drinking and they all were eating and drinking and everybody was sitting serious and somber and saintly? Is this the way to drink and eat and enjoy it? They must

have been telling jokes and they must have been gossiping and they must have been talking like human beings.
He was very human in that sense, far more human than Buddha and Mahavira. They look more abstract, more in the sky and less on the earth. He was very earthly. He used to stay in the house of a prostitute, Mary Magdalene. Now, your Vatican pope will not have that much guts! Even though he is a Polack, that much guts I don't think he will have!
But when people come here, these people who think themselves spiritual, they come with their ideas, their prejudices -- that there should be no laughter, no dancing, no singing. And when they see sannyasins hugging, then this is too much -- as if there is something wrong in hugging! When they see people holding hands with deep love they are shocked. Spiritual people should be very anti-life, utterly life-negative; they should not affirm life in any way. And my whole effort here is to affirm life in all possible ways.
Masta, a few jokes for you:

Once there was a little girl who came across the word 'frugal' and asked her mother what it meant. She was told that it meant "to save." The next day the child was asked to write a story at school, and handed in the following:
"Once upon a time a princess was lost in the woods and as night fell she became frightened. She began to run, crying out, 'Frugal me! Frugal me!'
"A passing prince heard her pleas and ran to her rescue. He frugaled her and they lived happily ever after."

"Hey, Giulio, where did you get the black eye?"
"Aw, I was at my girl's house," explained the young lover, "and we was-a dancing together real-a tight-a when her father walked-a in!"
"So?"
"So," said the Italian, "the old-a guy's deaf-a. He couldn't-a hear the music-a!"

A Texas cowboy was walking down a Tijuana street. Suddenly young Pablo walked up to him and yanked on his sleeve.
"Hey, meester," said the boy, "you wanna make love to my seester?"
"Podnah," said the Texan, "Ah don't even drink the water here!"

The second question:
Question 2
BELOVED MASTER,
YOU SAID THAT FOR BUDDHA FREEDOM IS THE HIGHEST. BUT HIS "DHAMMA" MEANS "THE LAW," WHICH INHIBITS FREEDOM. HOW DO FREEDOM AND LAW GO TOGETHER? PLEASE COMMENT.

Anand Maitreya, freedom for Gautama the Buddha is the very law of life. Hence there is no contradiction. Life itself is rooted in freedom. We are not machines, we are not preprogramed. We are utter freedom -- now it is up to us what to make of it. All the alternatives are open, we can choose any alternative, that is our choice. We can become anybody, that is our choice.

It is as if you find a marble rock -- now it depends on you what you want to make out of it. You can sculpt a Christ, you can also sculpt a Judas. The rock is totally available to you; now you have to decide, it is your decision, your conscious decision, what you want to make out of it.

Michelangelo was passing by a shop which used to sell marble. He saw a big marble rock outside the shop, he had seen it lying there for years. He asked the owner, "What's the matter? Can't you sell it?"
The man said, "I have dropped the idea. I can't sell it. Nobody is ready to purchase it, it is useless. I have thrown it out. But if you are interested you can take it free of charge so at least my place will be empty and I can put other rocks there."
Michelangelo took the rock with him, and after one year he invited the owner to see. The owner could not believe his eyes; he had never seen such a beautiful Jesus. He said, "How could you do it? You are really a magician! That rock was utterly useless; no other sculptor was ready to take it even free of charge."
And Michelangelo is reported to have said, "It has nothing to do with me. When I was passing, Jesus called out from the rock saying, 'I am imprisoned here! Help me to get out of this rock!' And I have just removed the unnecessary chunks, I have freed him."

But a Michelangelo is needed to hear it, to hear the Jesus inside the rock calling him to help him to be freed.

A rock is just a rock; it depends on you what you make out of it. That's what existentialists say: that man is born absolutely free. In the ancient days, philosophers used to think that man is born with an essence. Existentialists say man is born only as an existence, with no essence. He has to create the essence out of his own choice. And I perfectly agree with the existentialist approach.

Buddha is the first existentialist of the world and far more truly an existentialist than Martin Heidegger, Jean-Paul Sartre, Jaspers and others, because after all these existentialists are only thinkers -- they think about existence. Buddha really transformed himself. He was not talking about the essence -- he created it, he showed the world what man can make out of himself.

Gurdjieff used to say that man is not born with a soul. The meaning is the same. It looks very strange when you hear for the first time that man is not born with a soul. The soul has to be created, man is born empty. And millions die only as hollow emptinesses. Their souls are never born because they never make any effort. The old idea is that everybody is born with a soul; it frees you from the great responsibility of creating your own being, of creating yourself. When there is no responsibility to create, you go on living accidentally, like driftwood.

Buddha says freedom is the very law of life. What he means by it is that there is nothing higher than freedom. But by the word 'law', please don't misunderstand him. In fact for dhamma, the word 'law' is only approximately right. In the English language there is not exactly the right word for dhamma. In Chinese there is a word tao that exactly means dhamma. The closest word in English is

logos, but that has gone out of use. Hence 'the law' is used, but 'law' has other associations: the ordinary law of the state, of governments, of societies. That is not the meaning of Buddha. Of course, these laws are inhibitions; they prohibit you, they hinder you from freedom.

Buddha is saying freedom is the only real law and anything that hinders your freedom is against the law of life. Be free. All those laws have to be broken, sabotaged. You have to take your life in your own hands and you are responsible for it. No fate is responsible, no destiny is responsible. You have to create yourself by your own effort.

You are just a tabula rasa. You can write beautiful poems on it, beautiful calligraphy, you can do beautiful paintings on it; or you can leave it as it is. Or you can simply throw colors on it, meaninglessly, in an insane way, like a small child. You can destroy the whole thing. And there is nobody else who is responsible except you; the total responsibility is yours.

That is the most emphatic thing that Buddha wants you to remember: don't shirk your responsibility. Whatsoever you are is your own work and whatsoever you want to be you can be. But you can be that only if freedom is the law of life. If everything is destined, if there is something like fate, if there is something which has been preprogramed in you, then you are not a man at all, then you are just a biocomputer. You are simply going to repeat the program, you are a gramophone record. You don't have any freedom, you can't change anything. You are just play-things in the hands of unknown forces.

Buddha says this is not true. Hence he even denies the existence of God for the simple reason that if God is there

then there will be trouble; then he will be the supremost being. His very presence will become an inhibition to you. That's exactly the logic of Friedrich Nietzsche. He said: God is dead, therefore man is now free. But Nietzsche was only a philosopher. He could not contain that much freedom. He went mad.

Buddha is not a philosopher at all, he is a mystic. He used the freedom. He really became responsible for himself. He created his own being and he became the most beautiful person who has ever lived on the earth. He followed the law of freedom and achieved the ultimate joy, the ultimate truth.

You can do the same too. That is his message. He says, "Whatsoever has happened to me can happen to you. If it is not happening, nobody else is responsible except you." So take the total responsibility in your own hands, feel and be responsible, and use the law of freedom because it is available. Life has been given to you with no preprogram; now it is up to you what you want to make out of it. You can become an ugly monster -- a Genghis Khan, a Tamerlane, a Nadirshah -- or you can become a Gautam Buddha, a Jesus Christ, a Lao Tzu, a Zarathustra. It all depends on you, it is your freedom. Choose!

But you can choose only when you are conscious; you can choose only when you are aware, alert. The more aware you are, the more you are capable of choosing the course of your life. The more aware you are, the more you know, the more you can feel a sense of direction.

Freedom is the foundation of life and freedom is the ultimate goal too. Freedom is the source and freedom is the goal.

Use freedom to be free from all bondage.
Use freedom to become ultimately free.
Use freedom to become freedom itself.

The third question:
Question 3
BELOVED MASTER,
I-A NEVER-A THOUGHT-A IT WOULD-A COME-A TO THIS-A, BUT-A I WISH-A I-A WERE-A AN-A ITALIAN!
MUCH-A LOVE-A AND-A PASTA, BIGGA PREMA.

Bigga Prema, avoid such desires, because if you carry them too long they start becoming a reality. Then don't make me responsible for it! Be very careful what you desire, because the danger is that the desire may be fulfilled sooner or later. I love Italians -- as much as I love others -- but naturally many people are feeling jealous of Italians, for the simple reason that I am telling so many jokes about Italians. But the reason is not that I love Italians more than the Dutch or the Australians; the reason is simply that my librarian happens to be Lalita, an Italian, so she goes on finding Italian jokes for me! So rather than you desiring to be an Italian, just desire that I may get one assistant for Lalita from every country. In the new commune, I am thinking Lalita must have at least a dozen assistants! But beware of having this desire.

Do you know why they hang salami at Italian weddings?
To keep the flies off the bride.

And do you know who fired the bullet into Mussolini's body?
One hundred top Italian marksmen.

Bianco, the barber, nicked his customer six times while shaving him. Finally the bleeding man asked if he could have a razor.
"Why?" asked the Italian. "You wanna shave-a yourself?"
"No," said the victim, "I want to defend myself!"

Collared by the cops after he roared up a one-way street and crashed his 1949 Ford into a store window, the Italian drunk wanted to know what the hell was going on.
"You went against the traffic, you dumb bastard," the angry cop said, "Didn't you see the arrows back there?"
"Holy Mother-a Jesus!" the boozed-up guinea said. "I didn't even see the Indians!"

And if you really want to change in your next life, in the next round when you come back, Bigga Prema, rather than being an Italian, be a Polack! Now you see, the Polack has become the pope -- he has defeated all the Italians! Now if a Polack can become a pope, the next thing is that a woman is going to become a pope-a.

Why do Polack dogs have flat noses?
From chasing parked cars.

And why can't Polacks be pharmacists?
They can't fit the little brown bottles in their typewriters!

And do you know what is written on the bottom of Polish milk bottles?
"Open at other end."

Wojawicz walked into the department store with his mangy mutt. A floorwalker rushed over, pointed to the sign that read, NO DOGS ALLOWED and said, "Hey, mister, can't you read?"
"So," said the Polack, "who's smoking?"

And just the other day all the orange Italians and all the orange Polacks gathered together to decide who is really the greatest. Of course, there was no question of intellectual discussion... it had to be something existential! So they decided to go to the football ground by the side of the railway station and play football -- whoever wins....
For two hours everything happened -- except football. Karate chops were flying and yoga was done and boxing and wrestling and Dynamic Meditation and Kundalini Meditation. And they had forgotten completely that they needed a few referees as well; there were no referees at all. After two hours even the football lying by the side started laughing! "What is happening?" Then a train passed by and hearing the whistle of the train the Italians thought the game was over, so they left the ground, thinking, "We are equal and the game is over."
But the Polacks were bent upon winning, and now, because the sun was going down, the game became even more fierce. And finally after one hour's effort the Polacks were able to score one goal -- without the Italians, but that doesn't matter!

So if you want to be something really great, it is better to be a Polack rather than an Italian. Why choose something second-rate?

Milewski was trying to light a match. He struck the first match, it didn't work, he threw it away. He struck a second match. That didn't work either and he threw it away. He struck a third one and it lit up.
"That be a good one," said the Polack, blowing it out. "I got to save it!"

A Polack and a Jew were walking in the desert. The Jew was carrying a watermelon, the Polack was carrying a car door.
After a while the Polack said, "Why are you carrying that watermelon?"
The Jew said, "So when it gets too hot I cut it open and eat a piece of it."
After a while, the Jew said, "And why are you carrying that car door?"
"So," said the Polack, "when it gets too hot I just roll down the window!"

The fourth question:
Question 4
BELOVED MASTER,
A WHILE AGO I WROTE TO YOU ABOUT BEING CONFUSED, AND YOU SAID YOU WERE TAKING CARE. NOW SINCE THEN I HAVE GOT EVEN MORE CONFUSED! WHAT ARE YOU DOING TO ME?!

Prem Asang, taking care! That's my way of taking care! You get confused because you are carrying certain ideas and prejudices in the mind. If you don't carry any ideas, any prejudices in the mind, even I cannot confuse you; nobody in the whole world can confuse you. Confusion arises from your own inner causes.

For example, if you believe in a certain idea and I say something against it, then there is confusion. You cannot leave the old idea; it is so old, it has got so many roots in you and you have lived with it so long that it has become comfortable and cozy. You have believed in it so long, it has given you so many consolations, that now suddenly to drop it will mean moving in a state of insecurity; it has become your security and safety.

But listening to me you cannot cling to it anymore. You cannot drop it and you cannot cling to it, hence the confusion. You cannot cling to it anymore because what I am saying appeals to you, your heart understands it. Deep down something in your inner being says, "Yes, it is so." Between your heart and head a conflict ensues; that is confusion.

Confusion simply means that now you are unable to decide where to go: to go on clinging to the old, which will be impossible because now you have seen that that is not right, that you have been clinging only to a comfortable lie. It is not true, and your heart feels that it is not true... although it gives you consolation. Lies can give you consolation, they are very consoling; otherwise nobody would believe in lies. Everybody believes in lies for the simple reason that they are cheap and give you great consolation. You need not

make any effort to realize them. They are handed over to you by others: by your parents, by your teachers, by the society, by the atmosphere. You simply go on gathering from everywhere, from every source.

You are living in a sandcastle; but everything goes well -- unless somebody tells you that this is a sandcastle. Once you have heard that this is a sandcastle, the problem arises: you cannot live in it anymore, it is dangerous to live in it. And you cannot get out of it because you have become so accustomed to it. Hence the confusion. Confusion simply means you are unable to decide.

Unless you become decisive, Asang, the confusion will go on growing. My work consists in creating confusion in you, because without creating confusion I cannot pull you out of your sandcastles, I cannot pull you out of your paper boats, I cannot pull you out of your lies and dreams. And I know perfectly well that when you have put so much investment in a certain belief -- maybe you have lived for thirty years, forty years in a certain belief -- to see now that it was wrong, that it was utterly stupid, that it was ridiculous, creates a great problem for you. Your self-image of being intelligent is shattered. For forty years you have carried something ridiculous without seeing it. What kind of intelligence do you have? You become suspicious of your own intelligence and that doesn't feel good.

That's why to be with a master needs courage. To be with a master needs the courage to accept that "I don't know." The moment you accept, Asang, that "I don't know," all confusion will disappear, evaporate, simply evaporate -- just as dewdrops evaporate in the early morning sun leaving no trace behind them. The confusion is because you

are clinging to a few things which in the past you thought were very valuable. You thought that they were ornaments, golden, studded with diamonds, and now I have made you aware that they are nothing but chains -- maybe golden chains and maybe studded with diamonds, but what are diamonds? -- they are also stones. And what is gold? The difference exists only in man's mind, otherwise gold and iron are the same. The evaluation is ours, the projection is ours. But chains are chains and the chains have to be broken. Now the things you have believed were ornaments, decorations, are being shown to you persistently as nothing but chains.

Either you will have to escape from me... but remember, escaping won't help you. Once you have been on my surgical table it is better to go through the whole operation! If you escape in the middle of the operation you will remain confused your whole life, because whatsoever you have understood from me is not going to leave you, it will haunt you. So there is no escape from me.

Once you are with me you have to learn the ways of transformation, you have to go through a radical change. You have to die to the past and be born anew. It is hard, it is painful. Every birth is painful, and spiritual birth particularly is very painful. There are no sedatives available. For spiritual birth one has to go through many pains, but those pains are worth it because you grow out of your imprisonments; you grow into freedom, you grow up. And once you have tasted the joy of growing up, of becoming mature, then there is no problem. Then you know that all that you have left behind was worthless, was rubbish.

But, Asang, this moment has to be passed through. This critical moment has to come in every disciple's life when the disciple is in a kind of limbo, neither here nor there, half in the past and half moving with me, many times thinking to escape.

Just the other day Somendra asked a question: "But, Beloved Master, where is the exit?" There is no exit here! It is one-way traffic. You only come in... we don't have another door, only the entrance. Then you have to be reborn; that is the only exit. But the exit is not in escape, it is in "inscape." It is going inwards.

Asang, I am taking as much care as you can tolerate at this moment! I will take more.... The medicine is bitter and it has to be given in small doses. And this is not homeopathic treatment, remember, this is pure allopathy -- it is pure poison! It is crucifixion, because only then is there resurrection. But that too takes three days. Between the crucifixion and the resurrection... three days. Remember those three days; they are significant, very significant. Those three days are the most difficult days.

Just think of Jesus: three days in the cave, neither dead nor alive. He couldn't have been completely dead because once you are completely dead you are gone. He was not completely alive either; otherwise he would not have remained for three days in the cave, he would have escaped sooner. He must have been hanging between these two polarities of birth and death.

Those three days are significant, they are symbolic. Those three days represent body, mind, heart. You have to die in

the body, in the mind, in the heart; then only can you be born as a soul. You have to pass through this dark night of the soul. This is the womb period, those nine months in the mother's womb. In exactly the same way, the disciple has to be in the womb of the master. This buddhafield is nothing but a womb. You are in the womb. It depends on you: if you go on clinging too long it will take a long time for you to come out.

In India we have many beautiful stories about Lucknow. Lucknow is the most mannerly city in India, very mannerly; too much in fact, so it is said. Once it happened, a woman got pregnant and she was carrying two children within her womb, and they wouldn't come out. Nine months passed, then nine years passed, then ninety years passed....
Finally the woman died and the doctors had to open the womb. Two small, ninety-year-old gentlemen were standing there and they were saying to each other, "Sir, you first!"

Don't take that much time -- here you need not be that mannerly! Jump out of the womb as quickly as possible... because the spiritual womb has no natural time -- nine months or nine years -- it all depends on the individual. It can happen in a single moment or it may not happen in an eternity.
Asang, I am taking care of you, and as you become a little more available to me, a little more patient, a little more capable of absorbing my energy, I will take more care of you.

Just a few days ago I was going to call you one night as a guest medium, but Arup informed me that, "The first time you called Asang as a guest medium, for many days she was almost in a state of craziness, so please don't call her so soon." So I had to drop the idea.
If you are ready, you can come tonight! But then don't get too insane for many days. Try to absorb me. The more capable you become, the more I will confuse you till nothing is left to confuse, till the mind is completely gone and there is nobody to confuse.
That's what happens to my disciples who have been here long enough. Now, whatsoever I say, they listen joyously without making any comparison, without making any judgment, without any evaluation. They don't think of what I said yesterday, because if they think of that they start becoming confused. So they live in the moment with me. I live in the moment, and once you have understood how to live, you will also live in the moment with me. And then there is no confusion, then there is all clarity. And clarity is innocence and clarity is freedom.

The last question:
Question 5
BELOVED MASTER,
WHAT IS YOUR DOGMA?

Peter, I believe you must be a tourist here; otherwise you cannot ask such a question. I don't have any dogma. In the first place I don't like dogs at all! And 'dogma' means mother of dogs! Neither do I like any sonofabitch, nor do I like any mother of dogs! There are Christian dogmas and

Hindu dogmas and Mohammedan dogmas, and what do they do? They go on barking at each other! I don't have any dogma at all. Even my kids understand it here, my small sannyasins. You can ask them.

Upachara has informed me:
Just heard on the steps in front of the office. Five sannyasin kids are having a serious talk. One of them says, "Osho is not even a sannyasin!"

Enough for today.

The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 12

Chapter #7

Chapter title: No yesterday, no tomorrow, no today
27 April 1980 am in Buddha Hall

HE IS CALM.
IN HIM THE SEED OF RENEWING LIFE
HAS BEEN CONSUMED.
HE HAS CONQUERED ALL THE INNER WORLDS.

WITH DISPASSIONATE EYE
HE SEES EVERYWHERE
THE FALLING AND THE UPRISING.

AND WITH GREAT GLADNESS
HE KNOWS THAT HE HAS FINISHED.
HE HAS WOKEN FROM HIS SLEEP.

AND THE WAY HE HAS TAKEN
IS HIDDEN FROM MEN,
EVEN FROM SPIRITS AND GODS,
BY VIRTUE OF HIS PURITY.

IN HIM THERE IS NO YESTERDAY,
NO TOMORROW,
NO TODAY.

The master is calm, but with a difference. Many people are calm, but they are not masters. Calm can be cultivated very easily from the outside; it will deceive others, but it cannot deceive existence. Deep inside you will remain in a turmoil.

Hence, the first thing to be understood is that Buddha is never in favor of anything cultivated. The moral preachers, the moralists, are continuously telling people, "Be this, be that. Try to be calm, practice calm." And for thousands of years these things have been told to you; these qualities have been praised, appreciated, worshipped. Naturally you try to be calm and quiet and collected, but when you practice something it simply means you are creating a facade, you are just creating a face. It can't transform your being -- it is an exercise. Yes, it will help you to be more prestigious, to be more respectable; people will look up to you as a holy man. But in fact you have become schizophrenic, you have become a split personality, you are divided. Your surface says one thing, your inner reality is totally the opposite. You will live in a continuous civil war, you will be continuously at daggers with yourself.

It is hell to be a saint in this way. Sinners may go to hell after they die; your so-called saints live in hell here and now. There is no certainty about the future hell, but the saint's hell is very much a reality.

Never try to cultivate any quality.

Then what has to be done? Should one remain violent, disturbed, insane? No, Buddha says there is another way, the right way. The right way is that these things should come as consequences -- consequences of inner awareness. The magic of awareness is that the more you become alert, naturally, the more a calm surrounds you. You need not cultivate it, it follows you like a shadow, it is simply your vibe. You are surrounded by a subtle aura of peace, serenity. When you are aware inside, there is a grace radiating from your being. That grace is spontaneous, not cultivated. And when something is spontaneous it has tremendous beauty. It is not an artificial flower, it is not a plastic flower; it is something that has grown in you, that has bloomed in you. It is your own flowering. It has fragrance because it has roots in your being.

Unless calmness comes as a shadow of awareness, beware of it. It is false, it is utterly futile. The whole effort that you have put into cultivating it has been a sheer wastage. The same effort could have been put into becoming aware.

That is the difference between morality and religion. Morality is a social phenomenon; society needs it because society consists of millions of people. It has to keep a certain order, a certain discipline; otherwise there will be chaos. Morality keeps that order. Morality creates a conscience in you. Conscience functions as an inner policeman who does not allow you to do anything that is

against the law or against the code or against the tradition. Society has imprinted in your heart certain ideas and now you are dominated by those ideas. Even if you go against those ideas they will torture you, they will become a nightmare to you. If you follow them you will feel you are not tortured so much.

So the immoral person finds himself in two difficulties. One comes from the outside because he starts losing people's respect; and in this world respect is the most valuable thing in people's eyes because it is a nourishment for the ego. The moment you lose respect your ego starts dying, your ego is hurt, your ego is wounded. Secondly, something inside you starts creating an inner torture for you -- your conscience. That conscience is also created by the same society.

Hence, society pressures you from both sides, outer and inner. You are just crushed between these two rocks. So cowards cannot be immoral people; cowards are always moral people. In fact they are not moral but only cowards; because they are cowards they cannot be immoral -- that is too dangerous, too risky. And the moral people, the so-called moral people, live a superficial life. They are bound to live a superficial life because their conscience is not their own -- what else can be their own? They don't possess even their own conscience, what else can they possess? They are the poorest people in the world.

And they are not moral because they understand the beauty of being moral; they are moral simply because they don't have guts enough to be immoral. They follow the dictates of the society and the conscience just out of fear. There is fear of the law and there is fear of hell; there is fear of the

policeman and there is fear of God. They are constantly trembling, their life is nothing but a constant trembling. Their prayers arise out of that trembling -- naturally those prayers are false; they are fear-oriented. Even their conception of God is nothing but a projection of their fear. That's why these people are rightly called God-fearing people. They are not God-loving people. And remember, one who fears God can never love God, and one who loves God need never fear. Fear and love can't exist together, it is impossible. Their coexistence is not possible in the nature of things.

But society pays you enough to be moral, gives you as much ego as it is possible to give -- not only here but in the afterworld too. There are also places, special places reserved for you in heaven. The sinner is suffering here and the sinner will suffer in hell too, and the so-called saint is respected here and he is going to be respected in the other world too.

This is a strategy, a very subtle psychological strategy of society -- to exploit you. But because of this strategy you have completely lost track of real morality: a morality that is not dictated by fear, a morality that does not arise out of cowardice, a morality that is not fear-oriented.

A totally different vision of morality has been given by the buddhas, by the awakened ones of all the ages. Their vision is that real morality comes not out of conscience but out of consciousness. Become more conscious, release more conscious energy in your being, explode into consciousness! -- and then you will see you are living a life in absolute attunement with existence. Sometimes it may be in tune with society and sometimes it may not be in tune

with society, because society itself is not always in tune with existence. Whenever society is in tune with existence you will be in tune with society; whenever society is not in tune with existence you will not be in tune with society. But the real moral person never cares, he is even ready to risk his life. Socrates did that, Jesus did that. Buddha was constantly living in danger. This has always been the case, for the simple reason that they were living according to their own light. If it fits with society, good; if it does not fit with society it is bad for society but it has nothing to do with you. Society has to change itself. Socrates is not going to change himself, Jesus is not going to change himself according to society, Buddha is not going to live according to the crowd. The crowd consists of blind people, of utterly unconscious people who are fast asleep, who know nothing of themselves. To follow them is the most stupid thing in the world that a man can do. One should be intelligent enough to wake up one's own consciousness.

Religion consists not of conscience but of consciousness. Hence, even an atheist can believe in morality. Of course, in Soviet Russia or communist China they have to follow a certain code of morality. They may not believe in God, but they have to enforce morality on people. In fact, they have to enforce it even more because the fear of God is lost. Now the state has to be really very dangerous, because that is the only fear which will keep people confined within the boundaries of morality.

It is not accidental that the Russian government and the Chinese government don't allow any freedom; they cannot allow it. Capitalist countries can allow a little freedom because God is there to help. You allow a little freedom,

God won't allow that freedom -- it compensates. But in a communist country there is no God so there is no fear of the supreme, the ultimate, and no other life so there is no fear of hell.

Communist countries have to create hell here, right now, so they create concentration camps; they use Siberia as a substitute for hell. And they have created all kinds of very complicated tortures, all kinds of inhuman tortures. Even the Devil himself can learn much from them! Now in Russia if you don't agree with the society you are immediately declared a mental case -- not that you are politically of a different opinion, no, that is impossible. There can't be any possibility of somebody being politically different from the government policy, from the authoritarian principles, from the recognized ideology. Only an insane person can think that he is different. How can you go against Marx, Engels and Lenin? Impossible! This unholy trinity rules absolutely. The Russian government is totalitarian; it has to be because it has to function in such a way that the fear of God has to be replaced by something; otherwise people will become unmanageable.

Communist countries are bound to become totalitarian. They cannot be democratic, it is impossible, because who will do the work of keeping people afraid and trembling? Unless they accept God and hell.... God and hell are very helpful because they do almost all of the work. For a religious person -- a so-called religious person -- that fear is enough to hold him back, and the rest can be done by the government, but that is a lesser part, not more than twenty or twenty-five percent. Seventy-five percent of fear comes

from the psychological creation of a conscience. In a communist country there is no question of conscience, and of course the question of consciousness does not arise at all because no such thing as meditation is accepted.
A few people in Soviet Russia have become interested in my way of thinking. They have started meditating, but they have to meditate hidden underground in their basements. They cannot tell somebody else that they are meditating because meditation means you have gone insane! "There is no need to meditate at all. Why should one meditate? There is no soul to experience, no God to experience. Man is nothing but a by-product of matter. When death comes all ends, nothing remains beyond death, nothing abides." So consciousness cannot be allowed because meditation is not allowed: meditation is the science of releasing consciousness. And conscience cannot be created because the old ways of creating fear are no more accepted. The whole work has to be done by the government. Of course the government becomes ugly, the government becomes a monster.
But the same is happening in other countries too -- in more subtle ways. Communists are gross; the capitalist countries, the so-called democratic countries, are not so gross, they are subtle, but they do the same thing. They keep you tethered to the crowd, but in such an indirect way that it needs great intelligence to become aware of the fact that you are chained. Those chains are invisible.
Religion really consists in creating a different kind of morality, not the so-called ordinary morality, but a morality which is spontaneous, a morality which arises by itself and

is not imposed, a morality which is a consequence of your own intelligence.
Buddha is talking about that when he says: The master IS CALM. He means that he has gone deep into his center, he has penetrated his being to the very core, and he has settled there; now he is at rest. All hustle and bustle has dropped, all running hither and thither has disappeared. Now he knows there is nowhere to go. He has arrived home, he has found his ultimate shelter, the ultimate refuge. Now he knows, "This is my shrine." Sitting in that shrine he is absolutely calm. You cannot see where he is, but you can feel his calm. You can feel him like a cool breeze, you can feel him as a shower of silence. If you come close to him, suddenly you will be touched by something invisible. Your heart will start dancing. Not that he has done anything to you, but your mind can deceive you, your mind can start rationalizing.

Just the other day I was reading a manuscript. One woman came a few months ago, a friend of Pankaja and Savita. She came here just to see what had happened to Pankaja and Savita. Pankaja is a well-known novelist and has published beautiful novels. Suddenly she became a sannyasin and dropped her beautiful career. There were great possibilities: she could have become world-famous. She was on the way -- she was becoming more and more known. Not only did she become a sannyasin, she never went back to England. Not only that -- rumors must have reached England that now she functions in the ashram as a toilet cleaner. Her friend must have been puzzled -- what had happened to her?

Then Savita also disappeared. She was also doing well in her profession. She was a therapist, earning a lot of money and moving ahead. And she also never returned to England. Their friend came here just to see what was happening to these people -- "They must have been hypnotized." What else can the mind think? The simple explanation comes to the mind: "These people have been hypnotized." Otherwise why should one leave one's prosperous career, good livelihood -- a career which was full of possibilities? Why should one suddenly leave? Either one has gone insane or one has become hypnotized.

She came here just to observe what is happening. Then she also became a sannyasin. But she escaped immediately -- I gave her the name Kanan. She escaped. Now she writes a book about the whole experience and she says, "I don't know what happened, why I became a sannyasin. There is something which pulls you. There is something intangible -- one cannot figure it out, what it is exactly -- but something like hypnosis." She infers, "It may be in the eyes of this man or in the sound of his voice that one feels to become a sannyasin. Even I became a sannyasin, but then I became very much afraid: now I am being pulled the same way into this orange whirlpool in which Pankaja has disappeared, Savita has disappeared. It is better to go before I am too much in it and escape becomes impossible. I escaped. I dropped sannyas immediately because I was afraid -- carrying this man's mala and his picture around my neck was dangerous. Who knows what is hidden in it?"

Now, this woman thinks she is very clever, she thinks she is very rational, she thinks she has done the right thing. All that she has done is she has missed an opportunity which

comes only once in a while; maybe for many lives she will not come across such a man again.
There is no hypnotism. Nobody is trying to pull you, nobody is trying to influence you. But certainly there is a fragrance which affects you, which affects you deeply. There is a calm which goes into the heart and stirs the fast-sleeping heart into a kind of wakefulness. But if you are too much in your dreams, and you have invested too much even in your nightmares, you may become afraid -- you may become afraid of being awakened. You may miss the opportunity, you may escape from the opportunity. But then you try to rationalize. You HAVE to rationalize, otherwise how will you console yourself?
Now, by writing this book she is trying to convince herself that she has done the right thing. She has done the most stupid thing in her life.
And the opportunity is still not lost, Kanan. Wherever you are in the world my eyes are reaching there too. And whatsoever I am saying here, the sound of my voice goes on resounding around the earth. If you have even a little bit of intelligence you will be pulled back into the orange whirlpool!

HE IS CALM.
IN HIM THE SEED OF RENEWING LIFE
HAS BEEN CONSUMED.
HE HAS CONQUERED ALL THE INNER WORLDS.

What has happened in the master? What has really happened in the inner world of the master? Buddha says: The first, most fundamental thing is that the seed of

renewing life is burnt, utterly burnt, is consumed in the fire of awareness. Yes, awareness is a fire. It burns all that is rubbish, but it also purifies all that is gold. It does two things: burns the rubbish and purifies the gold. It is alchemy.
"The seed of renewing life" is desire. Buddha used to call it TANHA. Tanha means one wants to be born again and again, one wants more and more. In this life you want more and more, but that more is never fulfilled. When you are dying, all desires are standing there unfulfilled so you start desiring another life, one more chance.

There is a beautiful story, a great parable in the Upanishads:
One of the great kings, Yayati, was dying. He was a hundred years old, ripe enough to die -- one should be ready by that time -- but not grown-up enough; the seed of renewing life was not yet burnt. So when death came, Yayati fell at the feet of Death -- a great king, a great conqueror! -- and he said to Death, "Spare me only one hundred years more. I don't ask for more, just one hundred years more. And it is nothing for you, you can do it. All my desires are still unfulfilled because I had never thought about you. I was simply preparing and preparing. I have not enjoyed my life. Now that everything is ready -- I have conquered the whole world, I have all the riches, the most beautiful women, the most intelligent and courageous sons, the best army in the world, everything is settled, all enemies killed -- I was just thinking to relax and enjoy. Is this the time to come? All these hundred years have been spent simply in preparing for these moments. Spare me just

one hundred years more so that I can live to my heart's content."

Death laughed and said, "I am ready to spare one hundred years more to you, but I will have to take one of your sons because I have to go with somebody who resembles you; if not you, at least one of your sons. I can't go empty-handed, I have to give the account to my boss himself. He will ask, 'Where is Yayati?' What am I going to say? Such a thing has never been done before, but I feel sorry for you. Just ask one of your sons."

Yayati had a hundred sons; he must have had a hundred wives too. He asked his sons. The oldest was eighty, but he started looking downwards, was not ready to say yes. Why should he? He had lived only eighty years; if his father is not contented with a hundred years, how can he be contented with only eighty years? At least twenty years more he is entitled to live. In those days, the story says, people used to live a hundred years. Why should he die a premature death, an untimely death? And this old fellow has lived enough! He did not want to hurt the old man so he didn't say anything, he kept quiet.

The father was very much shocked; he used to think that his sons were ready to sacrifice themselves. But in this world nobody is ready to sacrifice himself for anybody else. He looked around. His sons also started looking at each other, meaning "Why don't YOU go?"

The youngest, who was only twenty years old, stood up and he said, "I am ready. Take me with you, I am coming with you."

Even Death felt sorry for the boy. Death came close to the young man and said, "Are you a fool or something? Your

other brothers -- one is eighty, one is seventy-five, one is seventy, sixty, sixty-five, fifty -- these people are not ready to go and you are the youngest, you have not lived at all. Why are you ready to go?"

The young man said, "If my father could not live in a hundred years, if my eldest brother could not live in eighty years, if my other brothers... nobody has been able to live, then the whole project is nonsense. I don't want to waste time. If I have to die it is better to die now. Why wait for eighty years? If THESE people have not been able to manage, it is absolutely certain it is unmanageable. And let my father try a hundred years more."

Death tried to convince him, but he wouldn't listen. Death had to take him away.

After a hundred years, Death came back and the situation was the same. Again Yayati fell at his feet and started crying and weeping and he said, "I know that now I should be ready, but nothing is fulfilled yet; all the desires are the same. I have LIVED all the desires, I cannot say that I have not lived them, but nothing is fulfilled. I want more! Now that I have lived a hundred years a new desire has arisen -- I want more! I want to live at least one time more, a hundred years more, just one time more."

And this went on happening again and again. When Yayati became one thousand years old and Death came, he was just going to fall at his feet. Death said, "Wait -- enough is enough! Can't you see the point, Yayati? Are you so blind? You have lived one thousand years, and you have been doing the same things again and again. You have done nothing new in these one thousand years, and still you want more? Can't you see the simple point that mind lives in the

more, it goes on asking for more? There is no end to it. Now you come with me -- I am not going to listen anymore. Now even my boss is feeling angry with me. He says, 'This is too much! This man has been given too much time.' But I also wanted to try -- let us see what you can make out of one thousand years. You have not made any progress, you are exactly in the same place, going in circles."

Buddha calls this tanha -- going in circles -- this constant desire for more. One becomes a master when this desire for more disappears, when the seed is burnt in the fire of awareness. HE IS CALM. Then of course he is calm. When there is no desire, when the winds of desire are blowing no more, there are no waves in the inner ocean, then the ocean becomes absolutely calm. In fact, the ocean is not the cause of waves -- the cause is the invisible winds. You see the waves in the ocean so you think the waves are caused by the ocean; they are not. The waves are caused by invisible winds blowing over the ocean. If the winds stop the ocean will be absolutely calm.

Why are you in a turmoil? Why are there constantly so many waves inside you, so many thoughts and so many memories, fantasies? Why does this whole circus go on? For the simple reason that there are invisible winds of desire blowing upon you.

The watchful person, the intelligent person, becomes aware of the root cause: it is in the winds, the winds of desire. He stops desiring. Seeing the futility of desire he drops desiring. The seed is burnt and then there is calm. This calm is not the calm of your so-called polished, cultured

man. This calm is totally different, its quality is different, its source is different -- it comes from the innermost core. The Buddha is calm because the winds are not blowing anymore. And they cannot blow because the very seed has been burnt. HE HAS CONQUERED ALL THE INNER WORLDS. There are worlds upon worlds inside you too, just as outside there are worlds upon worlds. Scientists go on discovering new solar systems, new stars, new galaxies of stars, new milky ways. They go on discovering, there seems to be no end. There seem to be universes and universes unending. So it is in the inner world: there are also many planes and many universes, but all are rooted in a single seed.

Out of a single seed a big tree can grow. You can't see it in the seed, but if you put it in the soil soon a tree starts growing. A small seed brings such a big tree with such thick foliage that thousands of people can sit underneath it, thousands of birds can make their nests in it. And millions of seeds will grow in this tree and each seed contains again millions of trees, and so on and so forth. The scientists say a single seed can make the whole earth green; not only this earth but all the earths in the universe can be made green by a single seed. What potential!

You are all carrying frozen seeds within you which are just waiting for their right opportunity. Maybe you have forgotten completely about a certain desire because there has not been an opportunity to provoke it. That's why monks and nuns and the traditional sannyasins used to escape from the world, simply to deceive themselves -- because when they went to the caves in the mountains they were going away from the opportunities where they would

have become aware of the seed, where the seed would have had a chance to grow.

But remember, the seed is there whether you give it a chance to grow or not, and the seed can remain there for years; for lives it will wait. Give it an opportunity, an accidental opportunity, and immediately the seed becomes alive. The seed can remain frozen, almost dead for millions of lives.

That's why I am absolutely against escapism -- for the simple reason that if you want to burn the seed the best place is in the world, in the marketplace, because there are all kinds of opportunities. You cannot avoid seeing the seed and seeing it means you have to do something about it. If you stop seeing it, if you put a seed on a rock, you will forget about the seed because it cannot grow on the rock. That's why monks and nuns used to move to the monasteries, nunneries; those were rocks. And they chose to be in the mountains. Have you observed it? -- that all the monasteries of the world have been made in rocky mountains, not beautiful mountains where there are great trees and animals and birds -- because there is danger: even two birds making love is enough of an opportunity to give you the idea! Just two animals in foreplay, and the monks and the nuns will have a great desire arising in them. Suddenly the seed will start sprouting. So they chose to be in rocks, utter rocks where not a tree grows. Or the monasteries were built somewhere in the desert. All Christian monasteries were made in the desert. The ancient Christians lived in the desert, for the simple reason that, in a desert, life is so absent, so utterly absent, that you can forget all about it.

Jaina monks chose mountains, but ugly mountains, just rocks and nothing else, because anything beautiful can create trouble. The distant call of a cuckoo can drive you cuckoo! -- because it has a sexuality of its own, it has a sensuality of its own, it is a sensual call. Do you know? -- it is the male cuckoo who is calling; the female simply waits. She simply waits for the male to come closer. Yes, she gives hints that "I am available," and yet keeps herself very aloof, very proud -- available, but not so easily available either!

Have you seen in the animals one strange phenomenon? -- that it is always the male who is taking the initiative. The peacock with beautiful feathers is the male; one should have thought otherwise, but it is the male not the female. The female has no feathers; the female is ordinary, does not look so beautiful. The male looks very beautiful and the male dances with great exhibition of all his feathers -- they are really beautiful feathers -- and he dances a great dance. He tries to allure.

Something strange has happened in man only; it seems unnatural. In fact, ornaments should be used by men, not by women. Men should use more colorful clothes than women. There is no need for women to bother about anything else, just to be female is enough! That's the whole story of nature if you look around: all the strategies have been used by males.

The monks and nuns have to be protected, but this kind of protection is not going to help. Even if the seed can remain protected for many lives it is there, it is not burnt yet.

An old maid had been going to sit in the park each day for years. As she fed the pigeons, which always roosted and fluttered around the bronze statue of a young Apollo, her eyes would wander over his nude form and she would dream of holding him alive in her arms.
One day as she sat there, a good fairy took pity on her. Appearing by her side, the fairy offered her three wishes. Without delay the old maid began, "First I want to be young and very desirable."
This was no sooner said than done.
"Second, I wish that the statue of Apollo would come to life."
A wave of the fairy's wand and instantly he sprang down from the pedestal, vibrantly alive. The new voluptuous maid faltered and began to blush. Fluttering her eyelashes coyly she murmured, "I would like to give the third wish to Apollo."
Turning to the naked young god, the good fairy said, "What is your wish?"
"I want to shit on a pigeon," he answered.

Now the marble statue had been carrying this seed maybe for hundreds of years. Those pigeons were continuously doing this thing to him. Waiting, waiting, waiting... one day the time arrived -- all that he wants to do is this.
Buddha says: HE IS CALM. IN HIM THE SEED OF RENEWING LIFE HAS BEEN CONSUMED. HE HAS CONQUERED ALL THE INNER WORLDS.
There are three worlds, and within those three there are many worlds within worlds. The first is the world of the body, the mysteries of the body. The second is the world of

the mind, the mysteries of the mind. And the third is the world of the heart, the mysteries of the heart. And each contains many worlds. Because of these three layers there have arisen three yogas, three sciences. One is HATHA yoga. Hatha yoga means going into the mysteries of the body. And the body has many mysteries; if you go into the mysteries of the body they are unending. You can go on and on forever, it is an infinity in itself.

But that is not the way to freedom and that is not the way to nirvana: you are caught in a new net. You are no more interested in money and you are no more interested in being a president, you are no more interested in worldly name or fame, but now your whole interest is how to become a superman, how to attain the powers that your body contains. For thousands of years so many yogis have been wasting time in that.

Buddha is not concerned with that type of inquiry at all. He wants you to cut through it. He wants you to remember that, if you go into the mysteries of the body, you may be able to walk on water, you may be able to walk in fire, but what is the point of walking on water or in fire? It is simply stupid! Even if you can walk in fire, so what? What is gained? You can fly in the air like a bird, so what? Birds are doing it already -- nothing special.

Three yogis were eating their lunch on the seventeenth-floor girder of a new skyscraper. They were working on their bodies, talking about it continuously, discovering new mysteries.

"Wow," said the second man, who was new on the job. "I see why you guys like to eat your lunch here. The view of the city is beautiful!"
"Yes, the view is nice," said the first man. "But do you want to know why we really like to eat lunch here?"
"Yes," said the new yogi.
"Well," explained the first, "there's the most incredible updraft right at the fourth floor, and when we finish lunch we like to jump off and ride back up on that air current. It puts you right back on the very spot you jumped from."
"Bullshit!" said the second man. "I don't believe you."
"You don't?" said the first, putting down his coffee thermos. "Then I'll show you."
He jumped. Down he went, and sure enough, right at the fourth floor -- whoosh! He was turned back and landed on the seventeenth-floor girder on the exact spot from which he had leaped.
"Wow!" said the second man in total amazement. "That beats the hell out of hang-gliding or anything! Let me do it next!"
He stood up and jumped. Down he went -- then fourth floor, third floor, second floor... splat! All over the sidewalk! Finished!
Back up on the seventeenth floor, the third man, who had been silent until now, turned to the first and said, "You know, Superman, sometimes you're a real prick!"

What is the point of it all?
Buddha is not interested in the yoga of the body, neither is he interested in the yoga of the mind -- MANTRA yoga and other methods which work on the mind and create

mental powers, SIDDHIS. Yes, you can do miracles... you can read others' thoughts, but are not one's own thoughts enough? You can predict others' futures, but what is there to predict? It is going to be almost the same as their past. Just the other day one sannyasin asked... he had been to some Hindu astrologer, very famous. And the astrologer said to him, after great deliberation, brooding, thinking about his chart and meditating about his future, that in this lifetime he cannot become enlightened. Now, this much can be said by any fool about you, because a man who goes to an astrologer to ask about his future is bound to remain unenlightened! That is enough proof. And what does that foolish astrologer know about enlightenment? Is HE enlightened? You should have asked him, "What about you? Are you enlightened, and still doing astrology?" Because of these fools I have to appoint Kabir here! Why go to other places? Somebody right on the spot is available here. Kabir makes beautiful charts, very colorful! He is doing a good job. Fools need... what to do? And if they are going to go somewhere, it is better to finish them here. Only fools are interested in the future. The intelligent person is interested only in the present. And enlightenment is not predictable; enlightenment is absolutely unpredictable. It is such a mysterious phenomenon that there is no possibility of predicting it.

But now this idea has been put into his head. Now he will feel at ease: "This time it is not going to happen, so why bother?" So this man will stop meditating, he may even think of dropping sannyas. What is the point when you are not going to become enlightened this lifetime? "So we will

see next lifetime when the time comes, we will meditate again and become enlightened."
But I tell you one thing: next lifetime you will go again to an astrologer -- I can predict it right now! And last time also you had done this! Are you really interested in becoming enlightened or not? Why go on finding excuses? And people can find any kind of excuse -- people are great rationalizers. Now you have a reason not to meditate -- because this time around it is not going to happen, so why waste time? But then how is it going to happen? And why should you go to an astrologer in the first place? Even stars are not enlightened! At least one thing is absolutely certain: that enlightenment is not determined by any causes, it is a sudden phenomenon. Your death may be predictable, your illnesses may be predictable, your foolishnesses may be predictable, but not enlightenment. You see? (AT THIS MOMENT THE VIDEO LIGHTS SUDDENLY COME ON...!) How does it happen? -- for no reason at all!

Somebody asked Picasso, "You seem to be so much interested in art studies in the nude. Why?"
"Well," said Picasso, "I guess it's because I was born that way."

One can always find some reason.

Julie: "And if I refuse you, Edward, will you kill yourself?"
Edward: "That has been my usual custom."

The third world is of the mysteries of the heart, BHAKTI yoga. First is hatha yoga, second is mantra yoga, third is

bhakti yoga. Buddha says: Go on cutting across them; don't move sideways, otherwise you will be lost in the inner worlds. Hence Buddha is neither interested in yoga, nor in mantra, nor in bhakti, devotion, prayer -- nothing. His simple interest, one-pointed interest, is awareness.
And I absolutely agree with him because that is the only possibility for you to get rid of all this nonsense that you have been living for millions of lives. And you will go on repeating it, because just by living through it again and again you don't become intelligent. You change a little bit, but the basic foolishness remains the same.

A telegram arrived at the army camp saying that Private Smith's father had died. The sergeant was told by the colonel to break the news gently to Private Smith. With the colonel watching, the sergeant went over to the private and said, "Smith, your father died."
The colonel called the sergeant over and said, "If it ever happens again you must be more gentle -- break the news easier!"
Two weeks later another telegram arrived saying that Private Smith's mother had died.
The sergeant lined up the whole platoon and said, "Anyone who has a mother take two steps forward.... Not so fast, Private Smith!"

Now, just the strategy has changed, but it is the same! And that's what has been going on in your life, life after life. A little bit, of course, you change in the details, but the fundamental foolishness persists.

WITH DISPASSIONATE EYE
HE SEES EVERYWHERE
THE FALLING AND THE UPRISING.

One who has become aware, he sees everywhere only one thing: that everything is born and dies, everything begins and ends, that everything is a flux. Nothing is worth clinging to, nothing is worth holding, nothing is worth possessing, because it is bound to disappear sooner or later. Hence he remains nonpossessive. He moves through the world detached, calm, cool, seeing everywhere the falling and the uprising. He knows things come and go; he watches. When something arises he watches and knows perfectly well it will go. Misery comes -- he is not worried because he knows it will go. Happiness comes -- he is not excited because he knows it has come, it will go.
WITH DISPASSIONATE EYE.... Awareness gives him a new kind of eye, a new vision -- dispassionate. He simply looks with no desire; it is a totally different vision. When you look with no desire, the world appears totally different; when you look with desire you are confined in your desire and you color everything according to your desire.

"What are you thinking about, John?"
"The same as you, Jane."
"Oh, if you do, I'll scream!"

Not even a single word can you hear which is not colored by your inner processes of thought.

A farmer persuaded one of his cowhands to buy two raffle tickets for which the draw was to be held that night at a dance. The next day the cowhand asked the farmer who had won the draw.
"Oh, I won the first prize," said the farmer. "Aren't I lucky?"
"And who won second prize, farmer?" asked the cowhand.
"My wife won that. Wasn't she lucky?"
"Arr, she were that. And what about third prize?"
"Oh, my daughter won that. Wasn't she lucky? By the way, you haven't paid me for your tickets yet, have you?"
"No," replied the cowman. "Aren't I lucky?"

Everybody is looking with his own world of desires, expectations, passions, lust, greed, anger. There are a thousand and one things standing between you and your world; that's why you don't ever see it as it is.
Once your eye is completely clean, clean of all the dust, once it becomes a pure mirror, it reflects that which is. And that is truth and truth liberates, but it has to be your own. My truth cannot liberate you, Buddha's truth cannot liberate you. There is only one possibility of liberation, that is your own truth. And all that you have to do is to create a dispassionate eye.

AND WITH GREAT GLADNESS
HE KNOWS THAT HE HAS FINISHED.
HE HAS WOKEN FROM HIS SLEEP.

The master is glad that he is finished with all the nonsense, with all the stupidity, with all the games of life. He is glad

that he is finished, he is out of it, he has transcended. HE HAS WOKEN FROM HIS SLEEP.

Willie D. left Harlem to visit friends in Mobile. On his second night there he met Laura Mae, a beautiful lady whom he soon led out in the woods. As they prepared to make love, Willie removed his pants and hung them neatly on a tree.
"You must be from the North," said Laura Mae.
"Right on, baby," said Willie, "but how could you tell?"
"A Southern boy don't hang up his clothes 'cause when we're finished we're gonna be three miles from here!"

And these games are there... and where are your pants and where are you? Three miles away! Where are your senses? Where is your intelligence? You must have hung it up somewhere and you have completely forgotten where.

The nurse took the gentleman standing by the bed of a woman in the maternity ward aside and asked, "Would you like to see the baby?"
The gentleman nodded. "Looks just like you!" she enthused when they finally came out of the baby room.
Later the nurse told the woman about her husband's delight at seeing the baby. The woman was horrified. "Husband? My husband is on duty in the next town and hasn't arrived yet to see the baby! That man was here to collect the overdue installment on my refrigerator!"

People are asleep. What is happening to them is almost accidental. Why you have fallen in love with somebody is

accidental. Your birth is accidental, your death is going to be accidental.
Buddha says: The master looks at everything falling and rising, rising and falling. All are accidents. There is only one thing which is not accidental, which is intrinsic, and that is your awareness of it all. That awareness makes you awake.

The couple evolved a perfect plan for spending their time. One night a week he goes out with the boys, the other six nights SHE does.

Here is a flash from Detroit: They have come up with a fast car with equally fast brakes -- you can come to a standstill in just the car's length from a hundred miles per hour. It is equipped with a device which automatically wipes your remains from the windscreen.

Altie and Big Bertha stood before the altar. Big Bertha weighed two hundred pounds, her groom a mere one hundred.
"Does you take dis woman for your lawful wedded wife?" asked the minister.
"Ah takes nothin'," replied Altie. "Ah's bein' took!"

Just watch your life, what is happening.

After a long, boring sermon, the minister asks Sandy, "Well, how did you like my sermon, Sandy?"
Sandy replies, "Oh, a bit like outer space, Minister."
"What do you mean, 'a bit like outer space'?"

"Well," says Sandy, "plenty of it but not much in it!"

And that's exactly what your life is: plenty of it, but nothing much in it. Just accidents and nothing else. You have not yet known the intrinsic. That's what Buddha calls sleep. The master has woken from his sleep. He has come to see that which is eternal in him. He has come to see his own consciousness, he has become aware of his own awareness. And that is the ultimate truth, the ultimate awakening.

AND THE WAY HE HAS TAKEN
IS HIDDEN FROM MEN,
EVEN FROM SPIRITS AND GODS,
BY VIRTUE OF HIS PURITY.

And the way he has taken is invisible. It is not that of fasting; people can see that you are fasting, starving, killing your body. It is not that of torturing your body, it is not that of distorting your body through so-called yoga postures. The way of the buddha is so subtle; nobody can see it except you yourself -- unless you come across another buddha. Only another buddha can see it because it is simply the way of being watchful. How can anybody else see it? It has no ritual.
Buddha's religion is tremendously beautiful -- no ritual, no so-called ordinary religious performances -- simply, you remain watchful. But that is something inside you, nobody else can even detect what you are doing. You can be driving your car, you can be sitting in your office and you can be doing it. It is not even deep breathing -- that others can feel, that you are doing some deep breathing. It is

simply vipassana, it is simply watching, watching everything -- outside, inside.
Buddha has given the purest way and the simplest and the subtlest -- but the most fundamental. He has given the golden key, the master key which can unlock all the mysteries of life and existence.

IN HIM THERE IS NO YESTERDAY,
NO TOMORROW,
NO TODAY.

Time has disappeared, because when you become absolute awareness there is no time left. Not only yesterdays disappear... they disappear first. In that order they disappear.
IN HIM THERE IS NO YESTERDAY.... First yesterdays disappear; you become more and more unconcerned about the past. What is gone is gone, only fools care for it. And there are fools who are so worried about their past -- they even write letters to me....
One man from Switzerland has written a letter just the other day, saying, "Seeing your picture and reading a few of your books I have recognized you, that we have met in our past lives. I recognize you absolutely. I am sending my picture -- do you recognize me? If you recognize me, then I will come."
I have told Laxmi, "Inform that fellow that I don't recognize anybody from the past. The past is finished! You have not read my books and you have not seen me yet. And why should you be concerned about being recognized -- that I had seen you in the past? What purpose is it going to

fulfill?" Some ego-fulfillment is involved: "Then I will come" -- if I recognize him, that I have seen him in the past.

Now, this type of foolish person is caught by people like Muktananda. They will immediately say, "Yes, we have been together in the past. You have been a disciple to me in the past too and you were working so beautifully and you were growing so high. Just a little bit is left that can be done now, so get initiated into siddha yoga."

The past exists nowhere. Many people write to me, "Give us methods so that we can remember our past lives." What are you going to do? Even if you remember that you were Alexander the Great or Cleopatra, how is that going to help in any way? It will create more complications. You are already in such a mess!

That's why nature closes the door every time you die. This is great compassion, otherwise you will be born mad. Remembering all your past lives you will be in such a state that it will be impossible for you to function at all, because your mother may have been your wife in the past life and in another life she may have been your daughter. Now, how to behave with her? -- as your mother, as your wife, as your daughter? You will get very confused!

There is no need to bother about the past. As you become aware, the first thing to disappear from your mind is the past, and the past is one third of the mind. It is the very base of the mind, the foundation. Once it disappears, then the whole building starts collapsing.

The second to go is tomorrow. When there is no yesterday you cannot conceive of tomorrow. Tomorrow is nothing but a projection of yesterday. You would like to live the

joys of yesterday again tomorrow and you would like to avoid the miseries of yesterday; that's what your tomorrow is. If yesterday is gone, tomorrow is finished; soon it will disappear.

And when yesterdays are gone and tomorrows are gone, where is today? It exists between the two. If both the banks have disappeared, the river itself will disappear. If both the banks have disappeared, the bridge will disappear. Chunk by chunk in three pieces, time dissolves: first the past, then the future, and finally the present. Then you are left with no time, a state of timelessness. And this, Buddha says, is nirvana.

To experience timelessness is to experience deathlessness. To experience timelessness is to experience that which really is. It is neither past nor present nor future; it simply is. It cannot be confined to any compartment, into any category; it cannot be categorized. You simply experience each moment with tremendous peace and silence and joy. And each moment becomes so fragrant, so alive! Each moment becomes such a benediction that it is impossible to imagine it, it is impossible to describe it. One has to know it to know it; there is no other way. Nobody can explain it to you. It is not expressible, it is not explainable. It is the greatest mystery. When time disappears, mind disappears, what is left? That which is left, that vastness... that is your real being -- in Buddha's words, your nonbeing, your no-self.

Jesus will call it the kingdom of God; that is a positive way of describing it. And Buddha calls it a state of cessation -- all has ceased. AND WITH GREAT GLADNESS HE

KNOWS THAT HE HAS FINISHED. HE HAS WOKEN FROM HIS SLEEP.
Enough for today.

The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 12

Chapter #8

Chapter title: Born enlightened
28 April 1980 am in Buddha Hall

The first question:
Question 1
BELOVED MASTER,
WHAT IS INNOCENCE AND WHAT IS THE WAY TO BECOME INNOCENT?

Sonja, innocence is your very nature. You do not have to become it, you are already it. You are born innocent. Then layers and layers of conditioning are imposed upon your innocence. Your innocence is like a mirror and conditioning is like layers of dust. The mirror has not to be achieved, the mirror is already there -- or rather, here. The mirror is not lost, it is only hidden behind the layers of dust. You don't have to follow a way to reach your nature because you cannot leave your nature, you cannot go anywhere else. Even if you wanted to, it is impossible. That's exactly the definition of nature: nature means that which cannot be left behind, that which cannot be renounced. But you can forget about it. You cannot lose it but it can be forgotten.

And that's exactly what has happened. The mirror is not lost but forgotten -- forgotten because it is not functioning anymore as a mirror. Not that any defect has arisen in it, just layers of dust are covering it. All that is needed is to clean it, to remove those layers of dust.

The process of becoming innocent is not really a process of becoming, it is a process of discovering your being. It is a discovery, not an achievement. You don't attain to something new, you simply attain to that which you have always been. It is a forgotten language.

It happens many times: you see a person on the road, you recognize him, his face seems familiar. Suddenly you remember also that you know his name. You say, "It is just on the tip of my tongue," but still it is not coming to you. What is happening? If it is just on the tip of your tongue, then why can't you say it? You know that you know it, but still you are not able to remember it. And the more you try, the more difficult it becomes, because making an effort makes you more tense, and when you are tense you are farther away from your nature, you are farther away from that which is already there. When you are relaxed you are closer; when you are utterly relaxed, it will surface of its own accord.

So you try hard, but it doesn't come, so you forget all about it. Then lying down in your bath, or just swimming in the pool, and you are not even trying to remember that man's name when suddenly it bubbles up. What has happened? You were not trying to remember, and you were relaxed. When you are relaxed you are wide, when you are tense you become narrow -- the more tense, the more narrow. The passage between you and that which is inside you

becomes so narrow that nothing can pass through it, not even a single name.
All the great scientific discoveries have been made in this very mysterious way -- in this very UNscientific way, so to speak.

Madame Curie was working on a certain mathematical problem for three years continuously and the more she tried, the farther and farther away the solution seemed. She tried every possible way, but nothing was working, nothing was happening. And there was somewhere a deep, tacit feeling that "The solution exists. I am not struggling with something absurd." This tacit feeling continued all the time as an undercurrent; hence she could not drop the effort either. She was getting tired -- three years wasted for a single problem. But deep down within herself somebody was saying, "The solution IS possible. This exercise is not futile. Go on." And she went on stubbornly, she persisted. She dropped all other projects, she forced herself totally into the one problem. But the more she tried, the more impossible it became.
One night it happened, almost as it happened to Gautama the Buddha; of course, the problems were different, but the process was the same. Buddha had struggled for six years to attain enlightenment and he had attained nothing. Then one night he dropped the whole effort, went to sleep, and, by the morning when the last star was setting, he became enlightened.
That night Madame Curie dropped the idea, the whole project -- she closed the chapter. "Enough is enough! Three years wasted is too much for one problem." There were

other problems which were waiting to be solved. It was finished in her mind, although the tacit understanding was still there just like a constant murmur. But she had followed it long enough, it was time. One has only a limited time; three years is too much for one problem. Deliberately she dropped the idea. As far as she was concerned she closed the whole project. She went to sleep never to be bothered by that problem again.

And in the morning when she got up she was surprised. On a piece of paper on her table, the solution was there, written in her own handwriting. She could not believe her eyes. Who had done it? The servant could not have done it -- he knew nothing of mathematics, and if Madame Curie had not been able to do it in three years, how could the servant have done it? And there was nobody else in the house. And the servant had not entered in the night -- the doors were locked from inside. She looked closely and the handwriting resembled hers.

Then suddenly she remembered a dream. In the dream she had seen that she had got up, gone to the table, written something.... Slowly slowly, the dream became clear. Slowly slowly, she remembered that she had done it in the night. It was not a dream, she had actually done it. And this was the solution! For three years she had been struggling hard and nothing was happening -- and the night she dropped the project, it happened. What happened? She became relaxed.

Once you have dropped the effort you become relaxed, you become restful, you become soft, you become wide, you

become open. It was there inside her, it surfaced. Finding the mind no longer tense, it surfaced.

Innocence is there, you have simply forgotten it -- you have been made to forget it. Society is cunning. For centuries man has learned that you can survive in this society only if you are cunning; the more cunning you are, the more successful you will be. That's the whole game of politics: be cunning, be more cunning than others. It is a constant struggle and competition as to who can be more cunning. Whosoever is more cunning is going to succeed, is going to be powerful.

After centuries of cunningness man has learned one thing: that to remain innocent is dangerous, you will not be able to survive. Hence parents try to drive their children out of their innocence. Teachers, schools, colleges, universities exist for the simple work of making you more cunning, more clever. Although they call it intelligence it is not intelligence.

Intelligence is not against innocence, remember. Intelligence is the flavor of innocence, intelligence is the fragrance of innocence. Cunningness is against innocence; and cunningness, cleverness are not synonymous with intelligence. But to be intelligent needs a tremendous journey inwards. No schools can help, no colleges, no universities can help. Parents, priests, the society, they are all extrovert; they cannot help you to go inwards. And buddhas are very rare, few and far between. Not everybody is fortunate enough to find a buddha. Only a buddha can help you to be an intelligent person, but you cannot find so many buddhas who want to become primary school

teachers and high school teachers and university professors; it is impossible.

So there is a substitute for intelligence. Cunningness is a substitute for intelligence -- a very poor substitute, remember. And not only is it a poor substitute, it is just the opposite of it too. The intelligent person is not cunning; certainly intelligent, but his intelligence keeps his innocence intact. He does not sell it for mundane things. The cunning person is ready to sell his soul for small things.

Judas sold Jesus for only thirty silver coins -- just thirty silver coins. And a Jesus can be sold. Judas must have thought that he was being very intelligent, but he was simply cunning. If you don't like the word 'cunning' you can call him clever; that is just a good name for the same thing, for the same ugly thing.

The society prepares you to be cunning so that you are capable of competing in this struggle for existence, the struggle to survive. It is a cut-throat competition, everybody is after everybody else's throat. People are ready to do anything to succeed, to be famous, to climb the ladder of success, name and fame. They are ready to use you as stepping-stones. Unless you are also cunning you will be simply used, manipulated. Hence the society trains every child to be cunning, and these layers of cunningness are hiding your innocence.

Innocence has not to be achieved, Sonja, it is already there. Hence it is not a question of becoming, it is your being. It has only to be discovered -- or rediscovered. You have to drop all that you have learned from others, and you will immediately be innocent.

Hence my antagonism towards all knowledge that is borrowed. Don't quote the Bible, don't quote the Gita. Don't behave like parrots. Don't just go on living on borrowed information. Start seeking and searching for your own intelligence.

A negative process is needed; it is to be achieved through VIA NEGATIVA. That is the Buddha's way. You have to negate all that has been given to you. You have to say, "This is not mine; hence I have no claim over it. It may be true, it may not be true. Who knows? Others say it is so; unless it becomes my experience I cannot agree or disagree. I will not believe or disbelieve. I will not be a Catholic or a communist, I will not be a Hindu or a Mohammedan. I will simply not follow any ideology." Because, whoever you follow, you will be gathering dust around yourself. Stop following.

Here, being with me, you are not my followers, remember it. Friends certainly, but not followers. You are in a love affair with me, but it is not a question of following. And my work here is not to teach you something, but to help you to discover yourself. Just drop all knowledge. It hurts because you have carried that knowledge for so long and you have been bragging so much about that knowledge -- your degrees, M.A.s and Ph.D.s and D.Litt.s, and you have been bragging about all those degrees. And suddenly I am saying to you: Drop all that nonsense.

Just be as simple as a child. Just be again a child as you were born, as God sent you into this world. In that mirrorlike state you will be able to reflect that which is. Innocence is the door to knowing. Knowledge is the barrier and innocence is the bridge.

The second question:
Question 2
BELOVED MASTER,
CAN I ALSO BECOME A GAUTAMA THE BUDDHA?

Govind, yes and no. Yes because buddhahood is nobody's personal possession. Gautama does not have it as a personal attribute; he is not the owner of it and he is not the only buddha. There have been many buddhas before him, there have been many buddhas after him. The word 'buddha' simply means the awakened one.
You are asleep. Naturally, if you can be asleep you can wake up. One who is capable of sleep is also capable of waking up; the very phenomenon of sleep implies the capacity to wake up. If you are incapable of waking up you will be incapable of sleeping too; they are two sides of the same coin.
So, Govind, if you can sleep, if you can dream, you can wake up, you can be a buddha. Hence I say yes -- but you cannot be a GAUTAMA the Buddha; Gautama you cannot be. You can be Govind the Buddha, but not Gautama the Buddha; that is not possible. Nature never repeats. They say history repeats -- and it certainly repeats because history consists of stupid human beings. What else can they do? They can only repeat. But nature never repeats; it never creates the same person again, the same form again. Nature is immensely innovative.
That's the meaning when we say God is a creator. A creator is never repetitive, he never creates the same painting again

and again. He goes on creating something new, he is always on a new venture.

Govind, God has never created another person like you and will never create another person like you. He loves individuality, he loves uniqueness. That's his way of showing respect to you, tremendous respect. And it is not only so with human beings: go into the garden, watch the leaves minutely -- you will not find even two leaves exactly the same. Not on the whole of the earth will you find two leaves exactly the same, or two pebbles exactly the same on all the seashores.

Everything is unique, everything has its own signature. Just as your thumb is unique and its print is unique -- there is nobody else who has the same print -- what to say about your soul? Even about such small details God is so careful -- or you can say "nature," if "God" has lost its appeal for you. If the word 'God' has lost its appeal for you, 'nature' is as beautiful, or 'existence', or whatsoever you want. Buddha likes the word 'dhamma' -- the universal law. Lao Tzu loves the word 'tao' -- the harmony of existence, the inner order. The universe is not a chaos, that much is certain. Whether there is a God or not is irrelevant, the universe is not a chaos. That's why we call it a universe. It has a certain unity, hence "universe," otherwise we would have called it a "multiverse." It is not a chaos, there is an order running inside it, a thread which joins everything together. Even the smallest grass blade is joined to the biggest star. Nothing is separate, and yet everything is unique and individual. This is the tremendous beauty of existence: it loves and respects the individual, it nourishes the individual.

Hence, Govind, you cannot be Gautama the Buddha, but there is no need to be Gautama the Buddha. That will be ugly, that will be imitative. Never try to imitate because then you will always be only a carbon copy and never something original. And unless you are something original you are not using your life's opportunity to its maximum, you are wasting it.

Don't be a Christian -- be a christ. And don't be a Buddhist -- be a buddha. The Christian is trying to be like Jesus Christ, the Buddhist is trying to be like Gautam Buddha, and this is not possible. What is possible is that you will become an imitator, an actor. And you can act beautifully. You can walk like Buddha, you can talk like Buddha, you can sit like Buddha. You can use the same words, the same language, the same gestures, but still deep down you will be Govind, not Gautam. And you will know it! That all that you are doing is just on the outside. And it is ugly because it will create a kind of hypocrisy in you.

Hence all Christians are hypocrites and all Buddhists are hypocrites. All followers are bound to be hypocrites because they are divided persons, split persons. And whatsoever they show is only on the surface, and whatsoever they really are is hidden behind. And there is a constant conflict between these two, they live two kinds of lives. Avoid this.

I know this desire arises. This desire seems to be very prevalent.

Jesus and Moses were playing golf. When they came to a two-hundred-yard water hazard. Jesus took out a five iron club. Moses warned him that two hundred yards were too

far for a five-iron, but Jesus insisted, "If Arnold Palmer can make it with a five-iron, so can I!"
He hit the ball and it landed in the middle of the lake.
"Will you get the ball for me, Moses?" asked Jesus.
"Just this once," he replied, walked over, raised his club, and parted the water. Then he walked out and brought the ball back to Jesus.
Again Jesus took a five-iron and again Moses warned, "If you don't make it, I'm not going to get it for you!"
Jesus reassured him, "If Arnold Palmer can do it, surely I can do it!"
Again he swung the five-iron and again the ball fell in the water. This time Jesus walked out on the water, reached down, and was picking up the ball when the next foursome came up to the tee where Moses was standing. The leader of the group asked Moses, "Who does he think he is, Jesus Christ?"
"No," replied Moses, "he thinks he is Arnold Palmer!"

Govind, you just be Govind the Buddha. There is no need for you to be Gautama the Buddha. Gautama was beautiful, but once it is beautiful -- twice it is too much. And what is the point? What will your contribution to existence be if you are Gautama the Buddha? No contribution. Gautama has done it, he has done what a Gautama can do. You cannot improve upon it.
You do something that YOU can do and no Gautama can ever do. God has great hopes for you: he hopes you will contribute something to existence. He never loses hope, that's why he goes on creating people. Although people go on deceiving, people go on misusing the opportunity,

people go on wasting time, but still God goes on hoping. With each child a new hope is born in the world. You have to contribute something that only you can do and nobody else can do, hence YOU have to do it. Forget this whole idea of being Gautama the Buddha -- just be yourself.
And that's exactly what Buddha has taught, that's exactly his essential message. His last words to his disciples were: APPA DEEPO BHAVA -- be a light unto yourself.
When he was dying, naturally thousands of disciples had gathered and they started crying and weeping. The master was leaving, it was natural, and the master had lived with them for forty-two years and they had loved the man, they had loved his vibe. He was one of the most beautiful men who has ever walked on the earth. Not only was he spiritually beautiful, physically he was also one of the most beautiful men. About Jesus that cannot be said. He was spiritually beautiful, but the ancient scriptures say that physically he was not beautiful. He was only four feet five inches and, moreover, a hunchback. Buddha was one of the most beautiful expressions physically too, really a lotus flower. And they had all loved him. They had renounced everything and risked everything for this man and now he was leaving. They started crying. One can understand their crying and their weeping and their tears.
But Buddha said, "Stop! Stop all this nonsense! Why are you crying? What difference is it going to make? I was not your light, you have to be your own light. And," Buddha said to them, "it may be a blessing in the form of a curse, because when I am gone you will try to find yourselves. While I was here you were more interested in me; although

I was insisting: Go in! you were focused on me. Now I will not be here, you are bound to go inside."
And that's exactly what happened: many people became enlightened after Buddha died. When they were asked, "Why did so many people become enlightened when Buddha died?" they all said, "Now we understand what he meant, that in the form of a curse it is a blessing -- because once you have seen a buddha and he is gone there is nothing worth seeing outside. So we closed our eyes. "We have seen all that was the most worth seeing: we have seen the most beautiful person. What else is there? There is nothing worth hearing, worth seeing. We closed our eyes, we turned inwards and because Buddha was not there anymore we heard his words for the first time. When he was here we were able to postpone, tomorrow or the day after tomorrow. We were so much enchanted by his personality, by his charisma. Once he was gone we had to fall back upon our own selves. Maybe that was his last device."
Govind, be Govind the Buddha!

The third question:
Question 3
BELOVED MASTER,
ARE THERE GREAT DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE DIFFERENT RACES OF MANKIND?

Meera, essentially there are no differences at all. Essentially there cannot be any differences. The whole of mankind is one species of being. But different races have evolved different qualities. They have lived in different

climates, they have encountered different situations, they have passed through different histories; naturally they have learned to behave in different ways.

For example, the Jews had to experience a totally different history from anybody else. They have lived for centuries without a country, they have wandered all over the world, they have lived without security, without a home; naturally that has made them very money-minded. When you don't have a home, when you don't have a country, then all your security becomes focused on money; then it is only money that can save you. And when you become focused on money, naturally you become more clever than others in earning it. Your whole being turns into a money-making machine. That's what a Jew is -- a money-making machine. Nobody can defeat him in that because they have lived a totally different past.

When you are living in your home surrounded by the same kind of people, the same race, protected by the country, by the society, you need not worry too much about money. Even without money you are not going to die, people will support you, you can depend on that. But the Jews had no way to depend on anything else; hence money became their country, money became their religion, money became their home, money became their security. That was bound to happen.

In a country like India where for thousands of years everybody has been told to seek and search for his salvation.... And, of course, you can seek and search only for YOUR salvation; you cannot seek and search for somebody else's salvation, that is not possible. The inward journey has to be done in absolute aloneness. But the by-

product of it has been that Indians have become very selfish. It was bound to happen. It is an ugly phenomenon, but too much insistence on going inwards, extreme insistence on going inwards, has made people very selfish, because there is nobody who is yours. That has been the teaching of all the mahatmas: "You are alone. You are born alone, you have to live alone, you have to die alone. Nobody is going with you. All relationships are just superficial, so don't be bothered much by them and don't invest much in them." That has made India more selfish than any other country.

This is one of the most selfish countries in the world. It is because of this selfishness that India has remained in bondage for thousands of years -- because everybody thinks only of himself. So if an enemy comes and conquers the country, who bothers about the country? The country does not really exist; there is no idea of nation in India. Individuals are there, but there is no nation. Hence all kinds of quarrels and small divisions and subdivisions... you will not find the same thing happening anywhere else in the world. Every political party goes on splitting into many many small fragments. Then those small fragments start splitting into smaller ones, and the process seems to be unending -- unless you are your own party! You are the member and you are the president and you are the secretary. When only you are left alone, only then will the process stop. And who knows whether there too the process will stop or not? -- because the habit of splitting everything has gone so deep that you may start saying, "Legs are not part of my party, the lower part of my body is not in my party, only the higher. The higher part is superior and the

lower is inferior. The higher part means the brahmins, and the lower means the SUDRAS, the untouchables."

Every race has passed through different phases, different climates. This is a hot country. A hot country makes people lazy, so you cannot compete with Indians as far as laziness is concerned. They are utterly lazy and lousy! You cannot compete with them, it is impossible; they will surpass everyone in that. No country can have any superiority as far as laziness and lousiness is concerned. Indians are the tops! Because it is a hot country and the climate is not provoking people to work more, people have remained poor. If one person in the whole family earns then it is enough. If just enough is available to survive, Indians are satisfied, more than satisfied. Of course, they find rationalizations for it, they find great spiritual rationalizations for it -- "We are very contented people." That is all nonsense. The reality is that they are simply lazy and the climate is hot and they don't want to work -- so they have to create a philosophy to support themselves: "We are not much concerned about mundane things, we only think of spiritual things."

India condemns everybody as materialist -- and those materialists have always been coming and conquering these great spiritualists! And all their spiritual power has not been of any use. All their Sai Babas, etcetera, have not been of any help. All they can do is, they can produce ash, holy ash, through their spiritual powers, nothing else. Just ordinary magic tricks, any stupid person can do it -- nothing to do with spirituality.

This country has not been able to create science, technology, because, the Indians will say, "We are so spiritual we don't bother about creating material wealth."

But they all hanker for it, deep down they all are longing for it. Their hearts are full of desires, but because of their old habit of laziness they can't do anything.

The cold countries became world powers for the simple reason that in a cold country if you want to be alive you have to work. In fact, when the climate is cold it provokes you, challenges you to work; otherwise you will become cold, you will die. You have to work hard, only then can you feel hot and alive. Cold countries became world powers; no hot country has ever been a world power, cannot be. Cold countries easily defeated big, hot countries. England is a small country, not bigger than a small state of India, a small province, but it dominated India -- easily, very easily, with no problem. It was so simple to dominate. Cold countries become adventurous; Indians have never been adventurous. They will not leave their villages. There are thousands of people in India who have never gone beyond the boundary of their village, and they will never go. But the cold countries started traveling around the world. Now the world is finished; they are trying to reach the stars -- they have reached the moon.

Everest is Indian, the mountain is Indian, but no Indian has ever tried to climb it. "For what?" Indians will say. "For what? What is there? It is so futile!" But for a hundred years Western mountain-climbers have been coming and risking their lives; many have died knowing that it is risky. The more risky it was, the more it was a challenge.

When Edmund Hillary, the first man to reach the top of Everest, was asked, "Why?" -- of course by an Indian! -- "Why did you try in the first place?" do you know his answer? He said, "Simply because it is there! It is a

challenge. For no other reason. We cannot tolerate this mountain unless we conquer it -- it is a humiliation! The mountain stands there so high and goes on telling us that nobody has been able yet to climb up to the top. It is a constant challenge!" But no Indian is challenged by it.
Every country, every race has lived in a different way for centuries: climate, situations, history, accidents, ideologies also have made much difference.
For example, Jews would not have been in such trouble if they had not carried this idea that they are the chosen race of God. The very idea has been the cause of all their trouble. If you think you are the chosen people of God, then of course you will be in trouble, because others will start fighting with you and proving that you are not the chosen people. "We are the chosen people. Who says you are the chosen people?" The very idea has been torturing them.
But this is something to understand: people love their misery. People are sadomasochists, they always love suffering. So any idea that gives you suffering, you cling to it. Jews have suffered so much, but they don't drop their idea. In fact, the very suffering and the antagonism of the whole world proves that they must be the chosen people of God; otherwise why is everybody against them?
So there are great differences on the surface -- and the surface is all that comes in contact with others. Intrinsically no two human beings are different; in their innermost core all human beings are just human beings.
So, Meera, we have to understand both things. Essentially, all human beings are one, but accidentally they are not one. And it is not bad that they are not one. Variety is beautiful, it enriches the world, it makes the world more beautiful. It

will be an ugly world where only Hindus live, where only Jews live, or where only Negroes live. It will lose all charm, it will lose all beauty.
It is such a beautiful mess.... Italians and Polacks and the Germans and the French, and they all have their own ways, their own understandings, and they have all developed different styles.
So although everybody, every human being belongs to one species, still we have been able to create a variety -- different flowerings on the same bush. It makes the world really rich. I would not like to destroy these differences, I would like to enhance them -- still with this understanding that human beings are human beings. Nobody is higher and nobody is lower; we should drop the idea of hierarchy, but variety is good.

Do you know how to recognize an Italian in a submarine? He is the only one carrying a parachute!
And how do you recognize the Polack? He is the one running after the Italian to steal his parachute!

A colored maid and her white employer became pregnant at the same time and gave birth on the same day. A few months later the white woman came running into the kitchen and exclaimed to the maid, "My baby said his first word today!"
In the crib the colored baby sat up and said, "He did? What did he say?"

An American couple was touring Europe.

As the bus pulled up at yet another famous cathedral in yet another famous town, the wife turned to the husband and said, "You do the inside of the cathedral, dear, and I will do the outside."

An airplane full of tourists is flying from New York to Texas when one of the engines stops working.
The captain speaks to the passengers: "Ladies and gentlemen, in order to stay alive we have to throw all the luggage overboard. Then we will have less weight and we will safely reach our destination."
So they do. But a few hours later the second engine stops working and again the captain speaks to the passengers: "Ladies and gentlemen, in order to safely reach our destination we need three persons to jump off the plane."
An Englishman stands up. "Sorry," he says, "I beg your pardon... but of course...." He turns around to the rest of the passengers, grabs his umbrella and jumps out of the plane shouting, "God save the Queen!"
A Frenchman gets up with tears in his eyes. "Vive la France!" he cries and jumps out.
A man from India wearing pure white khadi clothes, looking more like Morarji Desai than Morarji Desai himself, walks through the plane, grabs one old woman by the throat, throws her out of the plane and shouts, "Long live Mahatma Gandhi!"

Once a British lady was approached by a German man. As he was quite taken by her beauty, he marched over to her and shouted, "I love you!"
She said, "If you really love me, jump off the cliff!"

Before he could think he kissed her hand and jumped.
A short time later the British lady was approached by an Italian. He swaggered up to her and passionately whispered in her ear, "Amore mio!"
She responded by whispering in his ear, "If you really love me, jump off the cliff."
Coming up for air between kisses he answered, "If you really love me, you must jump with me!"
Impressed with his wit, she conceded to make love with him.
Still a short while later the British lady was approached by a British man. He made her acquaintance and invited her for tea. After several hours of polite conversation, he said, with some reserve, "I love you."
She answered, "If you really love me, jump off the cliff."
To which he gallantly replied, "Ladies first!"

The fourth question:
Question 4
BELOVED MASTER,
IS THERE REALLY NO DIFFERENCE BETWEEN AN ORDINARY PERSON AND ONE WHO IS ENLIGHTENED?

Narendra, everyone is born enlightened. Everyone is born absolutely innocent, absolutely pure, absolutely empty. But that innocence, that purity, that emptiness, is bound to be lost because it is unconscious. One has to regain it -- one has to gain it consciously. That is the only difference between an ordinary person and the enlightened one.

The ordinary person came with the same potential, has got the same potential still, but he has not claimed it yet. The enlightened one has lost it and claimed it back. The ordinary person is in a state of paradise lost and the enlightened person is in the state of paradise regained. But you can gain it any moment, it is up to you. Nobody can prevent you from becoming enlightened.

It is not a question of any particular talent. Not everybody is a musician and not everybody can be a musician; that is a question of talent. Only a few are musicians and real musicians are born musicians. You can learn the technique; if you go on and on practicing music, sooner or later you will be able to play, but you will still not be a musician. You will only be a technician -- one who knows how to play but one who has no inspiration, one who is not really in tune with the music of existence. Music is not flowing through you naturally, spontaneously.

Not everybody can be a poet and not everybody can be a scientist or mathematician; these are talents. But enlightenment is not a question of talents. Everybody is enlightened; to be alive is enough. Life itself is the only need, the only requirement. If you are not dead you can still become enlightened. If you are dead, then of course wait for the next round, but nobody is so dead. People are ninety-nine percent dead, but even if you are one percent alive that is enough. That much fire is enough; it can be kindled, it can be helped. It can be used to create, to trigger more fire in you.

The difference between the enlightened one and the ordinary person is not one of talent. This is the first thing to be remembered, because many people think that it is a

question of talent. "A Jesus is talented, a Buddha is talented; we are not so talented. How can WE become enlightened?" No, it is not a question of talent at all. You cannot become a Michelangelo and you cannot become a Shakespeare unless you are born one, but you can become a christ, a buddha.

Everybody is entitled to it, it is everybody's birthright, but you will have to reclaim it. And the effort has to be made consciously. You have lost it simply because you were unconscious. And if you remain unconscious, then the difference will remain. The difference is only of unconsciousness.

Buddha is as ordinary as you are, but he is full of awareness in his ordinariness. Because of awareness his ordinariness becomes luminous. He lives the same ordinary life, remember it. That is another illusion that people are carrying within themselves: that a Buddha has to be extraordinary, that a Jesus has to walk on water. You cannot walk on water, so how can you be a Jesus? A buddha has to be special, from the very beginning.

The stories say that before Buddha was born his mother had a few dreams. Those dreams are absolutely necessary. If the mother has not had those dreams before the birth, then the person cannot be a buddha. Now this is sheer stupidity! Joining Buddha with the dreams of his mother is sheer nonsense, there cannot be a more stupid idea.

And what kind of dreams? Jainas have different dreams. Before Mahavira is born, the mother has a few dreams. She sees one white elephant -- that is a must. Every TIRTHANKARA, every prophet of the Jainas, before he is born has to be preceded by a dream of the mother of a

white elephant -- as if the son is going to be a white elephant!

Buddha's mother has to see a few dreams, a series of dreams.... These are just stories, fictitious, created by the followers afterwards. The story is that the mother of a buddha has to die immediately when he is born, she cannot live. How can she live after such a great phenomenon? It is so vast and so big, the experience is such that it is bigger than death, she simply disappears. But Mahavira's mother lives, Jesus' mother lives; they didn't have that idea there. But they have other ideas: that when Jesus is born he has to be born to a virgin mother.

Now people can go to absurdities, to the very extremes of absurdities, just to make one thing settled in your minds: that Jesus IS special while you are ordinary. Now where will you find a virgin mother?... and you have already missed. Next time maybe you try again to find a virgin mother -- and unless you conspire with the Holy Ghost, it is impossible. How will you manage? And then three wise men have to come and a star has to lead them. Now stars don't do that at all, no star can do it. Stars go on their routes; they cannot lead the wise men from the East to the exact place where Jesus is born in a stable, in a poor man's house. Stars can't do that -- that is impossible.

These fictitious stories have been invented just to give the idea that you are ordinary and these people are special. My whole effort here is to proclaim to you that if they are special you are special, if you are ordinary they are ordinary. One thing is certain: you don't belong to different categories, you belong to the same category.

The miracle is not walking on water, the miracle is not walking in fire; the miracle is waking up. That is the real miracle. All else is nonsense.

Wake up... and you are a buddha! Wake up and you are enlightened! And when you wake up it is not that you will become totally different from your ordinary self; you will be the same person but luminous. You will eat in the same way, but it will not be the same, there will be an intrinsic difference. You will live in the old way, yet it will not be the old because YOU will be new. You will bring a new touch to everything and whatsoever you touch will start turning into gold, will start turning into something meaningful. Before it was meaningless, now it will have significance and meaning. And it is time that you wake up!

The master cannot force you to wake up; the master can only create a situation in which a process can be triggered in you. And ANY situation can be helpful.

Lao Tzu became enlightened just by seeing a leaf, a dry leaf falling from a tree. As the leaf started falling towards the earth, he became enlightened. Now what happened? Seeing the dead leaf falling on the wings of the wind, with no idea of its own, utterly relaxed, utterly surrendered to the winds, he had a glimpse. He must have been in a very vulnerable state. And from that very moment he became a dead leaf in the winds. He surrendered his ego, he surrendered his clinging, he surrendered his own ideas of what should be and should not be. He surrendered all his mind, he simply became a let-go. And that's how he became enlightened.

Anything can trigger the process. The master only creates a thousand and one situations. Who knows what situation is going to trigger the process?

Here you are going through hundreds of groups, doing all kinds of meditations, because nobody can predict in what moment, in what situation, what is going to trigger the process. It has always happened in such a mysterious way, it is not a scientific phenomenon. It is not a question of cause and effect, otherwise things would have been easier. You heat the water to a hundred degrees and it becomes vapor -- but it is not like that. A few people evaporate at zero degrees, a few people evaporate at a hundred degrees, a few people evaporate at one thousand degrees. People are not matter; people are consciousness, people are freedom, so nobody knows what will trigger the process. Not even the master can say that this is going to trigger the process. He can arrange all kinds of devices and he can wait patiently, lovingly, compassionately, prayerfully, and you have to move through all kinds of devices.

I am talking to you. Any word may trigger it... or maybe just a pause may trigger it... and suddenly the sleep is gone, the dreams have disappeared. You are born, spiritually born, twice-born. You have again become a child. That's what buddhahood is, that's what enlightenment is.

Narendra, you ask me, "Is there really no difference between an ordinary person and one who is enlightened?"

There is no difference in this sense: that both belong to the same world of consciousness. One is asleep, one is awake; hence the difference. But the difference is only peripheral, not central, not intrinsic, but accidental.

Respect the buddhas and that will teach you to respect yourself. Respect the buddhas, but don't condemn yourself. Love yourself because you are also carrying a buddha within you. You are also carrying a bud which is going to become a buddha. Any moment, any day... it can be now, it can be here....

The fifth question:
Question 5
BELOVED MASTER,
A GERMAN NEWSPAPER CALLED YOU THE MOST FAMOUS RELIGIOUS LEADER AFTER POPE PAUL AND KHOMEINI. HOW DO YOU FEEL IN THAT COMPANY?

Veet Vivarto, I would rather be in hell than be in that stupid company -- Pope Paul the Polack and Khomeini the Khomeiniac! I have not done anything so sinful in my life to suffer that company. I have no karmas to be punished -- that will be a punishment.

I have heard:
One mahatma, a great saint, died -- must have been someone like Muktananda. One of his followers died the next day. When the follower reached heaven, the first thing that he was interested in was, "Where is our guru, our Muktananda? He must be enjoying -- he must have been given all the joys that only heaven can provide."
And then suddenly he saw Muktananda underneath a beautiful tree... with whom, do you know? -- with Sophia

Loren! Sophia Loren sitting in his lap, both naked, hugging each other! The follower fell at the feet of Muktananda. He said, "Guru Deva, O Great Master, I always knew that you were the greatest master; now I am seeing with my own eyes. God is so pleased with you, he has given you Sophia Loren as a reward!"
Muktananda looked very angrily at the man and said, "You fool, stop talking nonsense! You don't understand a thing. She is not my reward, I am her punishment!"

I have not committed any sin so I don't think that I belong to that company. I belong to very ordinary people -- drunkards, gamblers, not to such stupid people, full of holy cow dung!
But that journalist must think he is praising me. That's what goes on in the world: people are so unconscious that they don't know what praise is and what condemnation is. This is condemnation, not praise!
Khomeini is not religious at all. Khomeini is the most irreligious person present today. And do you think Pope Paul is religious? If he is religious he cannot even be Catholic, what to say about being Pope Paul? He cannot be a pope. A religious person cannot be a Catholic or a Christian or a Hindu or a Mohammedan. These are just politicians playing the same game of power politics in the name of religion.
I have seen the article. The article is one of the most positive articles written about me, except for this small condemnation. So the journalist is not really trying to condemn me; in his vision, in his idea, he is praising me as the third most important religious leader.

I am not religious in the ordinary sense of the word, and I am not a leader at all. I don't like leading anybody. Certainly I am a finger pointing at the moon, but I am not a leader. You have to do all your walking, I am not coming along with you. I am not going to be ahead of you leading you. You are not to follow me, you have to be your own self. I can simply share my experience.
If that experience touches something in you, if that experience makes you aware that life is not what you think it is, that it is far more, that's enough. If I can create a thirst in you, that's enough -- a thirst for God. I am not a leader. If I can create enough thirst in you, then you will seek and search. And those who seek find, and those who search are bound to find, are absolutely, inevitably bound to find. All that is needed is an authentic thirst, a thirst in the very heart, in the very center of your being.
But these people are fast asleep. This journalist has never been here, he does not understand anything that I am saying. Otherwise he would not have compared me with Khomeini and Pope Paul.

The Prince of Wales was vacationing in Paris. After a sumptuous dinner and many drinks he asked the hotel manager for a beautiful young lady to keep him company during the night. The manager showed him to his room and sent him a young lady.
Although the prince was quite drunk he tried to make love with the lovely woman. Each time he tried, however, she would cry out, "MATOUSKA! MATOUSKA!" After several attempts he fell asleep exhausted.

The next morning the prince went for a stroll to a nearby village where he noticed some boys shooting marbles into holes in the ground. Suddenly one of the boys shouted, "Matouska! Matouska!"
The prince, surprised to hear this word used again, was curious and asked what it meant.
One boy answered, "Matouska means the wrong hole."

What more can you expect from a man who is fast asleep and drunk? But he was doing his best -- at least he was trying to make love.... Missing the target, that is another thing.

The sixth question:
Question 6
BELOVED MASTER,
WHAT IS A FATHER?

Anand Sugeet, a father is a Catholic priest -- who is neither a husband nor a father; but Catholics are well known to do such strange things. Why they call their priests "father" is really strange. Pope also means "father"; it is another form of "papa."

Father Francesco and Father Viggiani were sitting in a grotto chatting.
"Do you think the pope will ever allow priests to marry?" asked Father Francesco.
"It won't happen in our time," replied Father Viggiani. "Maybe in our children's."

The seventh question:
Question 7
BELOVED MASTER,
CAN I ALSO BECOME THE PRESIDENT OF AMERICA?

My God, Tom! I believe you must be the same Tom -- Tom the Tourist! Now great things are happening to you!
Reading your question for the first time I understood the meaning of the word 'tomfoolery'. I had always wondered, why this word 'tomfoolery'? Now I know.
Yes, you can be the president, only I think President Tom won't look right. Change your name to Banana, Tomato, Potato. Mr. Potato the President -- what pure poetry! And I think you have the required qualifications for it. The first thing is, you have to be stupid.
You have seen what Jimmy Carter did just two days ago? When Vivek told Asheesh, Asheesh thought it was a joke... because our orange people don't read newspapers. Who cares about all this nonsense? But what he has done is so stupid one cannot believe it. They must have sent their best people for this rescue mission, and what happened is really just great, far out! The two American planes crashed into each other and eight persons died and the rescue mission was canceled. Now the whole world is laughing!
But this is bound to happen when you make a peanut grower a president -- this is bound to happen. What else can he do? His whole life he was growing peanuts, now he has grown up and become a nut himself!
So the first requirement is: you have to be stupid. If you are not, at least pretend to be. That's what Nixon was trying to

do; he was not that stupid, but he pretended long enough. But finally the Americans found out that he was not that stupid; they threw him out immediately. So don't be caught -- continue doing something stupid. If you are caught, the same fate awaits you. Be like Ford, just pure stupidity, unadulterated!

The second requirement... that I have been trying to find for you. I have been doing great research since your question! The second requirement is: you need an ugly wife. This is something strange. Nixon, Ford, Carter, they have such ugly ducklings. It is strange, it cannot be coincidental. Only Kennedy had a beautiful wife, and they killed him, remember. So avoid!

Now Reagan has every chance, because just the other day, I was looking at his wife's photograph. I said, "This man seems to have every possibility. Now he can defeat anyone -- as far as his wife is concerned he can defeat Nixon, Ford, Carter, all." And they are sitting together on a sofa and the caption reads, "Reagan is being charged by his wife." I was simply wondering... this woman can DIScharge anybody! If you have such a wife you will renounce the world immediately! And Reagan is being charged by his wife....

So these two things I have found -- stupidity and an ugly wife. And change your name: become Reverend Banana, Reverend Tomato, Reverend Potato -- anything will do. Tom does not look good, it is too ordinary; you need a special name, and then you can become the president. And you have toured enough now -- go back home. This is the time! Carter is losing ground every day, don't miss this opportunity. Get married to an ugly woman, pretend to be stupid. Learn to laugh for no reason, no rhyme. Just

exercise your lips, keep them open as much as possible. And I think you have every possibility, as any other American has. Don't waste your time here anymore, because you don't belong here. This is not the place. We don't prepare people to become presidents and prime ministers.

The last question:
Question 8
BELOVED MASTER,
BUDDHA SAYS, "THE MASTER GIVES UP MISCHIEF." BUT AS I KNOW YOU, YOU ARE PAR EXCELLENCE MASTER OF MISCHIEF! HAVE YOU SOMETHING TO SAY ABOUT IT?

Dharma Bodhi, do you think I need to say something about it? But Buddha had no knowledge about me. When he said that, I was not included in it. When I make sutras, then you will see!
Enough for today.

The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 12

Chapter #9
Chapter title: Possessing nothing, wanting nothing
29 April 1980 am in Buddha Hall

POSSESSING NOTHING,
WANTING NOTHING.

HE IS FULL OF POWER.
FEARLESS, WISE, EXALTED.
HE HAS VANQUISHED ALL THINGS.
HE SEES BY VIRTUE OF HIS PURITY.

HE HAS COME TO THE END OF THE WAY,
OVER THE RIVER OF HIS MANY LIVES,
HIS MANY DEATHS.

BEYOND THE SORROW OF HELL,
BEYOND THE GREAT JOY OF HEAVEN,
BY VIRTUE OF HIS PURITY.

HE HAS COME TO THE END OF THE WAY.

ALL THAT HE HAD TO DO, HE HAS DONE.

AND NOW HE IS ONE.

These are the last golden sutras of THE DHAMMAPADA:

POSSESSING NOTHING,
WANTING NOTHING.

HE IS FULL OF POWER.

Why does man want to possess? It is one of the most fundamental things to be understood. Unless you understand why there is a constant hankering to possess more and more things, money, power, you will not be able to get rid of this insanity of possessiveness. Man wants to

possess because he has not known who he is; he is unaware of his inner kingdom. He thinks he is a beggar, hence he begs.

Desires are beggars. The more you desire, the more you prove that you are unaware of your own treasures. That very unawareness leads you into the desert of possessiveness. It is a desert because you will not attain to anything. You may possess the whole world, still you will remain the same hollow person, empty, your life meaningless, your vision clouded, your heart dead, your soul unborn.

Man wants to possess because he feels tacitly that something is missing. What exactly is missing he is not able to decipher, but something is missing -- that much is felt by everybody -- so rush and fill the gap. Naturally we start imitating others.

Children are imitators; the only way they learn things is by imitating their parents and the people who surround them. They are all running after money, after power, prestige, respectability. Naturally the child thinks these are the things that have to be attained, achieved. "Whatsoever the cost, I have to risk all. And life is short; hence I have to focus my energies in a concentrated way. I have to move in one particular direction with my totality. I have to be money-mad if I really want to possess money, because I am not the only one who is running after it; millions of people are running after it. It is going to be a great struggle and only those who are cunning, clever, crafty, are going to win the race." So be cunning, be crafty, but anyhow you have to win the race. You have to prove yourself, that you are somebody, that your life was not in vain.

The child learns all this in a very unconscious way from the atmosphere into which he is born. And whatsoever the society is, the game is the same. Somewhere it is money that is more important. If you are born in America, money is more important; that brings power. If you are born in Soviet Russia, then money is not so important; then political power is real money, real gold. You have to be high in the hierarchy of the Communist Party, but the game is the same. If you are born in a so-called religious country like India, then you have to become a great saint, you have to defeat all the other saints. It is the same game now played in the name of religion. You have to be the greatest ascetic, the most famous; you have to leave everybody far behind.

Look deep down: it is one single game being played in so-called religious countries, in capitalist countries and in communist countries. Whatsoever the format, the structure, the game is the same. The game is the game of the ego. And we are tremendously interested in fulfilling our ego, but it cannot be fulfilled. It is impossible to fulfill it -- because in the first place the ego is a nonentity. It is not real, it is fictitious. If you have real hunger there is a way to satisfy it, but if your hunger is unreal there is no way to satisfy it. If you have a real disease it can be cured, but if you are a hypochondriac and you invent diseases which exist nowhere, nobody can cure you. It is impossible to cure you -- there is nothing to cure. And if somehow you are convinced that one disease has been cured, you have the same old mind and it will invent another disease. It will go on inventing.

Ego is your invention. The hunger of the ego is your invention. You have to keep yourself occupied because you feel in a state of embarrassment. You are not even aware of who you are -- how can you be at ease? You feel a deep unease, it is always there. To hide it you keep yourself occupied with money, with power, with religion, with politics. These are all escapes. You can find any escape -- there are many alternatives available -- but you keep yourself occupied so that there is no need to become so conscious of your inner trembling.

Whenever you have time, whenever you are unoccupied, suddenly the inner hollowness starts opening up and you become afraid. It is like an abyss, you are afraid you may slip into it. Hang onto something, invent something if there is nothing else to hang on to.

That's why people are even ready to cling to their misery; nobody is ready to drop his misery easily. That's my experience of working with thousands of people. All their problems can be reduced to one problem, that they cling to their misery. It is very difficult for them to drop their miseries because their miseries keep them occupied. Their miseries help them to avoid themselves and their inner hollowness, emptiness, meaninglessness. Their miseries are nothing but a way to escape. Of course those miseries are hurting; hence they talk about how to get rid of them, but they cannot drop them because dropping them means they will be left empty.

So they are in a double bind: they don't want to be miserable and yet they cannot drop their miseries. Miseries are not clinging to you, remember -- you are clinging to your miseries.

You can drop your miseries only when some inner meaning starts flowering in you. Miseries can be dropped only when meditation starts blooming in you because then you start enjoying your emptiness, it is no longer empty. Emptiness itself starts having a positive fragrance; it isn't negative anymore. That's the whole magic of meditation: it transforms your emptiness into a positive fulfillment, into something overwhelming. Emptiness becomes silence, emptiness becomes peace, and emptiness becomes divine, it becomes godliness.

There is no greater magic than meditation. To transform the negative into the positive, to transform darkness into light, that is the miracle of meditation. To transform a trembling person into a fearless soul, to transform a person who was clinging to every stupid thing into a nonclinger, into a nonpossessor, that is what happens through meditation.

Buddha used to call meditation a great sword, it cuts your problems at the very root. It makes you aware that you need not be afraid of your inner abyss. It is beautiful, it is blissful. You have not experienced its bliss and beauty because you have never gone into it, you have always been escaping. You have not tasted of it; it is nectar, it is not poison. But how are you going to know without tasting it? You are running away from something which can become your life's fulfillment. You are running away from something which is the only thing worth achieving. You are running away from yourself.

POSSESSING NOTHING, WANTING NOTHING.... Buddha says that's where meditation brings the master. He is no longer interested in possessing and he is no longer desiring anything. All desires have left him because he has

found the ultimate beyond which there is nothing else. He has found the inexhaustible treasure of joy, of bliss, of ecstasy. What else can he desire? He has found a mine of diamonds; now he cannot go on collecting colored stones and seashells on the seabeach. Now that whole activity is stupid -- not that he renounces it.

That is one of the most significant things to be remembered: the real sannyasin never renounces anything, he simply understands his own inner world -- its beauty, its benediction, its blissfulness. And understanding it, great renunciation happens of its own accord. All that is futile slips out of his hands, he cannot cling to it anymore. He becomes nonpossessive. Nothing is so important to cling to anymore. Everything of this world becomes just a toy to play with, good for those who are not yet grown up -- but a meditator has become adult.

Only a meditator becomes adult. Otherwise, your chronological age may be seventy, eighty or ninety, it does not matter -- you are only an old child... ninety years old but still immature because still interested in toys, still carrying your teddy bears, still interested in possessing more and more toys. Children can be forgiven, but you cannot be forgiven. Only a meditator comes of age; for the first time he becomes mature, grown-up. All childishness disappears from him.

And the beauty is, when all childishness disappears from you, you again become childlike but on a different plane. No childishness but absolutely childlike -- the same purity, the same innocence, the same wonder, the same awe. Again existence becomes a mystery. But it is not that you are childish -- you are childlike. It is a totally different

phenomenon. Childishness is immaturity; to have a childlike purity is maturity. They are polar opposites. POSSESSING NOTHING, WANTING NOTHING... the master is at home. He is no longer running after shadows, he is not running at all. Just now to say to you that you are also buddhas will look absurd; at least to you it will look absurd. You will listen, you love me and you will try to understand what I am saying, but deep down you will not be convinced that you are buddhas.

That's why we have been finding every possible rationalization to prove to ourselves that buddhas are a totally different race. Every country has tried to prove to its own heart's content that "Buddha belongs to some other plane of existence, Christ belongs to some other plane of existence. They are amongst us, but they are totally different from us. They are strangers, they are outsiders. Whatsoever they say is true, but it is not applicable to us, it has no relevance to our world. We live in an ordinary world and they come from some extraordinary existence -- from the beyond."

Every country, every race has convinced itself that Moses, Krishna, Lao Tzu, Buddha, Jesus, Mohammed are not ordinary people. In some way or other we have been trying to prove that they are extraordinary. Not that we are much interested in their being extraordinary, we are simply interested in one thing: if they are extraordinary then we need not worry. Then we can go on the way we are going, we need not change. We can simply remain the same, as we are. To avoid a radical change we create these great rationalizations.

I say unto you that they are all as ordinary as you are -- or as extraordinary as you are. No difference at all. Just a very small difference which is not a difference really: you are asleep and they are awake. You can be awakened, you can wake up -- unless you decide not to wake up. But right now it is difficult for you to understand that you are buddhas. The function of the master is to remind you that you may be believing that you are slaves, but you are not -- that is only your belief. You are masters. The function of the master is to remind you, to go on reminding you again and again that you are buddhas. If you are behaving like fools that is your choice. You have the freedom to behave like fools, but you also have the freedom to transform your being totally, to become as centered as a Buddha.
Looking at yourself it will be difficult to believe, looking at your life it will be difficult for you yourself to believe that you can ever be mature, that you can ever be a master, that you can ever say about yourself: POSSESSING NOTHING, WANTING NOTHING. You are always wanting. People are so ridiculous that if they become convinced about wanting nothing, then they start wanting this state of wanting nothing. But it is the same game; now the desire has come from the back door.

I have heard:
After Beethoven finished his joyous Fourth Symphony he went through a dry period. Inspiration left him, his imagination went blank and he could compose no new music. This was too much for his restless energy and he fell to drinking at the local taverns where he often wound up in bar fights or went off with whores.

One night, after losing a bar fight and being rejected by the cheapest whore in town, Beethoven sat spending his last pennies on cheap wine. As he was the last customer in the empty tavern, the bartender came over to him and said, "Hey, buddy, you are always causing trouble around here. What do you do for a living anyway?"
Beethoven looked up, his face bruised, his lip bleeding, and said through clenched teeth, "I am a composer."
The bartender said, "You, a composer?! Ha-ha-ha -- Ha!"
That's how the Fifth Symphony was born!

Looking at you it is very difficult to believe that you are buddhas -- bruised face, bleeding lips, even rejected by the cheapest whore, drinking cheap wine. Who will believe that you are a buddha? But I believe it! And not only do I believe it. I know it.
Just something is needed to trigger it. Just something is needed to wake you up.
Beethoven went home and again the inspiration was back, again the sources were flowing.
The master cannot do anything directly, but he can push you, pull you in indirect ways, to help you to see the point. Once seen it becomes yours and unless it becomes yours it is of no use, it is of no meaning, it has no validity.
You are so unaware of yourself. That's why you are running after money, power, prestige. Become a little more aware of who you are. Give a little more attention to yourself.

Lukowski went to the bank to cash a cheque. Since Lukowski had no account at the bank, the clerk asked if he could identify himself.
"Say," asked Lukowski, "is there a mirror around here?"
"Yes," said the teller, "on the post beside you."
Lukowski glanced in the mirror and heaved a sigh of relief. "Yeah," he said, "it is me alright."

That is how you recognize yourself, always looking in the mirror. The mirrors differ. You look in the eyes of other people; if they think you are a good man, you think you are a good man. If they think you are beautiful, you think you are beautiful. If they think you are intelligent, you think you are intelligent. All that you know about yourself is collected from others -- others who don't even know themselves.
This is a very strange world: you are asking people, "Who are you?" and they don't know themselves, and you depend on what they say about you -- you depend on it. You go on collecting information. That's why it hurts when somebody says you are a fool. Why does it hurt? Let him say that you are a fool; just by his saying it you don't become a fool. But why does it hurt then? It hurts because all that you know about yourself depends on public opinion. Now that opinion comes from the same source -- from the outside -- from where you have been collecting the opinion that you are very intelligent. Now you are in a contradiction, that's why you are upset, disturbed. Now he has created a contradiction. Now he has created trouble for you, he has created a dilemma. Now you are again confused, you don't know who you are.

A Sufi parable:
A Sufi stayed in a caravanserai but there was no empty room available. So the manager said, "You will have to share the room with somebody else."
The Sufi said, "That is going to create trouble because when I am alone in my room, in the morning when I wake up I know perfectly well it is me, but when there are two persons in the morning, how am I going to decide who is who?"
While this strange conversation was going on, the man with whom the Sufi was to share the room was also listening to the whole thing. He had a great idea. The manager said, "That seems to be a relevant point" -- because the manager had come across these mad Sufis many times: "They are always saying strange things. Now what is this thing he is talking about?"
But the Sufi was saying something really significant: how do you know in the morning who is who? When there are two persons and there has been a gap of the whole night's sleep, how to gather again that "I am myself"?
The manager said, "I have come across many Sufis and slowly slowly, I have learned many things about them. Do one thing: take this rope with you and when you go to sleep tie this rope around your feet so when in the morning you see the rope around your feet you will know it is you."
The Sufi said, "That seems to be sensible."
In the night, in the middle of the night, when the Sufi was snoring, the other man took away the rope just to play some mischief, tied the rope around his own feet and went to sleep. And in the morning there was havoc! The Sufi woke

up; the other man was still sleeping. He shook him and he said, "Now I know you are the Sufi, but then who am I? I am perfectly certain you are the Sufi -- the rope is there -- but the problem is, now who am I? And I had told this foolish manager that some trouble is bound to arise; now this trouble has arisen."

This Sufi parable is significant, it is about you. That's how you know who you are. Yes, not so visibly; but invisibly how do you recognize yourself? -- in the mirror or in the mirror of other people's eyes, in the mirror of their opinions?

Only a buddha is unaffected by others' opinions because he really knows who he is. He needs no arbitrary method, no ropes, no mirrors, no information from anybody else; he knows himself directly. He has an intuitive feeling about his own being, but you don't have any intuitive feeling about your own being.

You say you are a Christian. This is a rope your parents have put around your neck -- not even around your feet, around your neck! And you are dying because you go on getting bigger and the rope was tied when you were a small child; it is becoming tighter every day. A few people are dying as Christians, a few as Hindus, a few as Mohammedans, and everybody has a rope around his neck. How do you know you are a Christian? You never encountered Christ. If you had not been told that you were a Christian there is no possibility that you would have ever loved Christ or ever thought about him. No Jaina ever thinks about Christ, no Jew ever bothers about Christ, although Christ was born a Jew, lived as a Jew, died as a

Jew. But it is the same. No Christian ever bothers about Mahavira. Who cares about Mahavira? Even if you come across a statue of Mahavira you may look at it as a beautiful piece of art, an antique, or you may be a little puzzled why this man is standing naked.

In one of the hotels in Bombay... just a few days ago the hotel opened. It belonged to a Jaina family so they placed a statue of Mahavira naked, a marble statue, a beautiful statue, in the compound of the hotel, in a beautiful spot surrounded by plants and fountains. Immediately it became a great attraction for the tourists. And the Jaina family was very happy, thinking, "We are spreading the message of Mahavira." But the tourists were not interested in Mahavira or in his message; they were only interested in his nakedness. They were taking photographs.
The manager asked, "Why are you so interested in this statue? Are you interested in Jaina philosophy?"
They said, "What Jaina philosophy? We don't know anything about Jaina philosophy, we don't even know who this man is. All that we know is that he is standing naked and we are interested in nudity."
Once this was known, the Jaina community was very much against it: "This is insulting to Mahavira. Remove the statue." First they were very happy, now they are against. Now they know perfectly well why people are taking photographs and why tourists are coming to the statue: for the simple reason that it is a statue of a naked, beautiful body -- and Mahavira has a beautiful body.

In fact, only a man like Mahavira who has such a beautiful body should be allowed to be naked, nobody else; that should be a condition. I have seen many Jaina monks -- they are so disgusting! They should be forced to wear clothes because to look at them is nauseating! They are eyesores.

No Christian is interested in Mahavira, no Jaina is interested in Christ, no Mohammedan is interested in Buddha, no Buddhist is interested in Mohammed. You are interested only in the rope that was tied around your neck when you were a child. You are still carrying it, it has become your identity.

Who are you? If you write it down, then you will write your name which has been given by others -- you were born without a name. And you will write your degrees which have been conferred by others -- you were born without any degrees. If you write down the whole description of yourself you will be surprised: there is nothing that depends on your own experience, all is dependent on others. This is not self-knowledge, this is self-deception.

Unless you drop this whole deception and start discovering yourself from ABC you will never be able to know this beautiful experience of: POSSESSING NOTHING, WANTING NOTHING. This continuous wanting of something is simply to stuff your inner emptiness. And this constant hankering to be on top is nothing but a projection of a deep feeling of inferiority. All the politicians suffer from inferiority complexes; all the Alexanders and the Napoleons and the Hitlers and the Stalins, without any exception, they suffer from deep inferiority complexes.

Somewhere deep down they know that they are nothing; they have to cover this nothingness with something beautiful. They know they are like a wound, they have to cover the wound with beautiful flowers.

A politician was very much in love with his dog. One day he went to the market to buy some dog biscuits.
He entered a shop and shouted, "Have you got biscuits for dogs?"
The shopkeeper calmly replied, "Do you want to eat them here or do you want to take them home?"

Politicians fight like dogs. They are dogs, and they have to be, because it is a very difficult struggle that they have to go through. They have to be very stubborn and stupid, doggedly stupid and doggedly stubborn, only then is there a possibility that some day they may reach the top. Of course, they will not find anything there, but they will go on smiling because now it is meaningless to say, "I have not found anything here." People will laugh. People will say, "We knew it from the very beginning -- there is nothing." That's how people are. They always say, "We knew it from the very beginning. We told you before that you were a fool trying to climb an empty ladder -- on the last rung you would not find anything." So one who has reached the last rung has to go on smiling as if he has achieved something, just in order not to show his idiocy; that he has been an idiot, that he has wasted his whole life.
There is no need to struggle really, life is spacious enough. If we drop these foolish ideas of hierarchy, of who is on the top and who is the first and who is the president and who is

the prime minister... if we drop these stupid ideas of hierarchy, if we simply start living whatsoever we are, wherever we are, life can be infinitely rich because the whole energy available can transform this earth into a paradise.

Noah was closing the gate of the ark ready to leave when the elephant appeared on the horizon running like mad.
"Come on," encouraged Noah, "faster!"
The elephant walked the last few steps into the ark. At that moment the mosquito who also was late rushed in, stumbling upon the elephant's ass -- sting!
The elephant turned back in anger and said, "Don't push, please. There is plenty of room for everybody!"

Even elephants understand there is plenty of room for everybody -- and just a mosquito! There is enough room for you if there is enough room for an elephant -- don't push. But these political mosquitoes, they go on pushing like mad; their whole life depends on pushing. Go on pushing till you reach the end -- and then there is nothing. There has never been anything, but we are brought up, educated, conditioned, to be ambitious, to be egoists. Yes, people drop desiring and wanting only when they are almost on their deathbeds, but then it is too late.
The old idea of sannyas was that you should become a sannyasin after seventy-five years. Buddha changed it; he brought a revolution into the very concept of sannyas. Hence India has never been able to forgive him. Even now India has not forgiven him, although he was born in India. He was the best flowering of Indian genius, no other person

can be compared to him. In the whole history of the Indian subcontinent he is the brightest star, but India rejected him. There were many reasons to reject him; one of the most important was that he destroyed the old idea of sannyas. The old idea of sannyas was, when you are too old to live, when life itself is slipping out of your fingers, then renounce. Buddha said, "What is the point of renouncing then? Life is renouncing you. Now why are you trying to deceive yourself? You deceived yourself your whole life -- do you still want to deceive yourself?" Buddha said, "If you want to renounce life, renounce it when desires are very young, when possessiveness is very strong, when your whole being is ambitious. THAT is the moment. If you cannot do it then, you have missed one life."

Mrs. Silver and Mrs. Gold were gossiping over the back fence as they hung out the wash.
"My husband, ah, such a faithful man!" boasted Mrs. Silver. "He never even looks at another woman."
"The same with my husband," said Mrs. Gold. "He never chases after women either. He is too fine, too decent -- too old!"

Buddha says: POSSESSING NOTHING, WANTING NOTHING....

HE IS FULL OF POWER.

When you try to possess, your power becomes invested in meaningless things. When you desire, your power becomes desires and desires are infinite. Each desire becomes a

leakage of your power. When all possessiveness and all desires have been understood as futile, and dropped, you become a reservoir of power. And to be a reservoir of power is the only experience that gives you the feeling that God is -- because God is power. When you also experience power within yourself, overflowing, abundant power, you know God is. If you are empty, with no power, tired, wasted in your desires, no proof that God exists can help. All those proofs are for impotent people.
The real person needs no proof for God. He comes to know God from the experience of inner power, from his own inner glow.

FEARLESS, WISE, EXALTED.
HE HAS VANQUISHED ALL THINGS.
HE SEES BY VIRTUE OF HIS PURITY.

And when you are full of power, death disappears. Death appears only because you are so powerless. Death appears only because your desires are exploiting your power, they are sucking your power. Desires are suckers, parasites; they leave you empty. When you are overflowing with energy there is no death. That experience of overflowing power makes you absolutely certain without any doubt that you cannot die. The body will go, the mind will go, but this power that you have felt is going to remain. It is going to expand; there is no way to destroy it. If you yourself don't waste it in desires, death cannot take it away from you. And when there is no death there is no fear. All fear is death-oriented, all fear is the shadow of death. When you don't possess anything you are fearless, when you don't

desire anything you are fearless. Nobody can take anything away from you because you don't possess anything. Nobody can hinder you because you don't have any desire. Nobody can obstruct your path, nobody is your enemy. The whole of existence suddenly becomes friendly.

And when there is power, fearlessness, wisdom arises. Wisdom means your capacity to see the truth. You become a seer. Not that you know the Koran, the Gita or the Bible, but that now you know the inner scripture of consciousness itself. You know the inner christ, you know the inner krishna. You know that as Mohammed was receiving messages from God you are also receiving messages from God; you are no less than any Mohammed. You are also a prophet and a messenger, you are also a messiah. When you are full of power you become receptive.

God can connect with you only when you have power. Right now you are powerless; there is no possibility of any communion between you and God. Power can only be connected with power. Powerlessness cannot be connected with power. Only the same can meet the same. You have to be something of the divine in your own right; then only do you earn, do you deserve that God should communicate with you.

He becomes wise, exalted -- exalted by existence itself. Society may not respect you, society may condemn you, society may crucify you, but who cares about society? Society is man-made. Existence itself exalts the man of wisdom -- the man who has known himself, the man who has experienced God, the man who can say authoritatively, "I know God, not through the scriptures but through my own experience," existence exalts him.

It is said that when Buddha became enlightened trees bloomed out of season. When Mahavira became enlightened gods descended from heaven and showered flowers on him. These are just metaphors, remember, not historical facts, but they indicate something. Whenever a man becomes a buddha, whenever a man becomes enlightened, the whole of existence exalts him, the whole of existence bows down to him. He has come home. The whole of existence welcomes him.

And why does the whole existence exalt him? -- because existence itself is exalted through him. One of its members has reached the ultimate peak of awakening; through him the whole existence has moved a little ahead in evolution. Just cancel a dozen names from the history of humanity -- Lao Tzu, Moses, Abraham, Krishna, Buddha, Mahavira, Christ, Kabir, Nanak... just a dozen names, cancel them, and where will mankind be? You would all have been Reverend Bananas or Reverend Tomatoes, Reverend Potatoes, but not human beings at all. You may know, you may not know; you may be aware, you may not be aware, but these few people have contributed immensely to the growth of human consciousness. Without Buddha and Mahavira and Krishna and Christ, humanity would be still hanging in the trees, just like American tourists!

They came a few days ago and they were making much noise on the roof. You knew them as monkeys, but you could not see them because they were on the roof. I can see through the roof! I immediately recognized them -- these are American tourists on their way to Goa, just paying their homage for a moment here and then gone. You would have all been American tourists!

These few people have released so much consciousness into the world. With each buddha, with each person becoming enlightened, humanity goes a little ahead, a step ahead. Hence the whole universe exalts him.
HE HAS VANQUISHED ALL THINGS. Buddha means by "all things" the world of the mind; not that he has vanquished all the things which are really there. You don't live in reality, you live in your projections.

"The water is absolutely divine this morning," enthused the pretty lass as she came out on the beach. "It is full of men!"

It is your projection. You live in a world of your own ideas.

"My wife deserted me," moaned the unhappy husband. "She took the car and ran off with a traveling salesman." "Why, that is terrible!" exclaimed his friend, aghast. "Your brand new car!"

Everybody lives in his own world of ideas.
Buddha says: HE HAS VANQUISHED ALL THINGS. Now there is no world of ideas, he has vanquished the mind. Once the mind disappears you can see things as they are in reality. Otherwise you never see them as they are, you see them according to your ideas. You always look through your own projections; those projections are subtle, but they color everything. You always look through your own prejudices; those prejudices are so close to you that you are not aware that they are there. It is as if on the panes of your window a layer of dust has gathered.

I have heard:
One old woman was looking out of a window and she said to the small boy playing outside, who must have been her grandson, "Bobby, today the morning seems to be very cloudy."
And the boy said, "Grandma, the day is perfectly fine as it always is. There are no clouds, it is just that on our window much dust has gathered."

But the old woman is not aware, may not be able to see; her eyes are weakening. She is not able to see that the panes are dusty and she thinks the morning is cloudy.
Your window panes are dusty, but when they are so close to your eyes you become unaware of them; they are colored, hence the whole world looks colored.
Buddha says: When you are full of power and all desires and all possessiveness have disappeared from you, that means your mind has died, ceased to exist. Now you can see things as they are. HE SEES BY VIRTUE OF HIS PURITY. Now everything is pure. He does not see through any screen, he sees through purity. Now he regains the wonder of childhood again, the same awe, the same mystery.

HE HAS COME TO THE END OF THE WAY,
OVER THE RIVER OF HIS MANY LIVES,
HIS MANY DEATHS.

And this is the end. When the mind ends, the journey ends. Now there will be no birth anymore and no death anymore. You have been born millions of times and you have died

millions of times. What have you been doing all this time, all along? Nothing in fact, just playing the same games again and again and forgetting the lessons again. It seems man never learns a thing. Each time he dies he forgets all the lessons of that life. Next time, next birth, he starts from ABC again.

It happened:
A great king asked to be initiated by Buddha and became a BHIKKHU, became his sannyasin. But he was just a junior sannyasin; there were elders who had meditated for thirty years, forty years. So where Buddha was staying in a caravanserai, the younger sannyasins -- not younger according to age, younger according to the time of initiation.... This king was old and he was a great king, but in the world of Buddha those things don't count, neither the age nor the money nor the kingdom. He was the most junior because just that day he had taken sannyas, so he had to sleep in the porch because there was no other place.
The king could not sleep; it was difficult, and one can understand his difficulty. He had never slept in such a place. And you know Indian mosquitoes... and the king had never experienced mosquitoes. And the ground was hard and the bhikkhus use no pillows, just their hands, their arms. He tossed and turned but he could not go to sleep.
In the middle of the night he thought, "What have I done? This seems to be stupid! I should be sleeping in my palace, I had everything. This seems to be pointless. Tomorrow morning the first thing I am going to do is to ask permission of the master: 'Please excuse me. I cannot

tolerate such unnecessary misery. I am going back to my palace.'"

But in the middle of the night Buddha came out and he said, "Why wait for the morning? If you want to drop sannyas, drop it right now! Why suffer the whole night?"

The king was amazed. He had not said it to anybody -- there was nobody else, he was alone in the porch. He said, "But how did you come to know? It was just a thought in me."

Buddha said, "If your thoughts disappear you can start seeing others' thoughts because others' thoughts are then like things. It is because of your thoughts that you cannot see others' thoughts. You are so covered with your own thoughts that there is no space for others' thoughts. But you please go!"

The man said, "Now I cannot go. How can I leave such a master?"

Buddha said, "But my suggestion is still this, because you will again think of leaving. You had better leave. Only one thing I have to remind you of: you took sannyas in your past life too -- and the same difficulty was there, and you renounced sannyas. Now the same difficulty has arisen and it will arise again and again. You have not learned anything from your past life."

As Buddha was saying this, the man suddenly felt a tremendous upsurge of the memories of the past life. He could see, he could remember that yes, this had happened. The whole situation was the same. The master was different, the serai was different, the mosquitoes must have been different, but the king was the same person and the difficulty was the same.

The king said, "That's enough, now I am not going to leave; I am going to stick to it. Now whatsoever happens.... I have lived in palaces many times and I have not gained anything so I am not going to waste this life anymore."
And he became enlightened one day. He persisted; a great perseverance must have been needed.

HE HAS COME TO THE END OF THE WAY, Buddha says, OVER THE RIVER OF HIS MANY LIVES, HIS MANY DEATHS.
What have you been doing all your past lives? You have been just a driftwood at the mercy of the winds, no sense of direction. You have not achieved any integrity. Don't waste THIS life; make something out of it, create something out of it.

Bailey, a violin player from New York, finally found a job in a small restaurant orchestra. But on his first night of work he played so terribly that the other musicians decided to fire him on the spot.
Bailey explained to them that he could really play much better, but he had been traveling for two months and had not been able to even touch his instrument. Tomorrow he would practice the whole day to get back in shape.
The second day of work came and he sounded just as bad. Now he was really going to get fired, but he explained to the others that his wife had been nagging him the whole day so that he had been unable to play even one note. Now this was something that the other musicians had much understanding for, so they gave him another chance. Bailey

said that tomorrow his wife would go to her mother's so he could practice the whole day.
But the third day Bailey sounded so bad that now even the waiters complained. That was it -- he did get fired.
Just as he was about to leave one of the other musicians walked up to him and said, "Excuse me, but just out of curiosity, do you really make a living as a musician?"
"Yes," replied Bailey.
"Oh, but where do you work?"
"Well, three nights here and three nights there," answered Bailey.

And that's what you have been doing for many nights: three nights here and three nights there, somehow earning your livelihood, somehow just trying to hold yourself together. But for what purpose? What have you achieved? What has been the gain? Certainly you have passed time, but life is such a valuable phenomenon, it is not just to pass through. It is an opportunity to grow, to be.

BEYOND THE SORROW OF HELL,
BEYOND THE GREAT JOY OF HEAVEN,
BY VIRTUE OF HIS PURITY.

... The master transcends. BEYOND THE SORROW OF HELL, BEYOND THE GREAT JOY OF HEAVEN.... He is no longer interested in pain and pleasure. Remember, if you seek pleasure you are bound to suffer pain in the same amount; they always come in the same proportion. If you have so much pleasure you will have to suffer so much pain; that is unavoidable. This is a fundamental law of life,

life keeps a balance. The more pleasure you have, the more you will have to suffer pain.
Hell and heaven are not geographical places but psychological experiences. And they are not separate either, they are two sides of the same coin. If you have one, the other is there just waiting for the right opportunity to assert itself.
The man of understanding, the man of awareness, the man who has gone deep into meditation, into no-mind, becomes aware of this whole phenomenon; he drops the whole coin. He is neither interested in hell nor in heaven. He is neither worried about hell nor desirous of heaven, because he knows if you desire heaven you will suffer in hell.
This is something tremendously beautiful -- remember it. The so-called religious people are all desirous of heaven and the heavenly joys; they are not religious at all. And these are the people who will suffer in heaven... in hell. Wherever they are it is not going to make much difference because if you desire one, the other follows it like a shadow.

I have heard about a man.... In Hindu mythology it is said that in heaven there are KALPAVRIKSHAS. A kalpavriksha means a wish-fulfilling tree. You sit underneath the tree and whatsoever your wishes are they are fulfilled immediately. You wish and they are fulfilled instantly. Even instant coffee takes a little time, it is not so instant, but under a kalpavriksha there is no time gap between the desire and its fulfillment; you have not even desired and it is fulfilled.

One man, a very religious man, reached heaven. He was tired -- the long journey from earth to heaven. The first tree that he came across he sat underneath. Tired he was, weary from the journey, and the tree was cool, shady. He rested underneath the tree.

Suddenly he felt hungry. Immediately beautiful food appeared. He was so hungry he did not even bother from where this food had appeared. He ate to his heart's content. Then he thought, "If there was something to drink...." Immediately a cold drink -- maybe Coca-Cola! -- appeared. He was very happy and he thought, "Now I would like to rest a little bit, but the ground is so uneven. If there was some bed available somewhere...." Suddenly out of nowhere a beautiful bed -- he had never seen one like it in his life. He fell asleep; he was so tired that there was no question of becoming curious. But when he woke up the sun was just coming down, was going to set. Now he was refreshed, well, nourished. He became a little suspicious: "What is the matter? I desired food, food appeared. I desired drinks and drinks appeared. I desired the bed and the bed appeared. It seems this tree is haunted by ghosts! My God! Are there ghosts?" he thought.

And suddenly ghosts appeared, so terrible, big monsters, just ready to jump upon him. He said, "I am finished! These people are not going to leave me!" And, of course, he was finished; they did not leave him, because whatsoever you wish.... They jumped upon him, tore him to pieces and ate him up then and there, raw!

The religious person, the so-called religious person, is not going to find peace even in heaven because his whole

desire for heaven is basically wrong. The desire for pleasure is wrong because it contains the other side, pain. You cannot divide them, they are indivisibly one.

This is one of the greatest contributions of Buddha: that he helped religious consciousness to go beyond heaven and hell. Otherwise Judaism, Christianity, Mohammedanism, Hinduism, they are all confined to the world of heaven and hell. Their ultimate desire is how to attain to heavenly joys. Buddha says the ultimate is how to drop all desire, even that of heaven, because only when all desire disappears are you in a state of absolute freedom. He calls it nirvana. When the mind ceases then you yourself are bliss. But it happens not because of desiring, it happens only when the state of desirelessness has been achieved. When desires have left you, in that space, bliss starts growing in you.

HE HAS COME TO THE END OF THE WAY.

Of course there is no longer anywhere to go -- he has come home.

ALL THAT HE HAD TO DO, HE HAS DONE.

AND NOW HE IS ONE.

... One with himself and one with the whole. You are many, you are a crowd. The master is one, he is not a crowd. You are not one, you are many selves. So one moment you are one thing, another moment you are another thing. You go on changing. Just watch your mind -- every moment you go

on changing, because one self says do this, then another self comes and says don't do this, then another self comes and says do something else. And you have many selves -- you are multipsychic. You don't have one mind, you have many minds. And you are being tortured by all these minds, pulled into different directions.

The master has no mind, hence he becomes one. With no desire, with no possessions, with no desire even for heaven, he is bound to become one. He becomes integrated. He is really individual, literally individual. The word 'individual' means one who is indivisible. You are not individuals, you are only persons, personalities -- and that too not one. You have many personalities, many faces, you wear many masks. The master has no masks, no faces; he has only one face -- his original face. He is simply natural. He has no mind; hence he is one.

And the miracle happens: when you are one with yourself, when you are one within yourself, you become one with the whole. And that is the ultimate state. Call it nirvana, call it kingdom of God, call it God-realization, or whatsoever name you want to give it -- it is nameless. But this has been the real goal of all the seekers of truth.

Let this be your only goal. Prepare for it. I hope these beautiful sutras of Buddha will help you tremendously. Meditate over them. They are not philosophy; they are just statements of inner truths, statements of his experience. And they are also statements of my experience.

Whatsoever I am saying here is not just a commentary on Buddha's sutras; Buddha's sutras are just an excuse. I am saying something which is my own experience. I would like you to be able to say one day this is your experience

too. It is possible. You all have the potential of being a buddha. Don't settle for anything less than that.
Shake yourself and wake up!
Enough for today.

The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 12

Chapter #10

Chapter title: Forget all about it
30 April 1980 am in Buddha Hall

The first question:
Question 1
BELOVED MASTER,
YOU CONTINUALLY SPEAK OF DROPPING THE EGO, BUT HOW CAN I DO SO WHEN I CAN'T DISTINGUISH BETWEEN WHAT IS THE EGO AND WHAT IS MY TRUE NATURE?

Anand Vedant, the ego cannot be dropped. It is just like darkness -- you cannot drop darkness, you can only bring light in. The moment light is, darkness is no more. You can say this is the way of dropping darkness, but don't take it literally. Darkness does not exist at all -- it is absence of light. Hence you cannot do anything directly to it. You can only do something to light -- either bring light in or take light out. If you want darkness, put the light off; if you don't want darkness, put the light on. The ego cannot be dropped.

Meditation can be learned. Meditation functions as a light, meditation IS light.
Become light, and you will not find the ego anywhere.
If you want to drop it you will be in trouble, because who is this one who wants to drop it? It is the ego itself -- now playing a new game, the game called spirituality, religion, self-realization. Who is asking this question? It is the ego itself, befooling you. And when the ego asks how the ego can be dropped, naturally you think, "This can't be the ego. How can ego ask for its own suicide?" That's how ego goes on deceiving you.
Your self-nature has no questions, it needs no answers. Your self-nature is absolutely light, full of light. It knows no darkness, it has never met any darkness.

Bodhidharma reached China. He was one of the greatest buddhas of all the ages. After Gautam Buddha, Bodhidharma seems to be the most precious person in the Buddhist heritage. When he reached China, his fame had reached far ahead of him. Even Emperor Wu who ruled over the whole of China came to receive him at the boundary. And the conversation that transpired between the two is of immense importance. It has to be meditated upon again and again. It has a tremendous message for you all. Emperor Wu was not only a great emperor, he was very religious too, and he had done much for Gautam Buddha's message. In fact no other person except Emperor Ashoka had done so much for Buddhism as Emperor Wu had done. He transformed the whole of China into a Buddhist world. He made thousands of temples for Buddha, he made hundreds of monasteries -- millions of Buddhist monks

were supported by the royal treasury. He translated all the Buddhist scriptures into Chinese. Thousands of scholars worked for years, almost their whole lives. He had done great work. Naturally, he wanted to know from Bodhidharma, "What is my merit?"

The first thing that he asked Bodhidharma was, "I have done so much, what is my merit? What have I gained? What virtue?"

Bodhidharma looked at him very sternly. If you have seen Bodhidharma's pictures you will be puzzled. He looks more like a lion than like a man -- very fierce; his eyes are very penetrating, like swords. He must have cut Wu down to his proper size just by his look.

Wu started trembling, he had never come up against such a man. He had conquered many enemies, he had conquered many dangerous kings, but Bodhidharma was the most dangerous person he had come across. It was a cool morning, but he started perspiring.

And Bodhidharma said, "Merit? Virtue? You are stupid! Now this is the ego and nothing else getting nourished and fat in the name of religion and spirituality. You are bound for the seventh hell, mind you!"

Wu could not believe his ears, could not believe his eyes. He said, "But thousands of other monks have come from India and they have all said, 'Wu, you have done a great service to Buddha's religion. You are a beloved of Buddha, you are blessed by Buddha.' But you are saying just the opposite!"

Bodhidharma said, "Forget all about those monks! They were buttressing you, they were praising you because they knew that that's what you expected from them. They are

cunning and crafty people. They know nothing of Buddha and his message. I am a buddha myself, I am not a Buddhist monk. I speak on my own authority, and I say to you: You are cursed!"

Emperor Wu asked, "Do you mean to say there is nothing holy, nothing spiritual, in all these beautiful acts?"

Bodhidharma said, "No action is holy, because every action arises out of the ego. When you forget all about actions, when you disappear and things start happening on their own and you cannot claim that they are YOUR actions, only then does something of immense value, of immense beauty penetrate your life.

"Spirituality has nothing to do with doing, spirituality is the fragrance of being, and you are not a being yet. You are still concerned that you have done this, you have done that.

"The ego is a doer, your self-nature is a nondoer. Your self-nature simply allows existence to flow through it, it simply allows the ultimate law to function through it. Your self-nature is just a hollow bamboo. In the hands of the ultimate nature it becomes a flute and a beautiful song is born out of it. But the flute cannot say, 'This is my song. What is my merit? What am I going to gain out of it? To what heaven, to what joys will I attain?' The bamboo flute is just nothing. Its whole being consists of nothingness. That's why the song can flow through it, it is utterly empty."

Shocked -- but he could see the point -- Wu said, "You are the first man who is not impressed by my great power, money, my empire. You are the first man with whom I am feeling that something is possible. How can I drop this ego?

Yes, I can understand your point. First, I was claiming a great empire, now I am claiming something of the beyond.

But the claim is the same and the claimer is the same. I can see your point. I bow my head to you. I am grateful that you have not been polite to me, that you have hit me hard. You have wounded me but I am thankful. How can I drop this ego?"

And Bodhidharma asked, "What ego do you want to drop? Again you want to do something. If YOU drop it, then the ego will persist. This is the subtle game of ego: if you drop it, the ego starts coming from the back door. It starts saying, 'Look! I have dropped the ego. Look how humble I am. There is nobody who is more humble than me. I am the humblest person in the world -- just dust under your feet.' But look into the eyes, look into the heart of the man who is claiming that he is the humblest person -- it is the same ego. It is not egolessness. Egolessness cannot claim humbleness. Egolessness cannot claim egolessness. Egolessness cannot claim at all, it simply falls silent. It cannot even say, 'I am not, I am nobody' -- because the 'I' can exist in any claim whatsoever."

The emperor asked, "Then help me because I cannot get out of this ego."

Bodhidharma said, "Come early in the morning, three o'clock. Come alone, don't bring anybody with you. And don't be worried -- I will finish it once and for all."

The emperor could not sleep the whole night. "What does he mean? -- this mad monk. He will finish it once and for all? And the man looks so dangerous... and three o'clock is not the time to meet such a person. He can do anything, he's so unpredictable. And he has asked that I should come alone."

Many times he decided not to go, but the pull was great, the man had something magnetic. He had to go. At three o'clock he found himself getting ready. He went. Bodhidharma was staying outside the town in a small temple. It was dark, and Bodhidharma was waiting... with his staff in his hand.

And he said, "So you have come! although you hesitated much. You decided many times not to come. You could not sleep the whole night, neither did you allow me to sleep -- because I had to go on pulling you. But now that you have come things can be settled forever. Sit in front of me, close your eyes, go in, and find out where the ego is! And don't fall asleep because I am sitting in front of you with my staff. I will hit you on the head immediately if you go to sleep! Be alert because when I hit I hit really hard. And find out.... If you can find the ego, just show me that this is the ego and I will finish it. First you have to find it, where it is."

The emperor followed the logic. He closed his eyes. It was impossible to fall asleep. Bodhidharma was sitting there. Even with closed eyes he could see Bodhidharma sitting there, and once in a while Bodhidharma would hit his staff on the ground just to let him know that "I am here. You go on searching."

Two hours passed, three hours passed. Wu looked and looked. For the first time he looked inside. In fact if you look inside and you can remain alert, just for forty-eight minutes.... That is the limit. The ego can go on eluding you only for forty-eight minutes, not more than that. This has been the experience of all the buddhas down the ages. Now, don't ask why forty-eight minutes, because that's

impossible to answer. It is just like at a hundred degrees water evaporates, nobody asks why. Why not at ninety-nine degrees? Why not at a hundred and one degrees? There is no question about it, it is simply so, the law of nature. At a hundred degrees water evaporates. Exactly like that, if you can remain alert and watchful continuously without wavering, for forty-eight minutes, your whole inner being becomes so quiet, so silent, so peaceful, so alert. For the first time there is clarity, transparent clarity. You can see everything that is there.

And Wu looked and looked and looked and could not find any ego -- because ego cannot be found. It is fictitious, it is just your idea, it has no substance in it. It is not even a shadow, what to say about substance? It exists only because you have not looked in. Looking in, your light is discovered -- which is always there, you just have to look in and find it. He was looking for the ego but he found the light, because the ego is not there and the light is there. He had gone to search for the ego but he found the light. And once the light was found there was no darkness.

Three hours passed and then the sun was rising, and Wu's face was transformed. He had a new beauty, a new grace. Bodhidharma laughed and he said, "Now, open your eyes. You have not been able to find it... so I have finished it forever."

Wu opened his eyes, touched Bodhidharma's feet and said, "Master, you have not done anything and yet you have finished it." That's the miracle of a master; he never does a thing, and yet the ultimate miracle happens in his presence. His presence is the miracle, his presence has the magical quality.

Anand Vedant, you need not drop the ego. Just look in, search for where it is -- first find it. Don't worry about self-nature right now. Just go in, search for the ego, and you will not find it; instead you will find your self-nature, luminous, fragrant like a lotus flower. One never comes across such beauty anywhere else. It is the most beautiful experience of life. And once you have seen your own lotus of light, your own lotus blossoming, the ego is finished forever. Then you will not ask such meaningless questions. "How to distinguish," you say, "between what is the ego and what is my true nature?"

Either the ego is there, then the true nature is not known; or the true nature is known, then there is no ego left. You cannot have both, hence you cannot make any distinctions; you cannot distinguish them, they can't both be present together. Only one can be present.

Right now, whatsoever you are is ego, so don't be worried about distinguishing. If there were no ego the question would not have arisen at all. Self-nature knows no questions, self-nature is ecstasy, not a problem.

The second question:

Question 2

BELOVED MASTER,

PLEASE TELL ME WHAT THE DIFFERENCE IS BETWEEN SURRENDERING TO A MASTER AND FOLLOWING A MASTER?

Edward Kiefer, there is a great difference. They are poles apart. Surrendering to a master is something of the heart, it

is a love affair, it is not an intellectual conviction. It is not that you are convinced intellectually that what the master is saying is right. It is not philosophical. What the master is saying may be absurd -- in fact, it is bound to be absurd, because he speaks from a totally different kind of vision, from the peak where opposites meet, where the ultimate synthesis has happened, where life and death are one, where man and woman are one, where negative and positive are one. Hence whatsoever he says is bound to be paradoxical.

Surrendering to a master means you have felt his grace. It is not a question of his knowledgeability. He may not be knowledgeable at all. Jesus was not knowledgeable. Mohammed was not even able to read or write, he was not even able to sign his own name. But thousands fell in deep love with the man. He had no logical acumen. If you go into the Koran you will not find great philosophy -- simple statements which can be refuted very easily. But the man must have had something totally different. So many people gravitated towards him. Now you cannot see gravitation; it is an energy, it is a force, invisible. It is a communion, heart-to-heart. The master's presence overwhelms you, then surrender happens.

It is not something that you do. You cannot do surrender, remember. Surrender done is not surrender at all, because you can withdraw. Any day you can say, "I take back my surrender." Surrender is something that happens. Sometimes it happens even in spite of you, you never wanted it to happen, you resisted it. People resist to the very end; when it becomes impossible to resist, only then do they surrender, because surrender goes against the ego,

it shatters your ego. The very idea of surrendering to someone is against your whole upbringing, your whole education, your whole psychology. You are brought up with the idea of having a strong ego.

Surrender means you are dropping your whole upbringing, you are pushing aside all your knowledge, you are bypassing your mind, you are allowing the heart to say "Yes!" -- a total yes. It is a happening, not a doing. It is just like falling in love.

What is the difference between falling in love and marriage, an arranged marriage? Exactly that is the difference between surrendering to a master and following a master. Surrendering to a master is like falling in love. The force is irresistible. You are behaving like a madman. The master is mad, now you are becoming mad. The master is like a flame, and you are moving towards the flame like a moth, to your own death.

Following a master is a safe phenomenon, like an arranged marriage. You are moving on safe ground. You think about everything -- about the family of the woman or the man, about their economic status, about their social prestige, about everything except love. It is a calculated phenomenon. There is no risk in it. And not to take any chances you go to the astrologer so that he can even predict the future, how things will be going in the future: "Will I be sailing safely?"

You make everything safe before you take the plunge. It is not a jump, it is a calculated step. And that's what following a master is. It is intellectual, it is of the mind, it is of the head. You are trying to understand intellectually, logically what he is saying. Does it appeal to you?

And who are you and what do you know? And how are you going to judge whether he is right or wrong? -- according to your prejudices, according to your conditioning? A Christian coming across Jesus may be impressed, but not a Jew, because their conditioning differs.

I have heard about two hippies:
They were hungry and had no money, and on a Sunday morning they were just passing by a church when an idea occurred to them. Both had long hair, beards, tattered clothes -- they looked exactly like Jesus and his followers would have looked.
One said to the other, "We should find a cross; we should go to the cemetery and take one cross from some grave. You carry the cross, you look more like Jesus, and I'll go ahead of you proclaiming that the Lord has come. Let's see, maybe something is possible."
So they entered the church. It was a Protestant church. The first entered and shouted loudly, "Awake! Behold! The Lord has come back! He has fulfilled his promise."
Everybody looked and then entered the second hippie with the cross. A few women fainted, a few old people fell at his feet. And people started giving money. When they went out they had collected fifty dollars. They were very happy.
The week went beautifully -- marijuana and all. They enjoyed it as spiritually as possible.
The next week they entered a Catholic church. Even more things became possible. The Catholics went crazy! They could not believe their eyes. People were crying and weeping and trembling and calling "Lord!" They collected

one hundred and fifty dollars. That week they were really high....
The third week, just for fun, they thought why not try the synagogue? So they went into the synagogue. They proclaimed, "Behold! The Lord has come back as he promised!"
The old rabbi fixed his glasses, looked, and then asked his assistant, "You go and bring the hammer and nails -- it seems that fool has come back."

You behave according to your conditioning.
If Mahavira appears suddenly on M.G. Road, only Jainas -- and that too only DIGAMBARA Jainas -- will recognize him. The SVETAMBARA Jainas, another sect of the Jainas, will not recognize him because they don't believe that he lived naked. He lived in white clothes -- of course those clothes were invisible. So they will ask, "Where are the invisible clothes?" And Hindus and Mohammedans and Christians will simply rush to the police station, because a naked man is standing on M.G. Road -- he seems to be an Osho freak!
How are you going to judge? According to your prejudices. When you become convinced that this man is saying the right thing, that simply means he is saying the thing that you think is right. But if you know already what is right, there is no need to bother about this man.
Following is useless, it is unnecessary. You are simply collecting support for your own beliefs. It is not going to help, it is not going to change you. Only surrender transforms. Anything that happens through the heart can

bring a radical revolution into your being. The head is impotent -- avoid the head.
Sir, avoid the head! Listen to the heart and follow the heart, then surrender happens of its own accord.

The third question:
Question 3
BELOVED MASTER,
WHAT IS MISUNDERSTANDING?

Sahajananda, misunderstanding happens only to knowledgeable people, it never happens to the innocent. It never happens to those who know that they know nothing; only to them understanding happens. But to those who think they know already, their very knowledge is a disturbance, a distraction. It is knowledge that creates misunderstanding.
If you are already carrying something in your mind, and then you listen to me, there are only two possibilities: either you find me agreeing with you or you find me disagreeing with you. If you find me agreeing with you, you must have misunderstood, because I cannot agree with you. It is impossible, I can agree with you only if you are also awakened, if you are also in the same space, only then. So you must have distorted the words, dropped a few words, added a few words, given them new meanings -- your meanings, coloring them, dyeing them according to your philosophy, way of life, or whatsoever you call it. It is a kind of adjustment. And then you can be very happy that I agree with you.

I cannot agree with you. It is impossible. Agreement is possible only if we both exist in the same space, otherwise not. In your confusion, in my clarity, there is no possibility of agreement. So that is the first kind of misunderstanding, which is far more dangerous than the second kind of misunderstanding.

The second kind of misunderstanding is: I say one thing and you immediately jump against it because you have come with a negative approach. The first misunderstanding comes from the one who has come with a positive approach. Ordinarily, people think that if you come with a positive approach you cannot misunderstand. The positive approach is very much appreciated around the world. Of course, your priests, your leaders praise your positive approach because you are agreeing with them. I cannot praise it because your agreement means nothing to me. Your negative approach means disagreement, but both are misunderstandings. If you have come already with a negative mind -- that you are against me, that this man is wrong -- you must have gathered it from public opinion, from newspapers, from magazines. And if you have come already with a negative attitude, then whatsoever I say you will find something wrong with it. You are bent upon finding something wrong with it. That is another kind of misunderstanding.

To me, both are misunderstandings. And the first is more dangerous, because the second misunderstanding is not going to do any harm. You will go empty-handed, that's all; you have not lost anything. But the first misunderstanding can be dangerous. You will go with the idea that I agree with you. You will become more egoistic, thinking that

your ideas are right, and that is more dangerous. If you think my ideas are wrong, there is no problem, you remain the same. But if you think that your ideas are right because they are in agreement with me and I am in agreement with you, then you are going with a more strengthened ego. The positive approach is far more dangerous than the negative.

The real seeker comes with neither the positive mind nor the negative mind. He comes only with an open mind. He comes silently. He has no a priori idea this way or that way. He simply listens, he does not interfere. He does not go on continuously judging. He remains in a kind of let-go -- silent, open, vulnerable. It is not a question of agreeing or of disagreeing. You are simply listening! What this man has to say, you are simply listening to it. And you are not continuously commenting inside yourself that "Yes, this is right, that is wrong. This agrees with the Gita and this does not agree with the Gita. If it does not agree with the Gita how can this man be right? The Gita is bound to be right." And what do you know about the Gita? All that you know about the Gita is your idea of the Gita. You can't understand Krishna. To understand Krishna you have to be a krishna, to understand Buddha you have to be a buddha -- there is no other way. And when you are a buddha, why should you bother to understand Buddha? When you are a krishna, what is the need to understand Krishna? You yourself know.

The real seeker listens with an empty mind, utterly empty. He listens totally, with no evaluation, no judgment. Then there is no possibility of misunderstanding. And the miracle of right listening is that, if you listen silently, whatsoever is

true immediately strikes deep down somewhere in your heart a chord, a rhythm. Deep down somewhere in your heart a synchronicity happens. That is the miracle of truth. If the mind is silent and if truth is being told, your heart immediately starts beating with it, starts dancing with it. And that is true agreement, not the agreement of the head, not the agreement of the ego, but something existential, something total. Then you have understood. And if something is not true, your heart remains cold.
So there is no need to bother whether it is right or wrong. If it is right it touches something so deep in you that you were not even aware that such a depth exists. And if it is not right nothing moves in you. So your whole being becomes decisive, not just your head -- which is just a fragment. Never allow the fragment to decide for the whole; let the whole decide.

The fanatic fisherman was telling a pal about his great dream: "I dreamt I was out on a lake alone in a boat with Elizabeth Taylor."
His pal said, "Wow -- how did you make out?"
He said, "Great -- I caught a ten-pound flounder!"

You know fishermen, you know people who are mad about catching fish -- who cares about Elizabeth Taylor? That is beside the point. He catches a ten-pound flounder.

He was really a golf nut. He was just about to tee off on the first hole when a beautiful girl came running up to him in a gorgeous bridal outfit.

The golfer waved her away and said, "Sylvia, I told you -- only if it rains!"

Two drunks were driving over a bridge and one said, "When you come to the end of the bridge, turn left."
The other slobbered, "What're you telling me for? You're drivin'!"

In your state of sleep, in your state of drunkenness, what agreement? what disagreement? what understanding? what misunderstanding? It is all the same.
Here, listening to me, become more and more silent and alert. Forget all about agreeing and disagreeing. I am not interested in converting you, I am not a missionary. I am not interested in creating a following -- not at all. I am certainly interested in sharing my joy with you, certainly interested in sharing my truth with you. But that is a totally different matter.

Dave and Mabel were just married and on their way home to the farm. Their old horse was getting slower and slower, and despite Dave's efforts, just before dusk the nag fell and died! There was nothing to do but put up camp for the night under a nearby tree.
The newly-weds snuggled under the blanket, and Dave turned to Mabel, saying, "Well, what about it, love?"
"What about what, dear?" Mabel replied.
"Oh, never mind," said Dave.
Shortly after, Dave said, "Well... ah, hum, what about it?"
Mabel replied, "What about WHAT, dear?"

Dave asked, "Oh, didn't your mum ever tell you about what marriage is for?"
Mabel answered, "I don't know what you mean, dear!"
Dave said, "Well -- ah -- um -- ah -- you are a woman, and I am a man, and you see -- well -- a man has this -- and it gives life."
"Well, for God's sake, Dave," said Mabel, "go and stick it in the horse and let's get going!"

The fourth question:
Question 4
BELOVED MASTER,
IN YOUR PROPHETIC VISION, WHAT DO YOU THINK WILL BE THE FUTURE OF SCIENCE?

Raju Bharathi, I have no prophetic vision. I am not a prophet -- I am not that old-fashioned at all. Do you think I am coming out of the Old Testament?
I am a twentieth-century man and still fully alive, and I don't care a bit about the future; neither do I care about the past. My whole concern is the present, because only the present exists. The past is no more, the future is not yet. Both are nonexistential. Those prophets must have been mad who were concerned about the future. They were always talking about the future.
There are only two types of mad people in the world: a few who are always talking about the past, and a few who are always talking about the future. The people who are talking about the past are the historians, archaeologists, etcetera. And the people who are talking about the future are the prophets, visionaries, poets. I am neither.

My whole concern is this moment... now... here.
So drop that idea, Raju. Raju is a scientist, and naturally he is interested in the future of science. I am not a prophet, but one thing I can say, and it has nothing to do with the future really. It is happening right now. Because people are blind they cannot see it. I can see it. It has already become a reality.
The greatest thing that is happening -- which will be understood only later on -- is the meeting of science and religion, is the meeting of East and West, is the meeting of materialism and spiritualism, is the meeting of the outer and the inner, is the meeting of the extrovert and the introvert. But that is happening right now. It will grow in the future, but my concern is the present. And I am tremendously happy that something of great importance is on the way.
The seed has sprouted. You are so much concerned with the past or with the future that you can't see the small sprout that is growing right now. Here, under your eyes... the meeting of the opposites -- the opposites are turning into complementaries.
Science alone is only half and cannot be a fulfillment for man. It can give you a better body, it can give you better health, longer life. It can give you more comforts, more luxury. I am not against any of these. I am not an ascetic, I am not that stupid at all. But it can only give you things of the outer world -- which are beautiful in themselves.
I would like everyone to live in more comfort, in more luxury, in better health, better nourished, better fed, better educated. But that's not all -- that is only the circumference of life, not the center.

Religion provides the center. It gives you a soul. Without it science is a corpse -- a beautiful corpse maybe. You can paint the corpse, you can wash the corpse and put beautiful garments on it, but a corpse is a corpse! And, remember, the same is the case with religion. Religion alone is not enough at all. Religion alone makes you a ghost, maybe a holy ghost, but it makes you a ghost.

You can see this happening in India. The whole country has become a holy ghost -- the body has disappeared, the physical health has disappeared, the material wealth has disappeared. And when there is no body to support a soul, you are simply talking nonsense. You can go on talking about the Brahman -- the ultimate reality -- but on a hungry stomach it does not work. It may be just an escape from reality.

If religion itself is not realistic it becomes an escape from reality. If religion is not materialistic enough it becomes an escape, it becomes a dreamworld, a Disneyland. That's what has happened in the East: we talked too much of the spirit and forgot all about the reality that surrounds us. We became introverts, too much concerned about ourselves. We forgot all about the beauties of the trees and the mountains and the sun and the moon and the stars. Humanity in the East became ugly. It has a center but no circumference. Everything has shrunk to the center.

The West has a circumference but no center. People have everything, but something essential is missing.

Science and religion are becoming one. They are already becoming one. I am not saying they will become one, they are already becoming one. All the greatest scientists -- Eddington, Planck, Einstein -- people of the highest caliber

in the world of science, became aware that science alone is not enough. There is something far more mysterious which cannot be grasped only through scientific methodology and means, something which needs a different approach, which needs more meditative awareness.

Eddington says in his autobiography, "When I started my career as a scientist I used to think that the world consisted of things, but as I grow old I am becoming more and more aware that the world does not consist of things but of thoughts."

Reality is far closer to thoughts than to things. Reality is far more mysterious than you can weigh, measure, than you can experiment with. Reality is not only objective but also subjective. Reality is not only content but also consciousness. And the greatest religious people, like J. Krishnamurti, are aware that religion cannot exist anymore as it has existed up to now. Something of a radical change is needed.

My own approach is that we have to create Zorba the Buddha.

Today, just by coincidence, is Buddha's birthday, also his enlightenment day, and also the day of his death. He was born on this day, he became enlightened on this day, he died on this day. Today's full moon belongs to him. It is a strange coincidence that this long series of Buddha lectures -- one hundred and twenty-six lectures in all... when I started I had no idea that it would end today.

Just the other night Laxmi told me, "Tomorrow is Buddha Purnima" -- Buddha's full moon.

Let this day also be the birth of a new buddha. The new buddha will be a synthesis of Zorba the Greek and Gautama

the Buddha. He cannot be just Zorba, and he cannot be just Buddha.
And that's my whole effort here, Raju, to create a bridge between Zorba and Buddha -- to create a bridge, a golden bridge, or a rainbow bridge, between the earth, this shore, and the farther shore, the beyond. It is happening here! You can't see it happening anywhere else....
We have all kinds of scientists here. Now, Raju himself has become a sannyasin. He has great scientific intelligence. He is young, but of tremendous intelligence. He is one of those scientists who put the first man on the moon -- he belongs to that project. There are so many other scientists here. There are poets and musicians, painters -- all kinds of people, and they have all joined together in one great effort: meditation. There is only one meeting-point here and that is meditation. Only on one point do they meet; otherwise they all have their own individualities. Out of this meeting a tremendous explosion is possible. It is already happening. Those who have eyes can see it happening.
This may be the only place on the earth where all the countries are represented. We were missing Russians but now I am happy to say that they are also here. All the races are meeting here, all the religions are meeting here. This is a miniature universe, a small world, and we are all meeting here as human beings. Nobody is a Christian, Hindu or Mohammedan. Nobody knows who is a scientist, who is a musician, who is a painter, who is a famous actor. Nobody even tells....
Just the other day I came across the news: one of our sannyasins has won a great, world-famous prize. She has been here, she was here for months, but she never told

anyone that she is a great actress. And now she is world-famous; she is now thought to be one of the most serious contenders for the highest award. But she never told anybody anything.
There are musicians of great caliber, poets, authors, painters, sculptors, magicians... all kinds of people are here. And they have all met in a deep merging. Their only meeting-point is meditation -- and their love for their master.
A totally new science is bound to arrive. It will be both science and religion, only then can it be total. It will be science both of the inner and the outer. In fact, the days of religion are over, just science will do, one word will do. 'Science' is a beautiful word; it means knowing, wisdom. Science should be divided in two categories: objective science -- chemistry, physics, mathematics, etcetera -- and subjective science. Then there is no need to divide religion and science. And the meeting of religion and science in one whole will create for the first time a whole man on the earth. Otherwise, up to now humanity has been schizophrenic, split, insane, divided.
I am all for the whole man, because to me the whole man is the holy man.

The fifth question:
Question 5
BELOVED MASTER,
WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN BEING MAD AND BEING ENLIGHTENED?

Deva Sadyo, not much. The only difference is that the enlightened person knows that he is mad and the madman does not know that he is mad.

The sixth question:
Question 6
BELOVED MASTER,
IF ITALIANS ARE "WOMEN," BRITISH ARE "LADIES" AND GERMANS ARE "FEMALES," WHAT ABOUT SOUTH AMERICAN WITCHES? CAN YOU MAKE SOME COMMENT ABOUT THEM?

Deva Samya, they are amazons.

The seventh question:
Question 7
BELOVED MASTER,
I AM LEAVING TOMORROW FOR FRANCE. PLEASE TELL ME A JOKE TO MAKE THE FRENCHIES LAUGH.

Toshen, an agitated Frenchman came into a Paris bistro and told the waiter to bring him a triple shot of cognac. He downed the huge drink in one gulp and asked for another. The waiter brought it and asked, "What's the matter, monsieur? Did your wife catch you making love to the maid?"
"No," he sighed. "The maid caught me in bed with my wife!"

The eighth question:

Question 8
BELOVED MASTER,
WHY DOES THE BUDDHA ALWAYS SAY: BE A LIGHT UNTO YOURSELF?

Paritosho, simple. Buddha says: Be a light unto yourself, because you cannot trust Indian electricity.
In fact, you cannot trust anything made in India.

What is the difference between an American computer and an Indian one?
The American computer has a memory; the Indian one has a vague remembrance.

How many Polacks does it take to put in a light bulb?
Four -- one to hold the bulb and three to spin him around.

How many Jews does it take to put in a light bulb?
Three -- one to put it in and two to supervise.

How many Californians does it take to put in a light bulb?
Four -- one to put it in and three to share the experience.

How many Italians does it take to put in a light bulb?
About sixteen -- one to give the orders, one to handle the money, one to get the bulb, one to tell the rickshaw driver where to go, one to clean up the broken glass, one to translate, three to carry the ladder, one to check the switch, one to shoo away the beggars, four to entertain you while you wait two or three minutes, two or three minutes, two or three minutes... etcetera.

And how many Indians it takes to change a light bulb?
Two hundred -- one to hold the bulb... and one hundred and ninety-nine to turn the house around!

And the last question:
Question 9
BELOVED MASTER,
IN A PREVIOUS LIFE YOU MUST HAVE BEEN AN ITALIAN. COULD YOU SAY SOMETHING ABOUT THAT EXPERIENCE?

Satyen, I am not a Californian, so I cannot share the experience with you. But I will tell you a few jokes....

"I find it hard to believe that you murdered that crippled old man for fifty cents," the outraged judge told the Italian mugger.
The Italian shrugged. "Fifty cents here, fifty cents there -- it adds up."

Martinelli always takes his superugly wife along with him when he goes away on business.
He explains, "It's easier to take her along than to kiss her goodbye."

Maria was complaining to her neighbor, Donna Arminda, "These pains drive me crazy. Every night it's the same thing. If I turn right, the pain attacks the liver; if I turn left, it attacks my heart. It's really hell!"

"But why don't you sleep on your belly?" asked the neighbor.
"On my belly? If I sleep on my belly, Roberto attacks me!"

An Italian was walking down the street with a pig under his arm.
"How much did that cost you?" asked a passerby.
"Fifty cents," replied the pig.

"I see you are no gentleman," hissed the woman on the street corner at the Italian who laughed as the wind swept her skirt over her head.
"No," he replied, "and I see-a you are not-a one-a either."

A long-suffering Italian husband was burying his wife. It chanced that in passing through the gate, the coffin was thrust hard against one of the posts. Almost immediately, to the amazement of the mourners, a muffled scream was heard. The lid was hastily unscrewed, and lo! the woman was not dead at all. She was taken home, and lived for three years. Then she died again.
At the funeral, as the coffin was being lowered from the hearse, the husband addressed the bearers very solemnly: "Boys, mind that post!"

Enough for today.